



Position Description

Position Title:	Counsel
Team:	Legal Services
Reports To:	Senior Counsel
Classification:	Excluded

A. Position Summary;

The legal services team provides critical support to the Ombudsman and his operations. The Ombudsman can investigate complainants about public sector bodies including provincial government organizations, municipalities, school boards, publically funded universities, child protection services, and compliance with the *French Language Services Act*.

The Counsel is responsible for a range of legal services, including providing legal advice, assisting in the conduct of investigations, and representing the Office in litigation.

B. Responsibilities:

Key areas of responsibility include but are not limited to the following:

- **Legal Advice and Research** – Conducts extensive legal research and provides legal advice and analysis to the Ombudsman and staff members on a variety of matters with the primary focus being, administrative law, municipal law and investigative procedure. Keeps abreast of relevant developments in the law, including legislative and regulatory amendments.
- **Investigation of Complaints**– In complex, systemic and open meeting cases, as required, assists in developing investigative plans and conducts investigations, including interviewing witnesses, identifying, obtaining, reviewing and analyzing relevant documentation, working to tight timelines and producing reports on the results of investigations. Works in collaboration with Senior Counsel in the conduct of investigation and production of reports.



- **Legal Representation** – Represents the Office as required in litigation, including preparation of pleadings, and court attendance.
- **Policy Development** – Assists in developing organizational policies to meet legal requirements.
- **Outreach** – As required, conducts outreach with stakeholders relating to the Ombudsman’s role and function.

C. Position Qualifications

Education:

Law Degree and licensed to practice as a lawyer by the Law Society of Ontario.

Experience:

Required:

Experience in administrative and municipal law or other relevant area of practice. Must have a minimum of 2 years experience as legal counsel or an acceptable combination of legal and other relevant experience.

Preferred:

Experience in conducting administrative investigations.

Personal Suitability:

The Counsel position requires a candidate with excellent communication skills and a high degree of professionalism.

The Counsel must be able to demonstrate good judgment, discretion and initiative.

Language:

English: superior ability to communicate in writing and orally is required.

French: ability to communicate in writing and orally at the advanced level or higher is a significant asset as incumbents may assist with French language services files.



Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Excellent knowledge of investigative principles.

Strong analytical skills to assess the applicability of legal principles and relevance of evidence and the exercise of sound judgment.

Strong interpersonal skills.

Excellent organizational, administrative and time management skills.

Demonstrated ability to work independently and in a team environment.

Excellent oral communication skills including ability to represent the office in outreach activities.

Excellent written communication skills including the ability to prepare a variety of materials including memos of law and high quality detailed investigative reports.

Demonstrated ability to successfully work on multiple projects and priorities within established time lines.

Superior research skills including ability to perform effective legal research.

Knowledge of the parliamentary and legislative process in Ontario and the role of the Ombudsman.

Knowledge of Ontario government programs and services will be considered an asset.

Proficient in use of internet, word processing and email applications.

D. Work Environment

The Office of the Ombudsman offers a highly charged, demanding, energetic and challenging work place with opportunities to work on interesting cases directly affecting the citizens of Ontario. We emphasize a hard-working productive environment that encourages professional development and teamwork.

Physical Environment: The Counsel works in an open-concept workspace, which is designed to facilitate teamwork and frequent consultation and professional communication among colleagues.



Hours of Work and Travel: The Counsel may be required to work evenings and weekends as required with occasional travel for outreach and investigations.

Time Pressure: The Counsel occupies a busy and demanding position, which requires regular multi-tasking and the ability to deal professionally and competently with competing demands and priorities.

Effect of Errors: The Counsel must provide timely and accurate information and advice at all times. The Counsel is expected to act with a high degree of integrity and professionalism at all times. Failure to present a professional, courteous and competent image or to provide accurate and timely information or advice or results has the potential to have adverse impacts for individuals, government officials, and on the office, its credibility, reputation and ultimately its operations.

Freedom to make decisions: The Counsel must work independently with limited direction and must apply sound judgment and common sense, and ensure that the organizational principles of the office are respected such as integrity, professionalism, timeliness, thoroughness and accuracy. Advice, guidance and support are available from Senior Counsel.

Interpersonal Communications and Contacts: The Counsel is accountable for the quality of information and advice provided. The Counsel is expected to resolve most issues independently. However, complex and sensitive issues are referred to Senior Counsel. All communications must be handled with a high level of professionalism, courtesy and respect and demonstrate a high level of competency which is commensurate with the position.