

POSITION PROFILE

DIRECTOR, SPECIAL OMBUDSMAN RESPONSE TEAM (SORT)

OMBUDSMAN ONTARIO

February 2020

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Client Organization: **Ombudsman Ontario**
Position Title: **Director, Special Ombudsman Response Team (SORT)**
Reports to: **Deputy Ombudsman**



ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN OF ONTARIO

Ontario's Ombudsman is an independent, impartial and non-partisan Officer of the Provincial Legislature. The Ombudsman's role is to enhance governance by promoting transparency, accountability, fairness and the rule of law. The Ombudsman can investigate individual complaints and systemic issues regarding provincial government organizations and public sector bodies, as well as municipalities, universities and school boards. Investigations may be launched based on complaints brought forward by members of the public or Members of Provincial Parliament, as well as on the Ombudsman's own initiative. As of May 1, 2019, the Ombudsman's mandate was expanded to include the investigation of complaints involving children and youth in care, as well as the provision of French language services under the *French Language Services Act*. The Ombudsman's powers and authorities are contained in the *Ombudsman Act*.

In 2018-2019, the Ombudsman's Office handled some 27,419 complaints from the public about provincial government organizations and broader public sector bodies, most of which were resolved through early resolution. The Office's work on systemic investigations has resulted in positive changes benefitting millions of Ontarians.

Information about the Ombudsman of Ontario may be obtained on its website at: www.ombudsman.on.ca.

ABOUT THE SPECIAL OMBUDSMAN RESPONSE TEAM (SORT)

Created in 2005, SORT was designed to handle the most complex, systemic and high-profile investigations that the Ombudsman undertakes. These investigations follow a thorough evidence-based assessment process and are meticulously planned to conform to the principles of excellent investigations for which the Office is renowned. For the past 15 years, SORT has led dozens of significant investigations, resulting in Ombudsman recommendations that have prompted widespread government reforms, benefiting millions of Ontarians through improved services, reduction of waste, and even saving lives. Some of these changes include enhanced de-escalation training for police,

improved screening of newborn babies for preventable diseases, better access to drug funding, overhauls of lottery ticket retailing and property tax assessment, and more supports for adults with developmental disabilities. The Ombudsman's office also handles thousands of complaints about municipalities and school boards, promoting accountability and transparency at the local government level.

THE ROLE AND OPPORTUNITY

The Director, Special Ombudsman Response Team (SORT) is a key member of the Ontario Ombudsman's Executive Management Team (EMT), providing investigative expertise, leadership, high-level strategic advice and critical management support to the Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman in the fulfillment of the Ombudsman's mandate. In addition, the Director represents the Ombudsman in high-level discussions with senior government and agency officials up to and including at the Deputy Minister level, to address problems identified in individual and systemic complaint reviews and investigations. The Director also provides training internally and on behalf of the Office on the methodology for investigations and related issues.

The position is responsible for the leadership and direction of the Special Ombudsman Response Team, which conducts systemic investigations focused on maladministration and fairness issues that affect the public trust in institutions. The Director of SORT ensures that all investigations conducted by the team follow the methodology developed by the Office and meet its high quality standards related to thoroughness, investigative integrity and impartiality. The Director is responsible for identifying and elaborating strategies to deal with all issues and challenges that may arise during the course of complex and systemic investigations, including resistance and lack of co-operation

The Director works in collaboration with other directors and senior managers across the organization in setting and implementing organizational strategy, providing guidance and direction on the conduct of investigations and enabling the Ombudsman to make recommendations and report on issues of significant interest to the Ontario public.

The Ombudsman's Office has grown over the past year, with the broadening of its oversight mandate to include children and youth in care and French language services. These additions create great opportunity to broaden the reach for SORT and the issues that the team is asked to investigate. Within this context, the Director oversees all investigations conducted by SORT, including pre-investigative and assessment work, drafting investigation plans and executing them, as well as producing reports and co-ordinating follow-up on the Ombudsman's recommendations.

A full job description will be provided upon request.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Director will be someone who can maintain SORT's reputation for excellence in the calibre of investigations and reports, as well as the impact of its work. With extensive investigative experience, strong diplomatic skills, tact, and excellent communication and writing skills, the Director will build credibility and maintain strong working relationships with internal and external stakeholders, and function as a direct representative of the Ombudsman. The successful candidate must have demonstrated an excellent work ethic, creativity, innovation, superior judgment, discretion and loyalty, as well as honesty and integrity, and the ability to maintain effective and professional working relationships within senior levels of an organization and/or government.

Experience and Qualifications:

- University degree in social sciences or related field, or an acceptable combination of education and experience.
- Experience in directing investigations in an oversight or similar type body and in managing teams of investigators (minimum 5 years).
- Experience in planning and executing systemic investigations and developing reports and recommendations (minimum 10 years).
- Experience in directing the delivery of services and programs to the public.
- Flexible and effective management and communications styles, and creativity in seeking solutions to problems and in developing ways to improve services to the Office's constituents.
- A thorough appreciation of the techniques and methodologies used in administrative investigations, as well as the role and function of a classical or executive model of Ombudsman.
- Experience in planning, conducting and evaluating investigations.
- In-depth knowledge of provincial government departments, boards, agencies, commissions and tribunals, as well as the machinery of government including applicable accountability and management frameworks.
- Detailed working knowledge of the theories and principles applicable to complaints resolution and methodology for executing investigations in an administrative oversight environment.
- Knowledge of the *Ombudsman Act* and the role and function of the Ombudsman of Ontario.
- Ability to communicate and work in French is considered an asset.

- A combination of experience and academic qualifications will be considered.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Should you have an interest in confidentially exploring this further or have any questions regarding this initiative, please contact the LHH Knightsbridge search team:

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