Assistant Ombudsman 1

Salary: $62,753.60 - $89,232.00 Annually

Location: Des Moines – 50319 – Polk County, IA (on-site)

Job Type: Full-time

Agency: 503 – Iowa Office of Ombudsman

Closing: November 10, 2026

Point of Contact: Bernardo Granwehr - ombudsman@legis.iowa.gov

To Apply: Submit a letter of application, resume, writing sample (illustrating your written communications skills) and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three references (two employment-related) to be received no later than 4:30 p.m. on the closing date to: **Office of Ombudsman, Ola Babcock Miller Building, 1112 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50319.** You may fax your application materials to 515-242-6007 or e-mail to ombudsman@legis.iowa.gov.

Job Summary:
The Iowa Ombudsman's office oversees most state and local governmental agencies, helping thousands of Iowans each year to cut through bureaucracy and red tape to resolve their problems. We receive more than 6,300 complaints each year on a wide variety of issues. This position will play a role in improving the public's interactions with the government, from small-town officials to the state's largest agencies.

In this assistant ombudsman position, you will be the first contact for people who call or write the Ombudsman's office with their complaints. You will triage and analyze complaints to clearly identify issues and determine how to resolve them or when to escalate them. An assistant ombudsman manages a caseload of files while identifying complaint patterns and potential systemic issues. In addition to receiving complaints by email and letter, assistants use their active listening and interviewing skills to take complaints over the phone and in-person, at times dealing with complainants who may require special accommodation or who may be frustrated and distressed by their experience with different state and local government agencies.

This opportunity will appeal to people who are keen to develop innovative solutions within a structured framework while respecting existing processes and procedures. Successful candidates are both analytical and empathetic, and enjoy working both independently and collaboratively. Applicants with experience in HHS/child welfare will be given strongest consideration, but those with legal services, public administration, investigations, corrections, or related fields are also encouraged to apply.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

1. Process cases received through intake or as assigned by the Ombudsman or designee.
2. Exercise appropriate judgment in determining when to pursue or decline a case.
3. Appropriately determine what action to take to complete an investigation and formulate case plan.
4. Communicate effectively orally and in writing with the public and public officials.
5. Enter timely, accurate, and detailed notes into the office's electronic case management system.
6. Organize case files and other assigned tasks to meet deadlines.
7. Draft final communication or report at conclusion of investigation.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES REQUIRED:

1. Basic knowledge of the functions and responsibilities of the Iowa Office of Ombudsman.
2. Excellent oral and written communication skills.
3. Excellent interpersonal skills as applied to interactions with difficult people, other staff, clientele, legislators, and agencies.
4. Ability to professionally and compassionately interact with members of the public who may be in distress.
5. Ability to investigate, research, interpret, apply, and explain law, rule, and policy of government agencies.
6. Ability to ascertain facts through personal contact, observation, and examination of records.
7. Ability to enter data and information accurately into the office's case management system.
8. Ability to collect, analyze, and summarize information through research and interviews.
9. Knowledge of investigative procedures and fact-finding techniques.
10. Ability to negotiate and problem solve to effectively resolve complaints and influence the actions of agencies.
11. Ability to conduct investigations of low complexity and prepare basic communications and reports.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Regular sitting, standing, walking, reaching, or kneeling. This job requires that stairs be traversed and weight be lifted or force exerted up to 20 lbs. occasionally.
2. This job requires close, distance, color, depth, and peripheral vision.
3. The noise level of the work environment is low to moderate noise levels regularly.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

Graduate from an accredited four-year college or university, or three years of work experience with similar or demonstrated knowledge and skills.