

141—2.2 (2C) Complaints.

2.2(1) *Persons who may contact office.* Any person may contact the ombudsman concerning an administrative action by an agency. If a person contacts the ombudsman on behalf of another person whose specific right or interest is directly affected by an administrative action, the ombudsman may request that the affected person contact the ombudsman as the complainant or obtain the consent of the affected person before considering the complaint.

2.2(2) *Methods of contact.* The ombudsman may be contacted at the office of ombudsman or at the site of an agency or other location specified by the ombudsman. No appointment is needed for the initial office visit. Contact may be made by mail, e-mail, telephone, facsimile (fax), office visit, or any other method deemed acceptable by the ombudsman, except as provided in subrule 2.2(3). Contact may also be made indirectly by the receipt of a person's correspondence which is referred or forwarded to the office of the ombudsman.

2.2(3) *Written complaints.* The ombudsman may require complaints to be submitted in writing or on a form prescribed by the ombudsman.

2.2(4) *Assistance by the ombudsman.* If a person is incapable of submitting a written complaint or has difficulty communicating with the ombudsman because of a disability or language barrier, the ombudsman shall assist that person in completing the complaint or make accommodations to facilitate communication with that person.

2.2(5) *Self-initiated complaints.* An investigation into an agency's administrative action may be initiated on the ombudsman's own motion, if the ombudsman determines it is an appropriate subject for investigation.

2.2(6) *Anonymous complaints.* The ombudsman may accept a complaint from an anonymous person. However, if the ombudsman at any time determines the complainant's identity is needed to pursue an investigation of the complaint, the ombudsman may request that the complainant's identity be disclosed. If the identity of the complainant is not disclosed as requested, the ombudsman may decline to pursue investigation of the complaint.

2.2(7) *Information requests.* If a person who contacts the ombudsman requests information, the ombudsman may provide such information, if it relates to state and local government, or refer the person to another agency or to any other appropriate entity or source for the information.

2.2(8) *No fee or charge.* The ombudsman shall not assess any monetary or other charge against any person who contacts the office of ombudsman for assistance.

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