**The Ombuds Team at CLIENT**

An ombuds has been described as “a person who has an ear to the people” who provides confidential, independent, impartial, and informal support to employees. CLIENT introduced the ombuds service in DATE to help employees effectively manage, raise, and resolve concerns that impact their ability to do their best work at CLIENT.

While not a replacement for existing resources at CLIENT, like speaking with HR or your manager, we're here if you need us. We also work as “change agents” to identify and bring anonymized trends to senior management so they can modify policies or procedures that might improve the workplace.

Here are some questions (and answers) about CLIENT’s ombuds function that we hope you find helpful.

All the best!

The CLIENT Ombuds Team – NAME and NAME
[www.mwi.org/INITALS-ombuds](http://www.mwi.org/INITALS-ombuds)

*What is an ombuds, and what do they do?*

An ombuds (or ombudsperson) identifies and helps resolve employee concerns. Ombuds offer confidential, impartial, and independent assistance including listening to your concerns, brainstorming solutions, and making referrals within CLIENT.

If you happen to reach out to one of CLIENT’s ombuds, they will begin by letting you know that the conversation will be confidential and your identity will not be shared with anyone. You, the visitor, will determine what happens at the end of the conversation.

The ombuds will start by listening to your concerns and goals. With your input and permission, the ombuds can support you in a variety of ways as you seek to achieve your goals:

* Help you prepare for an upcoming conversation or meeting
* Provide insight into a complicated situation or a clearer perspective on a concern
* Brainstorm options and solutions
* Refer employees to other appropriate CLIENT resources like HR or another resource
* Raise concerns anonymously to relevant leadership (with permission of the visitor)

*What won’t the ombuds do?*

While the ombuds team provides a range of support, the services provided by the ombuds do not replace other roles or procedures at CLIENT. Ombuds cannot do the following:

* Provide legal advice or psychological counseling
* Officially investigate concerns
* Render judgments or decisions
* Provide formal notice to CLIENT
* Participate in a formal meeting on an employee’s behalf
* Directly enact policies or changes in response to employees’ concerns

*What can I expect when I contact a member of the CLIENT Ombuds Team?*

When you call or set up a meeting with an ombuds, you are simply starting a conversation. The beginning of your conversation might go something like this:

*Thanks for reaching out. Our conversation might involve sensitive information or things you might not want me share, so I want you to know that I plan to keep our conversation confidential unless you tell me otherwise. The only reason I would break this confidentiality is if you tell me that you might hurt yourself or someone else.*

*I want to emphasize that you are in control here. As we talk, I am going to ask what you want me to do (if anything) in response to your concerns. I won’t take any additional steps without your permission.*

*If you don’t have any questions about my role in our conversation, I’d like to hear more about why you wanted to speak.*

The ombuds will give you the space to name your concern and how you would like to see it resolved. From there, they will help you brainstorm options and identify how you want to move forward.

If you feel that your conversation provided necessary clarity and support, you are free to tell the ombuds that you won’t need their assistance moving forward. They’ll keep your identity and information in confidence. You can keep your matter open with the ombuds as long as their services are helpful to you.

*What type of issues can the ombuds help with?*

The ombuds are available to talk about any issue an employee is experiencing in the workplace. This could be with a colleague or a boss, with an employee or a whole team, it could also be concerns about an organization-wide initiative, a big departmental change, or a new policy. What differs is how the ombuds can help. Sometimes the ombuds' assistance will be limited to helping you gain insight or decide how you want to move forward with a concern. Sometimes the ombuds will refer to a more appropriate resource that can better help you meet your needs. The ombuds is an informal and independent function, and they can help you clarify your goals and plan to manage whatever issues you have.

*Who are CLIENT’s ombuds, and how do I contact them?*

CLIENT has NUMBER ombuds available for employees:  NAMES. Each has extensive experience working with employees to help them productively resolve disputes and find solutions to their issues. You can learn more about each ombuds and find their contact information here:  [www.mwi.org/ABBRV-CLIENT-ombuds](http://www.mwi.org/ABBRV-CLIENT-ombuds)

*Where can I learn more about the ombuds function?*

The Ombuds Team webpage and a list of FAQs about the ombuds resource can be found here: [www.mwi.org/ABBRV-CLIENT-ombuds-faqs](http://www.mwi.org/ABBRV-CLIENT-ombuds-faqs)

You’re welcome to reach out to a member of CLIENT’s Ombuds Team, even if it’s just to say hi!