

Ombudsman Program Advisory Committee (OPAC)

In carrying out the management of the Ombudsman Program, a command Ombudsman may request the establishment of an Ombudsman Program Advisory Committee (OPAC), as it deems desirable and necessary to address identified family readiness issues throughout local commands within their area of responsibility (AOR). The committee will function as a network to address specific family readiness issues, support Ombudsman training, and provide outreach to newly appointed Ombudsman. In addition, the committee will serve to promote the Ombudsman program throughout the Coast Guard. The command Ombudsman taking the leadership position for the advisory committee shall obtain written approval by their local command and forward approval to the Ombudsman program supervisor at the Integrated Support Command (ISC) and Headquarters Support Command (HSC). The establishment of such advisory committee must be in direct support of Ombudsman program and family readiness issues.

1. Sponsorship: commanding officers are encouraged to sponsor Ombudsman program advisory committees to address networking of the Ombudsman program and to address specific family readiness issues affecting the command. A Command Ombudsman will present the request to establish an OPAC for the sponsoring commanding officers' review and approval. The commanding officer will sign the request to sponsor the committee and forward a copy to the serving ISC or HSC Ombudsman coordinator with the quarterly report.
2. Membership: membership is open to all appointed command Ombudsmen within the area of responsibility. The committee will be composed Ombudsmen throughout the local area of responsibility with extended invitation for participation to other team Coast Guard members, for example, active duty, reserve, auxiliary, retirees and civilians in support of family readiness including total Coast Guard representation, for example, sector, district, ISC, HSC or any established Coast Guard command with an appointed Ombudsman or considering the appointment of an Ombudsman. Attendees of the advisory committee not appointed as a command Ombudsman are considered on an extended invitation to the committee.
3. Funding: reimbursement of expenses in the performance of Ombudsman duties relating to the committee, to the extent authorized by law, will be incurred by the local command the ombudsman is representing. Committee attendees shall have a current appointment letter as a command Ombudsman; have written approval from their appointing commanding officer for meeting attendance and have written approval for reimbursable expenses relating to each committee meeting attended. Attendees not appointed as command Ombudsman and without direct approval of their commanding officer are considered guest by extended invitation and are not authorized reimbursement for Ombudsman committee related expenses under the Ombudsman program. Military or civilian personnel providing support that result in travel or other authorized reimbursements shall seek approval from their command. If additional funding assistance is needed, coordinate these funding efforts through the ISC or HSC Ombudsman supervisor. The supervisor shall offer guidance in

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finding the responsible command for these funding requests however, is not responsible to provide funding and does not imply the approval of funding will be granted. The sponsoring command of the advisory committee shall not be responsible for funding travel or other authorized reimbursable expenses of the committee members. Individual commands shall be responsible to fund their appointed command Ombudsman for attendance.

4. Responsibilities OPAC:

- a. Identify and review submitted issues and make recommendations for the priority in addressing these issues to the commanding officer;
- b. Provide recommendations to improve Ombudsman support and standardization of the program within their command, for example, the structure of the Ombudsman program at the local command;
- c. Provide recommendations and support for program training efforts throughout their local area of responsibility;
- d. Provide outreach services to newly appointed Ombudsman, locating all Ombudsmen within the assigned area of responsibility and providing contact information for the committee;
- e. Assist in the development of the committee meeting report for submission to the sponsoring commanding officer for approval of next meeting, approval of issues to be addressed and for continued sponsorship of the advisory committee;

5. Responsibilities OPAC lead ombudsman:

- a. Advise and coordinate with their local commands on the sponsorship of the advisory committee including committee meetings and dates;
- b. Market the development of the advisory committee and explain the purpose and of the committee;
- c. Coordinate the request to establish advisory committee and submit to the commanding officer. Forward approved request to the Ombudsman program supervisor for approval at the ISC;
- d. Review make recommendations to the sponsoring commanding officer for identified command related family issues to be addressed by the committee;
- e. Coordinate training opportunities and agenda issues; coordinate with the integrated support command ombudsman coordinator on all training efforts related to the committee;

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- f. Provide advice on networking opportunities for all Ombudsmen in the AOR. Assist in establishing communication between members and encourage networking to all ombudsmen;
 - g. Promote the Ombudsman program and other Work-Life programs;
 - h. Promote and support issues identified by local command;
 - i. Ensure committee meetings are recorded in writing, including date, location of meeting with address, committee members present which command they are representing, identified issues addressed at the meeting, recommended resolution, recommended action plan for the resolution, printed name and signature of lead ombudsman and signature block of the sponsoring commanding officer;
 - j. Ensure committee meeting minutes are forwarded, as requested, to the intergrated support command ombudsman program supervisor;
6. Responsibilities sponsoring commanding commanders:
- a. Sign approval for the development of OPAC. If a designee will serve in the place of the commanding officer document in writing;
 - b. Review submitted family related issues to be addressed. Determine priorities for the local command, which issues would the commanding officer address first;
 - c. Request an advance copy of the meeting agenda for approval.
 - d. Request a copy of committee meeting minutes, grant approval or disapproval of meeting report, upon approval forward to the ombudsman program supervisor;
 - f. Consult with the lead command Ombudsman serving as the chairperson when approved agenda is not followed;
 - g. Assist and approve use of meeting rooms and other support in regards to the committee meeting;
 - h. Approve assistance of lodging support and other cost effective methods in reducing the cost of program related expenses;
 - i. Obtain advance budget request for future committee activities and ensure budgeting information is available for reporting to the ombudsman program supervisor;
 - j. Refer to the intergrated support command ombudsman program supervisor for assistance in the development and support of the program and;

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- k. Disapprove the establishment of the ombudsman advisory committee or order the termination of services by the advisory committee, after consultation with the lead ombudsman when the committee does not adhere to the approved agenda actions.

Ombudsman Advisory Committee Establishment Procedures

1. Develop a proposed name of the Ombudsman Advisory Committee.
2. Provide the name, address and contact numbers for the appointed command Ombudsman volunteering to be the lead for the committee, include name, Ombudsman contact number, mailing address, e-mail.
3. Collect the name and addresses of other potential committee members with an expressed interest in starting an Ombudsman program advisory committee for this area; include name, Ombudsman contact number, mailing address, e-mail.
4. List identified family related issues the committee will address? Limit issues to three, and list by priority of which issues should be addressed first.
5. If proposed solutions to any of the issues have been identified list the proposed solution. This is not required if no proposed solution has been discussed at this point.
6. Provide the name, address and contact number of the servicing Intergrated Support Command (ISC) or Headquarters Support Command Ombudsman (HSC) coordinator.
7. Schedule an appointment with the commanding officer to discuss goals of the committee, compile the commanding officer's list of family issues, if any, and explain a written request for the establishment of an Ombudsman advisory committee will be forwarded to the commanding officer.
8. Request written approval from the sponsoring commanding officer with each area address in these procedures for the establishment of the Ombudsman advisory committee. Obtain written approve from the commanding officer.
9. Request approval from the intergrated support command. After approval by the commanding officer a copy of the written approval shall be forwarded to the ISC or HSC ombudsman program supervisor for approval. The ISC or HSC ombudsman program supervisor will review the request and coordinate local commands establishment of Ombudsman advisory committees to be must cost effective for the Coast Guard.
10. Submit a copy of the approval for establishment of the Ombudsman advisory committee with quarterly reporting.