

OmbudsPEI releases first annual report since creation of office

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I. – OmbudsPEI has tabled its first annual report, which highlights the creation, growth, work and statistics of the office’s first 14 months of operation.

On Nov. 29, the report was tabled during the fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly. The report includes a breakdown of the number of cases received and investigated by OmbudsPEI, as well as detailed information about how the office operates and summaries of some of our past cases. Ombudsperson Sandy Hermiston wrote in her message “In this last year, I have often reminded our team that we are building this plane while we are flying it – which is no small feat.”.

As detailed in the report, during its first 14 months, OmbudsPEI fielded 151 contacts made up of 64 complaints, 60 inquiries and 27 referrals to other agencies. The office closed 44 complaints. The report features the first public investigation report, issued earlier this year: “*Committing to Care: Improving the Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder in the Provincial Correctional System*” ([Cases – Reports – OmbudsPEI](#)).

Ombudsperson Sandy Hermiston also serves as PEI’s Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner. The office received six inquiries regarding whistleblowing, none of which resulted in a formal disclosure under the *Public Interest Disclosure and Whistleblower Protection Act*.

“I am proud of the accomplishments detailed in this report” says Ms. Hermiston, “not only were we able to resolve Islanders’ individual complaints, we also managed to facilitate systemic change with our opioid replacement therapy investigation. I want to thank Deputy Ombudsperson Matthew Chapman, Office Manager Lauren McKearney and Investigator Alex Dalton for their excellent work during a challenging year of growth.”

A copy of the report is available to the public on our website [OmbudsPEI Annual Report 2022-23 - 24 Pages.indd](#).

Media Contact

Cody McEachern

Investigator/Communications Officer – OmbudsPEI

cmceachern@ombudspei.ca

902-218-1967

About OmbudsPEI

As an independent office of the Legislature, OmbudsPEI investigates complaints of unfair treatment by government agencies and provides general oversight of government's administrative processes under the *Ombudsperson Act*. The Ombudsperson has a broad mandate to investigate complaints about unfair treatment, process or decisions by public sector agencies such as government ministries, agencies boards and commissions, municipalities and Health PEI.

OmbudsPEI promotes fairness, transparency and accountability in the public sector to enhance good governance and public confidence in government. Our work improves public services for all Islanders.

If any Islander believes they have experienced an unfairness in their interactions with a provincial agency, they can contact OmbudsPEI to explore options for making a complaint. Our services are free and confidential.

Sandy Hermiston also serves as PEI's Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner pursuant to her appointment under the *Public Interest Disclosure and Whistleblower Protection Act*. Public servants can report wrongdoing by making a protected disclosure or complaint about a reprisal to the office. For more information about OmbudsPEI, visit [Whistleblowing – OmbudsPEI](#).