



## OmbudsPEI works with PEI Human Rights Commission to address an almost four-year old delay in resolving Islander's discrimination claim.

CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI – An Islander's near four-year wait for a resolution has ended following a complaint and inquiry into the PEI Human Rights Commission.

OmbudsPEI received a complaint from a person alleging they were dealing with extended delays and a lack of communication relating to their discrimination claim with PEIHRC. The person alleged they had made the claim almost four years ago and were left without a resolution.

When our office contacted PEIHRC regarding the complaint, the commission explained the delay was created by staffing challenges and a backlog of claims. PEIHRC also explained they recently re-evaluated the complainant's claim, and were hoping it would lead to a quick resolution.

Shortly after OmbudsPEI reached out, PEIHRC indicated that the claim had been settled, and the commission would be updating their processes to prevent similar delays in the future. PEIHRC also indicated they had apologized to the complainant for the delay.

After hearing of the settlement, the complainant offered their thanks to OmbudsPEI for the assistance in the matter.

"There is no doubt in my mind that I would still be entertaining unanswered emails without your help," the complainant said.

While some authorities might feel uneasy when engaging with OmbudsPEI regarding complaints made about them, Sandy Hermiston, Ombudsperson for PEI, says the experience often results in a resolution that creates better experiences for the authorities and the Islanders they serve.

"Our aim when reaching out to an agency or authority is always to work collaboratively with them to resolve these complaints," said Hermiston.

“During that collaboration, if there is a chance to in helping agencies or authorities identify the cause of delays, backlogs or inefficient processes, we’re always willing to lend a helping hand.”

For more on this complaint, a summary titled ‘Resolving Delays’ can be found online at <https://ombudspei.ca/cases-and-reports/>.

Media Contact

Cody McEachern

Investigator/Communications Officer – OmbudsPEI

[cmceachern@ombudspei.ca](mailto: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 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 [ombudspei.ca](https://ombudspei.ca).