

Ombudsman Ontario – Education

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OVERVIEW

The Ombudsman oversees all aspects of public education in Ontario, from daycare and early childhood education, through the primary and secondary school systems (including school boards and school authorities) to post-secondary education and training (including colleges and universities, and the Ontario Student Assistance Program - OSAP).

School boards account for the largest volume of complaints in this area, followed by universities and colleges. As with all complaints we receive, most are resolved informally – at the local or frontline level wherever possible. We also work with school boards, universities and other bodies to assist them in improving internal complaint processes and adopt best practices – including establishing their own ombudsman offices.

The most common topics of complaint at the school board level are special education, discipline and transportation. At the post-secondary level, the most common topics of complaint are academic decisions, fees and admissions.

We can

- Help with unresolved complaints or investigate systemic issues regarding such organizations as:
 - Ministry of Education
 - Ministry of Colleges and Universities
 - Public school boards and school authorities
 - Publicly funded universities
 - Colleges of applied arts and technology

See our [full list of bodies we oversee](#).

We cannot

- Overturn decisions of elected officials or direct them on public policy
- Take complaints about:
 - Private schools or universities
 - Teachers or other self-regulated professions
 - Labour issues

See our list of [Common Referrals](#).

Which type of complaint do you wish to file? Click below for the appropriate complaint form.

- **[General](#)**: Regarding an Ontario government or public sector body (including municipalities, universities and school boards)
- **[Children and Youth](#)**: Regarding children and youth in care, or child protection agencies
- **[Children and Youth](#)**: Notification of death or serious bodily harm;
- **[French Language Services](#)**: Regarding French language services

If you have questions, our staff can help: [Contact us](#).

WHERE TO COMPLAIN IF:

- Your issue is outside of the Ombudsman's jurisdiction
- You have not yet exhausted other avenues of complaint

The Ombudsman oversees more than 1,000 public sector bodies in Ontario, and is an office of last resort. We can only deal with complaints about bodies that are within our jurisdiction, after existing complaint mechanisms have been tried.

Are you complaining about a body that is within the Ombudsman's jurisdiction? Check to see if it is on our "[Who We Oversee](#)" list.

The organizations listed on this page – by topic – might be able to help you before you come to the Ombudsman, or if your complaint is about something we don't oversee, such as private sector or federal government bodies. We regularly refer people to these organizations.

We also have a list of other [ombudsman and watchdog offices](#).

If you are still not sure where to turn, [contact us](#) and our staff will do their best to help.