

POLICE OMBUDSMAN

Nature of Work

The Office of the Police Ombudsman (OPO) will provide a professional presence to help ensure a quality investigation in real time, and visible, independent oversight to reassure the public. The OPO may recommend policies and procedures for the review and/or audit of the complaint resolution process, and review and recommend changes in departmental policies to improve the quality of police investigations and practices.

Supervision

Works independently with direction established as broad guidelines by City of Spokane Ordinance C 34302, and reports for administrative and executive functions directly to the Mayor or the Mayor's designee.

Examples of Work

Receives complaints from any complaining party, including without limitation citizens or employees of the Police department.

Makes recommendations, when appropriate, for mediation rather than investigation, of complaints. Acts as mediator in appropriate circumstances.

Attends administrative interviews on complaints of a serious matter and complaints originating at the OPO.

Reviews completed investigation files to determine whether the investigation was thorough and objective. If determines that further investigation was needed works first through assigned investigator, then the Police Chief, and finally the Mayor to resolve issues.

Reviews all complaint and investigative files for audit purposes. Prepares reviews and reports of Spokane Police department investigations into and handling of complaints of retaliation by SPD employees.

Recommends policies and procedures for the review and/or audit of the complaint resolution process.

Reviews and recommends changes in departmental policies to improve the quality of police investigations and practices.

Requirements of Work

Ability to express information to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information.

Ability to identify problems, determine accuracy and relevance of information, and to use sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives and to make recommendations.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with public officials, co-workers, representatives of public and private agencies and the general public.

Knowledge of community resources sufficient to be able to use them appropriately as needed.

Demonstrated skill in communicating with people of diverse backgrounds and interests in sometimes difficult and stressful circumstances.

Demonstrated skill in utilizing the principles and practices of effective and persuasive communication to elicit information, negotiate problem resolution, influence and solicit cooperation, and seek and obtain support for various programs or policies.

Minimum Education and Experience

College graduate

Legal, investigative, or prosecutorial experience, familiarity with police procedures; demonstrated ability to work with confidential information and the ability to review investigations to ensure they are thorough and unbiased.

Successful completion of criminal background investigation consistent with the requirements to become employed as a Spokane Police Officer.

Ability to build working relationships with and communicate effectively with diverse groups.

Record of community involvement.

Appointment and Removal of Ombudsman

The Ombudsman shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council for a term of three (3) years, subject to reappointment for additional three (3) year terms.

The Ombudsman may not be removed from office except for misconduct, inefficiency, incompetence, inability or failure to perform the duties of the office or negligence in the performance of such duties. In such cases that warrant removal from office, said removal shall be accomplished only by a resolution adopted in public hearing by either the majority of the full City Council upon recommendation of the Mayor or by a vote of no less than five (5) members of the full City Council; nothing contained herein shall prevent the Council from eliminating the Office of the Police Ombudsman by the normal ordinance process which action shall not be considered a removal for cause but simply a change in policy by the City.