

OMBUDSPERSON PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Definition

Under general direction, to coordinate, plan, organize and supervise the activities of the Ombudsperson Program.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This position is located in the Office of the County Executive. The Ombudsperson Program Coordinator is distinguished from the Dispute Resolution Program Coordinator in that the Dispute Resolution Program Coordinator assists in resolving problems among different groups throughout the County. The Ombudsperson Program Coordinator provides a neutral review of issues and concerns raised by families and children served by the Social Services Agency's (SSA's) Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS). The Ombudsperson Program Coordinator presents its findings to SSA management.

Typical Tasks

- Plans, organizes, and supervises activities of the Ombudsperson Program serving SSA;
- Represents the Program and develops and maintains liaison with community groups, clients and government entities;
- Recruits, hires, supervises and evaluates contractors as necessary;
- Provides technical resources to contractors for successful performance of their deliverables;
- Conducts neutral and independent fact finding inquiries and analysis of issues in order to assist families, individuals and management on concerns relating to clients' interactions with DFCS;
- Considers interest of all parties in seeking resolution of concerns and provides recommendations to SSA management;
- Prepares and presents written and oral reports, correspondence and Board of Supervisors and Board Committee transmittals;
- Educates complainants regarding the child dependency system as appropriate;
- Develops outreach materials and delivers oral and written presentations to interested parties;
- Answers routine questions on child welfare regulations for clients based on current welfare laws and regulations;
- Monitors and analyzes articles and legislation pertaining to the area of child welfare laws and regulations and keeps apprised of new trends and developments related to child welfare issues and services;
- Assists complainants in identifying additional resources to address their concerns;
- Prepares and maintains statistical summaries of cases resolved as required by DFCS;

- Gathers and analyzes information to identify any systemic issues within DFCS; provides findings of such studies to SSA management;
- May make recommendations to ensure adherence to best practices;
- Participates as a member of the DFCS Best Practices Committee and creates best practices recommendations to management;
- May recruit, hire, evaluate and supervise subordinate staff;
- Trains staff on changes in child and juvenile welfare laws and DFCS best practices;
- Oversees and coordinates efforts to manage Program budget, funding and resources;
- Formulates strategies and develops Ombudsperson Program priorities in keeping with available resources;
- May perform other duties as required.

Employment Standards

Sufficient education, training and experience to demonstrate the attainment of the knowledges and abilities listed below:

Possession of a valid California driver's license is required at the time of appointment and ability to qualify for and maintain an acceptable driving record, which will qualify for a County's Driver's Permit.

Experience Note: Possession and application of the required knowledge and abilities is typically attained through education and experience equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree in Arts or Sciences and two (2) years experience as a mediator of community/legal conflicts and disputes. Coursework in behavioral science, social work, mediation, negotiation, and/or diplomacy is desirable.

Knowledge of:

- Principles of employee supervision, training, development and discipline;
- Diversity issues as they impact the local community;
- Training and instructional methods and techniques;
- California Welfare & Institutions, and Evidence Codes;
- Nature of conflicts, conflict cycles, and methods for resolution;
- Professional practices of neutrality, including, but not limited to conflict resolutions, mediation, active listening and shuttle diplomacy;
- Methods of administrative problem solving and policies and procedures, including fiscal management and program development and evaluation;
- Analytical and communication techniques required for gathering, evaluating, and transmitting information;
- Requests for Proposal process, contract development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of contract administration;

- General principles and applications of modern information systems;
- Brown Act and quorum requirements for public meetings.

Ability to:

- Interpret and apply provisions of Federal, State and Local laws and regulations relating to child/juvenile welfare issues and services;
- Reason deductively and ask appropriate follow-up questions in order to understand client complaints;
- Provide guidance and supervision for contractors and/or support staff;
- Understand different cultural styles and approaches to resolution and conflict;
- Establish cooperative and effective relationships with representatives of Federal, State, and local agencies, other County agencies/departments, community resources, the general public and others contacted in the course of work;
- Assist individuals/groups in determining which conflict resolution method is appropriate to a specific situation;
- Develop and recommend effective courses of action.

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