



COALITION OF FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date and Time: March 10, 2021, 1:30-3:00 pm (ET)

Location: WebEx

Agenda:

1. Social Media Committee Update
2. Ombuds Day Update
3. IOA Annual Conference
4. Next OSO Meeting
5. Announcements
6. General Questions
7. Pros and Cons of Publishing an Annual Report Discussion
8. Dealing with Persistent Inquirers Discussion
9. Security of Electronic Records Discussion

Highlights:

1. Social Media Committee Update

- a. Committee Chair Erica Katherine reports that a survey will be coming soon
- b. Goal will be to gain feedback from the COFO membership about how they use social media and any concerns

2. Ombuds Day Update

- a. Ken Skodacek will be reaching out to volunteers
- b. This will be the 4th Ombuds Day
- c. Plan includes holding webinars and issuing proclamations
- d. Will reach out to organizations, university leadership, policymakers, and those considering creating Ombuds programs

3. IOA Annual Conference

- a. Katie Manderson is Conference Co-Chair
- b. Virtual platform sent for conference 3/22-24, 2021
- c. Schedule includes networking and learning circles

4. OSO Meeting

- a. Next meeting of Ombuds Supporting Ombuds (OSO) will be 3/31/2021, 2-3 pm EST
- b. Moving back a week to accommodate those attending IOA Conference

5. Announcements

- a. None

6. General Questions

- a. None

7. Pros and Cons of Publishing an Annual Report Discussion

- a. Do you publish an annual report? Why or why not? If so, has it worked? Is it worth the effort you put into it?
- b. Mollie Berg led discussion
- c. One program had a robust annual report for a few years with aggregated data, case examples, and topics of interest and then shifted to a quarterly "newsletter"
- d. Annual reports can be valuable tools to communicate value of Ombuds
- e. Burden in developing report
- f. Reporting is valuable as long as you use it
- g. It's a static, historic document
- h. Beyond a document, it can be a launching pad for robust conversations
- i. It's a place to identify systemic issues, patterns, and/or trends
- j. Some have annual reporting required by Congress
- k. Report can be much work, at times surpassing 100 pages
- l. Some considered white pages and summaries instead of annual reporting
- m. Major recommendations are often included
- n. Good to let public know what external Ombuds are seeing
- o. Can communicate with stakeholders
- p. Some are shifting to quarterly newsletters and blogs
- q. Reports hold Ombuds accountable
- r. Some refer to them all the time
- s. Reports can serve to highlight issues for new leadership
- t. Agency leaders can use reports
- u. Reports can serve as outreach tool
- v. Some develop mid-year one-pagers to give a snapshot
- w. For externals, annual reports may be best practice to promote program
- x. For internals, concerns exist about creating disincentive to cooperate with Ombuds if sensitive matters between teams disclosed, so some keep systemic information private
- y. Confidentiality issues raised
- z. Showcasing success stories can be valuable; challenge to protect identifying information while maintaining connection to an interesting story
- aa. Reports can serve as vehicles to give tools and resources to the public
- bb. Reports help Ombuds reflect on who we are and how we engage

- cc. Small offices need to assess if trade-offs are worth it; are they missing out on work or outreach with time commitment to reporting?
- dd. Reports can set Ombuds offices apart from the rest of the organization visually
- ee. Though annual reports can show effectiveness, it is not the only way to showcase effectiveness
- ff. Even if not published, could annual report be FOIA'd?
- gg. Reports can memorialize work and show continuity of what Ombuds accomplish and value of Ombuds over time

8. Dealing with Persistent Inquirers Discussion

- a. Tabled

9. Security of Electronic Records Discussion

- a. Tabled

Attendance 3/10/2021

Last	First	Agency	Call-In
Adams	Joanne	USDA	1
Anderson	Jeff	DOE	1
Arbid	Michelle	FEMA	1
Balick	Howard	FDA	1
Berg	Mollie	DOD / National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA)	1
Bookstein	Monique	FBI	1
Cameron	Bob	CFPB	1
Coleman	Jean	SBA	1
Davenport Dayes	Nathelia (Nicky)	FEMA	1
Derrick	Danielle	FINRA	1
Feliciano	Ramon	DOD / DIA	1
Footman	Aaron	USPTO	1
Foster	Cindy	FINRA	1
Fox	Angela	FDA	1
Frazier	Veronica	DOD / DIA	1
Garmon	Felisa	CFPB	1
Gordon	Laurel	DOJ / U. S. Marshals Service (USMS)	1
Green	Veronica	State OIG	1

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Last	First	Agency	Call-In
Greene	Sam		1
Hartman	Jessie	NARA/ Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)	1
Heffernan	Claire	TSA	1
Heimlich	Elizabeth	FINRA	1
Hopkins	Emily	NGA	1
Hurley	Nathan	FDA / Center for Tobacco Products	1
Jarrett	Syreeta	DIA	1
Kamenshine	Wendy	CFPB	1
Katherine	Erica	FDA	1
Kinnavy	Noreen	Broadcasting Board of Governors	1
Kith	Sarah	Library of Congress	1
Lawrence	Steve	DHS Office of Intelligence & Analysis	1
Levine	Lisa	DOJ / Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR)	1
Lewis	Mark D.	FDA	1
Magnus	Vicki	Library of Congress	1
Mahony	Jennifer	NIH	1
Malone	Marcus	DOJ / USMS	1
Manderson	Katie	VA	1
Marcotte	Dan	FDIC	1
Mateen	Fatimah	DHS / USCIS	1
McGuire	Carrie	NARA / OGIS	1
Merrix	Celeste	DHS / FLETC	1
Mesbahi	Mohammad	IRS	1
Michael	David	NIH	1
Miller	Carla	DOJ / ATF	1
Milner	Heather	CFPB	1
Morey	Chauncenette	FBI	1
Patel	Bina	USPTO	1
Patno	Arielle	FDA / Center for Tobacco Products	1
Piziali	Jamie	EPA	1
Porch	Susanne	Commerce / National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)	1
Raymond	Xaivian	NASA	1
Reed	Janay	DOD / DIA	1
Reilly	Kevin	NASA	1
Robinson	Belinda	FBI	1

UNCLASSIFIED

Last	First	Agency	Call-In
Rojas	Nick	DOD / DIA	1
Rowe	Mary	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	1
Semo	Alina	NARA	1
Simmons	Wendy	TSA	1
Simpson	Melissa	HHS	1
Skodacek	Ken	FDA	1
Sotoudeh	Paul	USPTO	1
Stergio	Marcus	Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs / DOL	1
Sung	James	DHS	1
Swann	Benita	FDIC	1
Trujillo	Sarah	USDA	1
Vermillion	Chris	TSA	1
Villafane	Jacqueline	American Red Cross	1
Voloshin	Victor	NIH	1
Weber	Guy	DOD / NGA	1
Wolfe	Lexi	DOE	1
		Total	69