



Yukon
Ombudsman

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NEWS RELEASE
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Yukon Ombudsman becomes member of international Ombud organization

WHITEHORSE – The Office of the Yukon Ombudsman has been approved for membership in the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI).

The Yukon office's application was approved at the IOI's recent annual general meeting, held earlier this month in Vienna, Austria. The IOI was established in 1978 and is the only global organization set up to support the cooperation of more than 200 independent Ombudsman institutions from more than 100 countries worldwide. Its focus is on good governance and capacity building, including support for its members through training, research and regional subsidies for projects.

"Membership in an international organization such as the IOI lends additional credibility to the work of our office," said Yukon Ombudsman Jason Pedlar. "It also provides more opportunities for development of our staff, including training, conferences, exchange of expertise and shared learning. This is a benefit for all Yukoners, as we continue our ongoing work of investigating complaints from Yukoners of unfairness in the delivery of public services."

The IOI also led important work which contributed to the adoption by the United Nations of the Venice Principles and the resolution on the role of Ombudsman and mediator institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights, good governance and the rule of law.

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The 25 Venice Principles are the first international independent set of standards for the protection and promotion of the Ombudsman institution. They are equivalent to the Paris Principles, which set standards against which national human rights institutions are judged.

Pedlar will use the Venice Principles in the near future, when he plans to make recommendations to the Yukon Legislative Assembly about necessary updates to the *Ombudsman Act*.

Other members of the IOI in North America include most provincial and territorial Ombuds offices in Canada, as well as Ombudsman for major cities such as Toronto, Montreal and Seattle, and other similar organizations such as the Veteran Ombudsman Canada and Correctional Investigator of Canada. Members outside of North America include offices in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia and Pacific, and the Caribbean and Latin America. For more information on the IOI, see the organization's website at <https://www.theioi.org/>.

The Yukon Ombudsman looks into complaints from citizens who feel they have been treated unfairly in the delivery of services by the Yukon government and other public authorities. These complaints may be about such things as delays in receiving a government decision, not being given the opportunity to provide input to a government decision, barriers to accessing a service, and other issues. Public authorities subject to the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman include Yukon government departments, schools, Yukon University, hospitals, public corporations and more. Yukoners are encouraged to become familiar with the role of the Yukon Ombudsman and to make use of the office's services as needed. Staff are available to answer any questions that Yukoners may have about their work.

The Ombudsman is an independent officer of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. In the Yukon, the Ombudsman also serves as the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner for the territory.

For more information, please go to www.yukonombudsman.ca.

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