

GUIDELINES FOR THE NEW OMBUDSMAN ITEMS COMMAND LEADERSHIP SHOULD REVIEW

As part of orientation, it is the commanding officer's responsibility to make sure that she or he explains expectations to the ombudsman.

Clarify the following significant items.

- How often the ombudsman will meet with the commanding officer/executive officer/command master chief, etc.
- The ombudsman's point of contact at the command.
- Confidentiality and reportables. Handling of information protected by the Privacy Act. Reportables including life-threatening situations and cases of child or domestic abuse. Additional issues the command wants the ombudsman to share such as births, deaths, uncontrolled rumors, etc.
- Information about the Command Support Team and how everyone will work together. The role of CO/XO/CMC spouses.
- Record keeping. The type of written records, monthly report, etc.
- Command roster. How updates will be provided.
- Sailor's parents/significant others. The command's policy on ombudsman contact and communication.
- Conflict of interest. Ombudsman may not use her/his position for personal gain. For example, if the ombudsman sells Avon, she may not advertise or sell to command members.
- Supplies. How the ombudsman will get office supplies, updated rosters, mailing labels, supplies for newsletters, dedicated phone line, Internet service, answering machine, calling cards, etc.
- Reimbursement procedures for approved and budgeted expenses.
- Careline, phone tree/email and other communication tools.
- Correspondence. How to obtain command approval on all official correspondence before printing, distributing, or mailing.
- Newsletter. How and where the newsletter will be printed, copied, and distributed. Command policy regarding the content of the newsletter, including who may submit articles and who approves the newsletter before it is sent out.

- Disasters – ombudsman’s role in an emergency or disaster situation.
- How the ombudsman will deal with the media.
- How the ombudsman will work with the Navy Fleet & Family Support Programs.
- How the ombudsman will work with co-ombudsmen.

Review what ombudsmen should not do.

- Transport people in their privately-owned vehicle.
- Provide childcare.
- Lend money.
- Allow people to stay with them in their home.
- Hold an office or leadership position in the Family Readiness Group (FRG).
- Do for others what they must learn to do for themselves.

If a deploying command, clarify the following:

- How the ombudsman should communicate with the command during deployment.
- How the command may be reached through deployment.
- During deployment, when a problem warrants a direct call to the commanding officer.
- Local Point of Contact (POC) while the command is deployed.
- Who determines whether a call is an emergency – the ombudsman, the command’s local POC, or another POC?
- How the ombudsman and the command’s local POC will coordinate and keep each other informed.