



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
2000 NAVY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

OPNAVINST 1750.1H  
N171  
11 Dec 2023

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1750.1H

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: NAVY FAMILY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

Ref: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990  
(b) OPNAVINST 3120.32D  
(c) Ombudsman Program Commander's Guide  
(d) Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual  
(e) SECNAVINST 1754.1B  
(f) OPNAVINST 5380.1D  
(g) SECNAVINST 5211.5F  
(h) COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1754.2  
(i) Title 5. U.S.C.  
(j) OPNAVINST 1754.1B  
(k) OPNAVINST 1754.5C  
(l) Title 18 U.S.C.  
(m) Joint Travel Regulations  
(n) DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 9  
(o) OPNAVINST 5218.7D  
(p) DoD 1342.22, DoD Military Family Readiness, 5 August 2021  
(q) DoD 1100.21, Voluntary Services in the Department of Defense, 27 March 2019  
(r) DoD 6400.06, DoD Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Abuse Involving DoD Military and Certain Affiliated Personnel, 15 December 2021  
(s) OPNAVINST 1752.2C  
(t) SECNAVINST 1752.4C  
(u) OPNAVINST 1752.1C

Encl: (1) Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award  
(2) Policy Exception Selection Procedures  
(3) Chief of Naval Operations Ombudsman-at-Large Duties  
(4) Fleet and Family Support Center Duties in Support of Ombudsmen  
(5) Ombudsman Registry  
(6) Ombudsman Program Advisory Group and Region Ombudsman Advisory Boards  
(7) Ombudsman Assembly  
(8) Program Support  
(9) Reporting Requirements for Child Abuse, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault

1. Purpose. To provide policy and assign responsibility for the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. This instruction is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety. Key

changes include updates to the Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award, Ombudsman selection waiver requirements, Ombudsman Registry worksheet due date, use of Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) funds for Ombudsman Appreciation and child abuse and sexual assault reporting requirements.

2. Cancellation . OPNAVINST 1750.1G.

3. Background. The Ombudsman Program was introduced to the U.S. Navy by Z-gram 24 on 14 September 1970 by then Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr. It was adapted from a 19th century Scandinavian custom established by the king to give ordinary private citizens an avenue to express their grievances to high government officials. To improve family readiness, the Navy Family Ombudsman Program is focused on command communications, information and referral while also providing an avenue for leadership to stay informed about the welfare of command families.

4. Scope and Applicability. The provisions of this instruction apply to all Navy Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) commands.

5. Discussion.

a. The Navy Family Ombudsman Program is established to improve mission readiness through improved family readiness. A strong command Ombudsman Program, ashore and afloat, will help families have the information necessary to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle. Per references (a) and (b), commanders and commanding officers (CO) are responsible for the morale, health and welfare of command personnel and inherently, their families. Reference (c) helps commanders and COs have a better understanding of the welfare of the command's families. It also helps commands and their families be better prepared to meet emergency situations.

b. Every afloat and ashore command is required to appoint an Ombudsman. For small commands, see subparagraph 6f(2)(b) of this instruction. Fleet, force and region commanders (REGCOM) should appoint Ombudsmen for their staff and may also appoint an Ombudsman who can advise the commander on fleet, force and region-wide matters.

c. Appointed Ombudsmen serve in an advisory capacity to the commander on matters affecting Service Members and families within their area of command responsibility. Ombudsmen are authorized to perform official, funded travel in conjunction with this role solely for the purpose of reporting current family status updates and emergent issues to the commander and CO. There is no hierarchy within the Ombudsman Program or prescribed supervisory roles over other Ombudsmen. Supervision of Ombudsmen is the responsibility of the commander or CO.

d. Ombudsman Appreciation Day is 14 September (or the Friday preceding the 14th if it falls on a weekend). While the 14th is significant to the program's history, commands are authorized to celebrate the event at any time deemed appropriate during September, or as soon as possible thereafter. In addition to appreciation events, COs may nominate their Ombudsman for the Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award, per enclosure (1).

e. The command Ombudsman is a volunteer and spouse of an Active or Reserve Component command member. If the commander or CO is unable to select the spouse of an Active or Reserve Component command member, refer to enclosure (2) for selection exceptions. The Ombudsman supports the command mission by providing communications, outreach, resource referral, information and advocacy to and for command families.

f. For the purpose of this instruction, the term Command Master Chief (CMDCM) also includes the chief of the boat or command senior enlisted advisor.

## 6. Responsibilities.

### a. CNO.

(1) The CNO may appoint in writing one or more Navy-wide Ombudsman-at-Large. The spouse of a senior CMDCM (Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, fleet, force or region) and a spouse of a senior flag officer, are normally selected to fill these positions. Support for the Ombudsman-at-Large will be specified in their appointment letters and as provided in enclosure (3).

(2) Deputy CNO (Personnel, Manpower and Training) (CNO (N1)) must develop and coordinate overall policy for Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

b. Navy Culture and Force Resilience Office (OPNAV N171) must provide a representative to serve as a member of the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group to stay abreast of family readiness issues that have application to other family-related programs per enclosure (6).

### c. Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC).

(1) Establish procedures to implement the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

(2) Publish and maintain references (c) and (d) and post additional guidance and procedures for operation to the Ombudsman section on the Fleet and Family Support Program (FFSP) website at <https://ffr.cnic.navy.mil/Family-Readiness/>.

(3) Ensure the program effectively addresses family readiness issues, per reference (e).

(4) Adequately resource the program at headquarters, region and local levels to provide sufficient training supported through Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC), materials, website and marketing. For a complete list of FFSC support requirements, see enclosure (4).

(5) Establish training requirements and ensure sufficient training is held to support those requirements. Ombudsman Basic Training and Certified Ombudsman Trainer training will only be provided by CNIC-qualified trainers using approved curriculum. Advanced training offered by the region or installation should be provided by a subject matter expert. However, this training does not need to be conducted by a CNIC-certified trainer.

(6) Coordinate Ombudsman Basic Training with REGCOMs, Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (COMNAVCRUITCOM) and Commander, Navy Reserve Force (COMNAVRESFOR) to ensure command Ombudsmen are able to receive this training prior to (or within 6 weeks of) appointment. Schedules can be found on the Ombudsman Registry at <https://Ombudsmanregistry.cnic.navy.mil> or FFSP website at <https://ffr.cnic.navy.mil/Family-Readiness/Fleet-And-Family-Support-Program/Work-and-Family-Life/Ombudsman-Program/Ombudsman-Program-Training/Ombudsman-Basic-Training-COT-Schedules/>.

(7) Provide guidance on Ombudsman advanced training topics, curriculum and delivery.

(8) Train, certify and decertify Ombudsman trainers, per enclosure (4).

(9) Conduct a bi-annual symposium or virtual town hall meetings for FFSC Ombudsman Coordinators, Reserve Component Command Warrior and Family Support Specialists and Certified Ombudsman Trainers, to obtain recommendations for changes to the Ombudsman Program training curriculum and disseminate Ombudsman Program updates.

(10) Establish and maintain an Ombudsman website and registry to provide additional information on the program and the Ombudsman locator. Ensure all official information, announcements and updates are distributed as bulletins via the Ombudsman Registry. See enclosure (5) for more information.

(11) Provide guidance in the establishment of Region Ombudsman Advisory Boards. See enclosure (6) for more information.

(12) Establish an Ombudsman Program Advisory Group per enclosure (6), to serve as a working group, augmented by representatives of other activities as needed to advise on policy, special projects and curriculum development.

(13) Develop a comprehensive outreach and marketing plan to educate Service Members and their families about the Ombudsman Program. The plan will include key support services (e.g., FFSPs, Child Development Centers, Chaplains, School Liaison Officers and Family

Readiness Groups (FRGs), as well as installation-level Ombudsmen to provide coordinated services in support of Service members and their families.)

d. Commander, Naval Leadership and Ethics Center.

(1) Incorporate Ombudsman Program training in applicable curricula as necessary to ensure Navy leadership is aware of the importance of the program and is able to carry out their responsibilities to achieve a successful Ombudsman Program.

(2) Provide a representative to serve as an Ombudsman Program Advisory Group member to ensure the most up-to-date information is being taught to attendees of the leadership school courses.

e. REGCOMs.

(1) Establish a Region Ombudsman Advisory Board to support and provide advice on issues relating to the Ombudsman Program. The board will provide feedback to CNIC on trends and issues in their region concerning the Ombudsman Program. Board composition and duties are described in enclosure (6).

(2) Coordinate with type and local commanders to ensure sufficient Ombudsman assemblies exist in their regions to support area Ombudsmen. Procedures for establishing Ombudsman assemblies can be found in enclosure (7).

(3) In coordination with FFSCs, conduct Ombudsman basic training and advanced training. Reserve Component command Ombudsmen will attend virtual Ombudsman basic training unless local classroom training is available.

(4) Ensure appropriate roles for Ombudsmen are included in region and installation plans for disaster preparedness (especially in the establishment of emergency family assistance centers) and disaster preparedness exercises.

(5) Ensure outreach and marketing plans include family readiness support services available for each installation.

f. Commanders and COs.

(1) Establish and execute the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. This instruction and reference (c) provides detailed guidance for commanders to effectively manage the Ombudsman program at their individual commands and is available at: <https://ffr.cnic.navy.mil/Family-Readiness/Fleet-And-Family-Support-Program/Work-and-Family-Life/Ombudsman-Program/Commanders-Guide/>.

(2) Appointment. Appoint sufficient command Ombudsmen to provide required services to command families.

(a) All Ombudsmen must be appointed per reference (f).

(b) Small commands with few family members or tenant commands may arrange to share Ombudsman services with one or more other commands or the installation command. Such agreements must be at the concurrence of all commands and Ombudsmen involved and should be specified in writing, including any agreed-upon provisions for support of the combined Ombudsman Program, as stipulated in enclosure (8).

(3) Ombudsman Registry Responsibilities. Ensure command Ombudsman information is added to the Ombudsman Registry as soon as official appointment is made. The commander, CO or designee will update the registry as changes occur. Commanders and COs can receive assistance with the registration process by submitting a registry support request at <https://Ombudsmanregistry.cnmc.navy.mil>.

(4) Training and Appointment. Ensure the command Ombudsman receives required training and, upon appointment, provide a copy of this instruction, reference (d) and a letter of appointment containing specific instructions. Reference (c) provides detailed guidance on training requirements.

(5) Command Roster. Ensure the command Ombudsman receives a regularly-updated command roster to include contact information for inbound personnel and families. References (g) and (h) provide for the release of roster information to the Ombudsman without the consent of the individuals listed when the Ombudsman is acting in an official capacity. Ensure a process is established for receiving, storing and destroying rosters.

(6) Communication. Communicate regularly with the command Ombudsman.

(a) Commanders and COs should assign a command member point of contact (POC) for the Ombudsman; this is normally the senior enlisted advisor. The CO will decide what issues and events are to be handled through the POC and which should come directly to the commander or CO. Commanders and COs may assign as many POCs as necessary to ensure worksheets and command updates are made as changes occur.

(b) Introduce the Ombudsman to members of the command support team. The command support team is generally comprised of the CO, executive officer(XO), CMDCM and their spouses, chaplain (if one is assigned) and any other advocates assigned to work with the program.

(7) Resources. Ensure the command Ombudsman receives adequate equipment, material and funding support. See enclosure (8) for funding guidelines.

(8) Market the Ombudsman. Ensure current and reporting command personnel (including single personnel) and their family members are aware of who the command Ombudsman is, what services they provide and how to contact them. Include the Ombudsman in the command sponsor and indoctrination program. Provide a generic command e-mail address for the Ombudsman or Ombudsmen.

(9) Command Inspections. Ensure the Ombudsman Program is included in appropriate command inspections and reviews.

(10) Command Disaster Preparedness Plan. Ensure the Ombudsman is included in the individual unit's disaster preparedness plan, as well as the host installation's plan for disaster preparedness. This will include the Ombudsman's role when providing assistance at emergency family assistance centers; also include Ombudsman in disaster preparedness exercises.

(11) Ombudsman Worksheets. Ensure Ombudsman monthly and quarterly worksheets are uploaded into the Ombudsman Registry. See enclosure (5) for additional guidance.

(12) Other Provisions. Ensure the provisions in subparagraph 6f(12)(a) through 6f(12)(c), if applicable to appointed Ombudsmen, are followed.

(a) Probation Periods. A probationary term may be established when appointing an Ombudsman. Recommended probation periods are 6 months for a first-time Ombudsman and 3 months for an experienced Ombudsman.

(b) Term of the Ombudsman Appointment. The Ombudsman's term of service ends when the Ombudsman's spouse transfers from the command, is discharged, transfers to the Fleet Reserve, retires or in the case of a change of command. If an Ombudsman chooses to leave his or her position prior to any of these events, a resignation letter should be submitted to the CO stating his or her projected end date of service to the command.

(c) Termination of Service for Cause. A commander or CO should terminate an appointment when the Ombudsman violates the Code of Ethics as published in reference (c), knowingly fails to execute their responsibility regarding issues required to be reported, knowingly submits an unauthorized reimbursement claim or if the commander or CO considers the Ombudsman's behavior to be detrimental to the command.

(13) Additional Considerations. Adhere to additional considerations for appointing command Ombudsmen serving outside of the continental United States and those serving at recruiting or RC commands, which may apply.

(a) Outside of the Continental United States. Living overseas presents Ombudsmen with challenges and rewards, including language, isolation, communication, transportation and

cultural differences. These factors should be taken into consideration when appointing an Ombudsman.

(b) Recruiting Commands. At a minimum, an Ombudsman is to be appointed for each Navy Talent Acquisition Group. An Ombudsman will be appointed for COMNAVCRUITCOM, Navy recruiting orientation unit and each Navy recruiting region headquarters. Due to the varying geographical characteristics of each Navy recruiting district, more than one command Ombudsman may be required to adequately serve the needs of command families. Additional command Ombudsmen will report to their commander or CO, not the designated Ombudsman. Reference (h) provides supplemental guidance for the recruiting command family Ombudsman Program.

(c) Navy Reserve Component Commands. Ombudsmen may be assigned to Navy Reserve units within the Reserve Component command, at the discretion of the unit leadership. The Reserve Component command Ombudsman should serve as a central POC for general information; however, additional unit Ombudsmen will report only to their commander or CO.

(14) Legal Status of Ombudsmen. Command leadership must be knowledgeable about the legal status of Ombudsmen. As a formally approved volunteer to the government, an Ombudsman is considered an employee of the government only for the purposes of using and safeguarding information protected by reference (e), compensation for work-related injuries and complying with reference (i).

(15) Supporting Region Ombudsman Advisory Board. As needed or requested by the REGCOM, provide the Region Ombudsman Advisory Board the support, including materials and clerical assistance, necessary to perform their designated duties described in enclosure (6).

g. Ombudsmen.

(1) Attend Ombudsman Basic Training prior to, but not later than, 6 weeks after appointment and receive advanced training to expand knowledge and improve skills. If a break in service of more than 18 months has passed since the last assignment, or if more than 3 years have elapsed since attending the course, the Ombudsman Basic Training course must be repeated.

(2) Serve as the liaison between command families and the command, keeping the commander or CO informed regarding the general morale, health and welfare of the command's families.

(3) Communicate regularly with command and command family members. Contact families as soon as possible upon arrival to introduce themselves and explain how they can help the family.



(4) Develop and distribute a command-approved monthly or quarterly newsletter or, if not possible, contribute to a command-approved column in appropriate publications.

(5) Follow strict privacy guidelines as outlined by Navy Information Operations Command when using social media. Operations security should be observed at all times by all users.

(6) Obtain command approval on all official correspondence before printing, distributing, mailing or e-mailing.

(7) Establish and maintain an up-to-date and timely telephone tree or use the command's information careline to rapidly distribute and gather information. The careline is a telephone service established by the command to communicate with family members.

(8) Become knowledgeable about all programs offered by the local FFSC, chaplains and other support agencies to keep family members informed of available resources. Reference (j) gives Ombudsmen the authority to request and receive support from FFSCs.

(9) Represent the command at local Ombudsman Assembly Meetings.

(10) Collect data on services provided and time expended and provide this data monthly to the commander or CO. Data from the Ombudsman monthly and quarterly worksheets will be entered into the Ombudsman Registry by the command POC. The Ombudsman will comply with the provisions of reference (g).

(11) Serve as a source of emergency and crisis information. Perform other official roles, functions or duties assigned by the commander or CO.

(12) Collaborate with the FRG on behalf of the command, but not serve as an FRG officer. Ombudsmen are not responsible for coordinating and conducting command-sanctioned homecoming activities. See reference (k).

(13) Provide immediate action when a reportable issue comes to their attention by notifying the appropriate official or organization and the commander or CO. Additional guidance for required reporting can be found at enclosure (9). Mandatory reporting is required for:

(a) All suspected child abuse and neglect.

(b) All alleged domestic abuse.

(c) All suspected or potential homicides, violence or life-endangering situations.

- (d) All suspected or potential suicidal risks.
- (e) All alleged sexual assaults.
- (f) All other issues identified by the commander or CO as reportable.

(14) Adhere to the strictest code of confidentiality to protect the privacy of individuals and maintain the credibility of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. For issues requiring immediate attention, the safety and well-being of every individual takes precedence over their right to confidentiality.

(15) Receive training during Ombudsman Basic Training on the provisions of references (e) and (g), proper referrals and maintaining a current resource list.

(16) Avoid conflicts of interest in dealings with the command and family members. Criminal laws and regulations relating to conflicts of interest are described in reference (l).

(17) Coordinate services for families during mobilization or geographic separation. In any situation in which family members remain in one community while the Service Member reports to another location for duty (e.g., mobilization of a unit, executing individual augmentation orders or executing permanent change of station orders), the losing command retains responsibility for local support services to family members. They are responsible for assisting family members in connecting with the gaining command Ombudsman, FRG or other family support activity. The gaining command assumes responsibilities for official command communication with Sailors and their family members.

(a) The losing command Ombudsman will contact the gaining command's Ombudsman to coordinate services to ensure the family receives services to which they are entitled. Contact information can be obtained from the Ombudsman Registry or from the FFSC Ombudsman Coordinator at the gaining command. Each FFSC has an Ombudsman Coordinator assigned. FFSC Directory may be found on the CNIC website at <https://ffr.cnic.navy.mil/Family-Readiness/Fleet-And-Family-Support-Program/FFSC-Directory/>.

(b) Ombudsmen from both the losing and gaining commands will coordinate or share responsibility for those family members who do not accompany the Sailor to the Active Component assignment area.

(18) Perform other assigned duties. In addition to responding to the needs of the command's families, the commander or CO may direct the Ombudsman to:

(a) Assist in the organization and implementation of the command welcome program (command sponsorship program) and participate in indoctrination and orientation programs for new command members.

(b) Represent the command on committees, boards and working groups in the military or serve as a military family liaison to civilian community organizations providing services and support to command families.

(c) Establish, maintain or contribute to an up-to-date and timely command telephone care line to provide information to families.

(19) Resignation. The actions listed in subparagraph 6g(19)(a) and 6g(19)(b) should be considered or completed upon departure as command Ombudsman.

(a) The Ombudsman may be reappointed by the new commander or CO or requested to remain until a new Ombudsman can be appointed and trained.

(b) The Ombudsman will confer with the commander, CO or POC about turnover of any personal notes or records on unresolved issues to the incoming Ombudsman. All other correspondence, personal notes and records will be destroyed per command procedures for handling personal-confidential information protected by reference (e). The command roster will be turned over to the command or destroyed and a new copy issued to the new Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's e-mail list will be deleted. Resources may be shared with the incoming Ombudsman.

(20) Ombudsman Program Manual. Be familiar with reference (d), which includes sample forms, letters and additional guidance for performing Ombudsman duties.

## 7. Records Management.

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy (DON) Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager or the OPNAV Records Management Program (DNS-16).

8. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, OPNAV N171B will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy and Navy policy

and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.

9. Forms and Information Management Control.

a. Forms. The referenced forms in subparagraphs 9a(1) through 9a(3) are available online:

(1) DD Form 2793 Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities <https://www.esd.whs.mil/directives/forms/>.

(2) DD Form 1351-2 Travel Voucher or Sub-voucher  
<https://www.esd.whs.mil/directives/forms/>.

(3) Optional Form (OF) 1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business <https://www.gsa.gov/reference/forms>.

b. Information Management Control. OMB Control Symbol 0703-0070 is assigned to the Ombudsman Registry and expires 30 June 2025.



R. J. CHEESEMAN, JR  
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations  
for Personnel, Manpower and Training

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via DON Issuances website, <https://www.secnav.navy.mil/doni/default.aspx>.

MRS. SYBIL STOCKDALE OMBUDSMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

1. History. The CNO established the annual Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award in May 2015.
2. Description. This award was inspired by Mrs. Sybil Stockdale, who set an unflagging example for her support to families of other prisoners of war during the 7-year internment in Southeast Asia of her husband, Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale. The Ombudsman of the Year Award is presented to four Ombudsmen who have served their command and families with selfless dedication and commitment to family readiness in the categories listed in subparagraph 2a through 2d.
  - a. Afloat command (Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (COMUSFLTFORCOM)).
  - b. Afloat command (Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMPACFLT)).
  - c. Ashore command.
  - d. Reserve command (Commander, Navy Reserve Force (COMNAVRESFOR)).
3. Criteria. The criteria for Ombudsman of the Year are:
  - a. Must have demonstrated the ability to effectively communicate between the Navy family and the command.
  - b. Must have maintained the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality while providing a positive role model for command members and families.
  - c. Must have facilitated and promoted a healthy sense of community among command families by assisting and supporting Navy families, including during emergencies, mobilization or deployment.
  - d. Must have demonstrated consistent compliance with training, data collection and required reports.
4. Requirements. Eligibility requirements for Ombudsman of the Year Award nominees are:
  - a. Must be registered in the Ombudsman Registry and have distinguished themselves in supporting Navy families.
  - b. Must have served as an Ombudsman in good standing for at least 1 year culminating no later than the due date of the nomination package and embody the Ombudsman Program's core values.

5. Nomination Package. The nomination package for the Ombudsman of the Year award will consist of:
  - a. Cover letter.
  - b. A summary of action, not to exceed two pages written, addressing each of the criterion set forth in paragraph 3 of this enclosure.
  - c. A short biography of the nominee.
  - d. A letter from the FFSC director or Reserve Component command verifying the Ombudsman is registered in the Ombudsman Registry and participates in Ombudsman assemblies and advanced training.
  - e. Additional supporting information (e.g., a letter of support for nomination from former COs, command POC or command support team; or letter(s) of appreciation presented by COs or family members).
6. Nomination Process. Nomination packages will be submitted to the appropriate organization, via the chain of command, no later than dates published via naval administrative message (NAVADMIN).
  - a. COMUSFLTFORCOM Ombudsman of the Year. COMUSFLTFORCOM will select an Ombudsman from all deployable forces within the Atlantic Fleet.
  - b. COMPACFLT Ombudsman of the Year. COMPACFLT will select an Ombudsman from all deployable forces within the Pacific Fleet.
  - c. Navy Reserve Force Ombudsman of the Year. COMNAVRESFOR will select an Ombudsman from all Reserve Component commands within the Navy Reserve Force.
  - d. Navy Shore Ombudsman of the Year. Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) will select a shore (type 1 and type 6) Ombudsman from the following: OPNAV direct report naval shore activities; COMUSFLTFORCOM; COMPACFLT; U.S. Naval Forces Europe, U.S. Naval Forces Africa; and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Personnel, Manpower and Training (CNO N1).
7. Selections. Selections will be forwarded to Director Navy Staff for inclusion in a NAVADMIN announcing all four winners.
8. Presentation of Award. Type Commanders or designated representatives will present the awards in September.

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9. Additional Information. Additional information about the award process and procedures is located at <https://ffr.cnic.navy.mil/Family-Readiness/Fleet-And-Family-Support-Program/Work-and-Family-Life/Ombudsman-Program/Mrs-Sybil-Stockdale-Ombudsman-of-the-Year-Award/>.

POLICY EXCEPTION SELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Appointment of Non-Spouse of Command. Navy personnel policy is to hold firmly to the requirement that persons appointed as Navy family Ombudsmen be the spouses of Active or Reserve Component command members . However, it is recognized there are circumstances in which it may be in the best interest of the command to name another individual. When necessary, commanders or commanding officers should select an individual based on specific criteria, as stated in subparagraph 2a through 2c.

2. Exceptions. Exceptions may be granted after efforts to recruit spouse volunteers have not been successful. Commands should address the candidate's ability to meet the requirements listed in subparagraph 2a through 2c.

a. Parent or other family member of single members:

(1) Lives in vicinity of the command or has close connection with the command.

(2) Has experience within five years as a military member or family member.

(3) Demonstrated interest in the command and ability to attend training and perform duties of the role.

(4) Demonstrated appropriate attributes, skills and volunteer experience.

(5) Nominated by the command (not self-nominated).

b. Active Duty, former Active Duty, selected reserve, civilian or spouses of civilian members of the command:

(1) Currently an active member or retired within two years from the command.

(2) Demonstrated unique abilities to perform the role of liaison between families and the command.

(3) Demonstrated interest in the command and the ability to attend training and perform duties of the role.

(4) Nominated by the command (not self-nominated).

c. Family member of retired members of the command:

(1) Demonstrated an interest in the command and the ability to attend training and perform duties of the role.



(2) Formerly an Ombudsman or an Ombudsman at time of member's retirement.

(3) Nominated by the command (not self-nominated).

3. Local and Region Support. CNIC will continue to offer guidance as to who meets the criteria, but the command will select and appoint the person of their choice, based on the listed criteria. Any assistance will be provided through their local installation or region.

CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS OMBUDSMAN-AT-LARGE DUTIES

1. Role of Ombudsman-at-Large. The CNO may appoint, in writing, one or more Ombudsman-at-large. The spouse of a senior command master chief (Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), fleet, force or region) and the spouse of a senior flag officer are normally selected to fill these positions. The Ombudsman-at-large is responsible for advising the CNO and MCPON on matters affecting Sailors and their families. The Ombudsman-at-large will be tasked by CNO and report directly to CNO. Specific duties will be addressed in the letter of appointment. Additional duties that may be performed by the Ombudsman-at-large are listed in subparagraph 1a through 1e:

- a. Act as a focal point for the flow of important information to Navy Ombudsmen, Sailors and their families.
- b. Be an advocate of the Navy and Ombudsman Program.
- c. Understand available Navy family programs and provide vital, timely and responsive information to the Navy community.
- d. Serve as a member of the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group.
- e. Meet periodically with the CNO, as CNO deems necessary.

2. Site Visits. The Ombudsman-at-large may travel to Navy sites with the CNO, CNIC, Naval Inspector General, MCPON and other senior officials at CNO's discretion. The Ombudsman-at-large may also visit commands, meet with command Ombudsmen and family members and attend meetings and conferences. During these visits, information important to the successful operation and improvement of the Ombudsman Program may be learned. Ombudsman-at-large are encouraged to share this information with the CNIC Ombudsman Program Coordinator per guidance from the CNO.

3. Ombudsman-at-Large Accepting Official. The CNO will be the accepting official for the volunteer services provided by the Ombudsman-at-large via DD Form 2793. See enclosure (8), subparagraph 6a. Individual travel authorizations for the Ombudsman-at-large will be processed through the immediate office of the CNO.

4. Provisions for Ombudsman-at-Large. The Ombudsman-at-large will be provided training and support, per reference (f).

- a. An Ombudsman-at-large not currently familiar with the Ombudsman Program must attend Ombudsman Basic Training prior to or as soon as possible after appointment, as well as other trainings to ensure continued familiarization with the Ombudsman Program.

b. In addition to the support provided by the immediate office of the CNO, MCPON and CNIC's offices have been designated by the CNO to provide support to the Ombudsman-at-large.

5. Term. The term of service for the Ombudsman-at-large ends when their spouse retires from Active Duty. In the case of a change of command, the new CNO may request that the current Ombudsman-at-large remain until a replacement can be found or reappoint the incumbent.

FLEET AND FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER DUTIES IN SUPPORT OF OMBUDSMEN

1. FFSC Staff. The FFSC will provide a variety of services to support and enhance the effectiveness of local command family Ombudsman Programs per reference (j). Specific services to be provided are listed in subparagraph 1a through 1d:
  - a. Coordinate Training. Coordinate and offer the standardized Ombudsman Basic Training course per assessment of local requirements. This includes advertising the schedule, providing classroom space and arranging for trainers. Only Certified Ombudsman Trainers may conduct Ombudsman Basic Training. To the maximum extent possible, these trainers should include non-FFSC staff Certified Ombudsman Trainers.
  - b. Non-Compliance. Report non-completion of Ombudsman Basic Training to the sponsoring command and explain the circumstances.
  - c. Advanced Training. Help arrange and provide speakers and trainers for advanced training. Advanced training takes place after successful completion of Ombudsman Basic Training. Outside guest speakers are permitted during advanced training.
  - d. Supporting Ombudsman Assembly Chairperson. Work in conjunction with the Ombudsman assembly chairperson to determine topics and coordinate speakers for Ombudsman Assembly Meetings.
2. Ombudsman Coordinator. A member of the FFSC staff is to be assigned as the Ombudsman coordinator. In addition to coordinating training requirements, the coordinator serves as an advisor and consultant to the local Ombudsmen, Ombudsmen assembly and commands. The coordinator will not serve as the chairperson for the assembly. Additionally, other FFSC staff members should provide advice to Ombudsmen regarding services offered at the FFSC.
3. The FFSC Ombudsman Coordinator.
  - a. Roster of Local Ombudsmen. Maintain a current roster of local Ombudsmen, including recruiting command Ombudsmen geographically located near the installation. The roster will reflect the assignments as listed in the Ombudsman Registry at <https://Ombudsmanregistry.cnic.navy.mil>.
  - b. Primary Support. Be a primary support to installation Ombudsmen in conjunction with the CO and CNIC Ombudsman Program team.
  - c. Ombudsman Assembly Training. Coordinate Ombudsman assembly training that supports Ombudsmen's educational and informational needs.

- d. Ombudsman Assembly Advisor. Attend Ombudsman Assembly meetings at the installations in an advisory capacity. The alternate Ombudsman coordinator may fill in, when needed.
  - e. Inclusion with Ombudsman Assembly. Be included in the planning of all assembly meetings and agenda plans for purposes of compliance with this instruction.
  - f. Assistance to Ombudsmen. Provide office space, supplies and assistance with newsletter preparation for Ombudsmen and assembly chairs.
  - g. Meeting Space. Provide space for Ombudsmen assembly meetings, if available.
  - h. Support Commands. Provide commands with program guidance, policy clarification and recommendations for Ombudsmen recognition, if requested.
  - i. Identify Problems. If issues arise that appear to negatively affect the local program and family members, the FFSC Site Manager or Ombudsman Coordinator will notify the respective command. By providing accurate and timely information, the respective commander or CO may then take appropriate action.
  - j. Resources. Provide information regarding Navy and community resources.
  - k. Referral. Refer families to their Ombudsman and provide information about the Ombudsman Program.
  - l. Access Ombudsman. Assist geographically-dispersed family members with gaining access to a local Ombudsman.
4. Certified Ombudsman Trainer Transfer. As Certified Ombudsman Trainers are a valuable resource for the Ombudsman Program, CNIC's Ombudsman Training Coordinator will be informed of all transferring Certified Ombudsman Trainers and will assist with the transfer process. Transferring Certified Ombudsman Trainers must meet the current eligibility requirements as listed on the trainer application.
5. FFSC Role with Certified Ombudsman Trainers Transfer. The outgoing FFSC Ombudsman Coordinator or Reserve Component Command Warrior and Family Support Specialist will provide the information listed in subparagraphs 5a through 5d for the transferring Certified Ombudsman Trainers to the gaining FFSC Ombudsman Coordinator or Reserve Component Command Warrior and Family Support Specialist:
- a. Certified Ombudsman Trainers training dates.
  - b. Copy of Certified Ombudsman Trainers training certificate.

- c. Date last taught Ombudsman Basic Training.
  - d. Letter of recommendation from FFSC Site Manager or Director and Ombudsman Coordinator. Certified Ombudsman Trainers should have a letter of recommendation from their CO.
6. Approving Certified Ombudsman Trainers Transfer. The receiving FFSC Site Manager or Director must inform CNIC's Ombudsman Training Coordinator of their approval for the perspective trainer to teach within their region. Acceptance of a trainer's transfer includes acceptance of any funding needs that may occur for training purposes. Funding is the responsibility of the incoming FFSC or CO of the accepting command.
7. Certified Ombudsman Trainers Decertification Guidance. Guidance for decertification of a Certified Ombudsman Trainers is located in the Ombudsman Coordinator's Desk Guide and reference (d).

## OMBUDSMAN REGISTRY

1. History of the Ombudsman Registry. The Ombudsman Registry was established by Task Force Navy Family in August 2005 in response to the Gulf Coast region hurricanes. Its initial purpose was to identify and manage command Ombudsman assignments for recall purposes. Additionally, the registry allows CNIC to deliver real time communication and information to commanders, Ombudsmen, certified Ombudsman trainers, command leadership spouses and Ombudsman coordinators. Commands are required to register, assign themselves and their Ombudsmen and ensure required worksheet data is submitted per this instruction.

a. Requirements. Every command, afloat or ashore, will ensure their command Ombudsman information is added to the Ombudsman Registry and the registry is updated as changes occur.

b. Commanders or Command Designees.

(1) Confirm their command is listed in the Ombudsman Registry.

(2) Register in the Ombudsman Registry and assign themselves to their command.

(3) Assign appointed command Ombudsman or Ombudsmen to the command.

c. Ombudsman Coordinators.

(1) Register in the Ombudsman Registry as Ombudsman Coordinators.

(2) Have access to the commands in their area of responsibility and ensure all commands have completed the actions listed in subparagraphs 1b(1) through 1b(3). Upon request, provide assistance to commanders or command designees to register their Ombudsmen when presented a copy of the appointment letter.

2. Ombudsman Worksheets. Ombudsmen will download the worksheet template from the registry login page, complete the modified worksheet and e-mail it to their command POC with a copy to the Ombudsman Registry Administrator at [Ombudsman.registry.fct@navy.mil](mailto:Ombudsman.registry.fct@navy.mil). For commands that are unable to upload their Ombudsman worksheets, please submit completed final worksheet to the Ombudsman Registry Administrator to be uploaded for the command. Commanders still have the capability to access the worksheet information using common access card login. Worksheets must be submitted by the 5th of the month following the end of the reporting period. Active Component Ombudsmen must email their worksheets monthly. Reserve Component command Ombudsmen must e-mail their worksheets quarterly. If a command has more than one Ombudsman, all monthly and quarterly worksheets must be combined as the data collection system will only allow one worksheet per command, per month or quarter, per unit identification code. The CO will determine who will e-mail the worksheets.

- a. Document time spent and types of contacts made so resources can be made available to enable Ombudsmen to deal with families more efficiently and effectively.
  - b. Indicate which FFSC programs are utilized the most and which ones need updating.
  - c. Indicate the programs the Navy needs to educate families or help them become more self-reliant.
  - d. Demonstrate to Navy leadership the cost avoidance of having Ombudsmen perform the types of services they deliver. The performance of these services by Ombudsmen saves many man hours if the Navy had to use their manpower to perform these functions.
3. Ombudsman Contact during Emergencies. The Ombudsman Registry enables contact with Ombudsmen from commands affected during national disasters or emergencies in order to provide support to families needing assistance.
  4. Ombudsman Registry Bulletins. Updates, program changes and alerts can be communicated in real time to all registered Ombudsmen, COs or designees, Ombudsman coordinators, certified Ombudsman trainers, command leadership spouses and FFSC directors via e-mail.
  5. Contact Your Ombudsman. The “Contact Your Ombudsman” feature, located on the login page of the registry, allows interested parties to contact the Ombudsman from any registered command. In the event a command does not have an Ombudsman registered, a notice is sent to the Ombudsman Registry Administrator who will establish contact with the appropriate Ombudsman coordinator to provide assistance.



OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM ADVISORY GROUP AND REGION OMBUDSMAN  
ADVISORY BOARDS

1. Ombudsman Program Advisory Group. The Navy Family Ombudsman Program advisory group is a working group of individuals, convened at the discretion of CNIC family readiness, to include an OPNAV (N171) representative, CNIC force master chief, FFSP director, Ombudsman program manager, Navy Reserve Force family support program manager and Naval Leadership and Ethics Center representative. Ombudsman-at-large are encouraged to serve as Navy Family Ombudsman Program advisory group members. The Navy Family Ombudsman Program advisory group will include representatives of other activities as needed to advise on policy, special projects and curriculum development, based on input received from the Region Ombudsman Advisory Board.

2. Region Ombudsman Advisory Boards.

a. Function. Be appointed and convened by the REGCOM or designee, for the purpose of reviewing the region's Ombudsman Program. The Region Ombudsman Advisory Board will provide feedback from local Ombudsman assemblies on policy, implementation or other programmatic issues. Issues presented at the Region Ombudsman Advisory Board should be resolved at the local level, when possible. Unresolved questions or issues may be forwarded to CNIC's Ombudsman Program Analyst as action items for review. If further review is necessary, the action item will be presented at the next Ombudsman Program Advisory Group meeting for discussion.

b. Membership. Have their membership identified by the REGCOM. Membership may include both active and reserve personnel, spouses of senior military members (officer and enlisted), chaplains, CMDCMs and Ombudsmen representing commands within the area of responsibility, assembly chairpersons, FFSC Ombudsman Coordinator(s), action officer from the REGCOM, staff legal officer; and any other interested and appropriately positioned person(s).

c. Role. Support and advise area assemblies. However, they are not policy making or supervisory bodies and will not interfere with the operation of individual command family Ombudsman Programs.

d. Schedule. Meet semi-annually. The chairperson will forward meeting minutes and any action items, recommended changes and observations requiring higher-level review or action to the CNIC Ombudsman Program Analyst no later than August.

## OMBUDSMAN ASSEMBLY

1. Ombudsman Assembly. The local Ombudsman assembly is an important component of the Ombudsman Program. The assembly is an excellent forum for sharing and exchanging successful practices. As with all informational exchanges, confidentiality must be maintained. Established by the sponsoring command (CO, REGCOM or area coordinator) in support of tenant commands, the assembly functions only under the supervision and guidance of the sponsor.

2. Role of Assembly.

- a. Convene monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly.
- b. Serve as a resource for Ombudsmen's professional growth by arranging advanced training.
- c. Serve as a liaison for policy discussion and clarification by appropriate local authorities regarding issues of interest to Ombudsmen and command family members.
- d. Provide such functions as peer mentoring and sharing of common information of interest to all commands.
- e. Provide assistance to commands to recognize and show appreciation to their Ombudsmen.
- f. Maintain a current roster of all area Ombudsmen in the absence of a local FFSC.
- g. Perform other functions as directed by the sponsoring command (e.g., provide resource handbooks and materials, publish newsletters, distribute assembly meetings minutes and maintain a calendar of events).

3. Non-policy Making. Assemblies are not policy making or supervisory bodies and will not interfere with the operation of individual command family Ombudsman Programs. However, they may make recommendations about community matters affecting the well-being of the area command family members.

4. Multiple Assemblies within a Geographic Area. Because of the structure and diversity of Navy communities and installations, there may be more than one assembly within a geographic area. Assemblies are not hierarchical and do not have authority over another assembly regardless of the rank of the sponsoring commander. Local commanders may decide that one area assembly consisting of all Ombudsmen within the geographic location is sufficient.

5. Ombudsman Assembly Instruction. Each sponsoring command will have a local Ombudsman assembly instruction. An example is provided in reference (d).
6. Assembly Support. The sponsoring command will ensure the assembly has any support, including materials and clerical assistance, needed to perform their designated duties.
7. Informational Groups. Assemblies are information-sharing groups and do not function as social clubs. Assemblies will not establish or maintain treasuries or collect dues for the purpose of sponsoring assembly activities.
8. Membership. All appointed Ombudsmen of local commands will participate in the assembly. Others, such as senior leadership and senior leadership spouses, CMDCMs and command chaplains, are encouraged to attend. Representatives of other military or civilian organizations may be invited to attend meetings to share information about their activities and respond to concerns of the membership.
9. Leadership. Assembly leadership should be selected and appointed in writing by the sponsoring command for a specified term. A sample description of the duties of the assembly chairperson is provided in reference (d).
10. Chairperson. The chairperson must be a current Ombudsman whose spouse is an Active Duty or Reserve member of a command that is a member of the assembly. The FFSC Ombudsman Coordinator cannot serve as the chairperson but can serve as an advisor to the assembly. Duties can include:
  - a. Representing the sponsoring command as a member of committees, boards or group meetings (organizations desiring this representation should submit a request through the assembly's sponsoring command).
  - b. Providing information and referral liaison with other military and community organizations.
  - c. Providing input and feedback to the Region Ombudsman Advisory Boards regarding the operation and policies of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program and offering recommendations to improve support and standardization of the program worldwide.
11. Working with the Ombudsman Coordinator. The Ombudsman Assembly Chairperson must work in conjunction with the Ombudsman coordinator and include them in the planning of all meetings and agenda preparation. The primary or alternate Ombudsman coordinator will attend all Ombudsman Assembly meetings.

PROGRAM SUPPORT

1. Funding. Every command will establish specific funding resources for support of the command's Ombudsman Program. Most commands, activities and organizations of the Department of Defense are funded with Appropriated Funds (APF), the costs and expenditures associated with the Ombudsman Program will likewise be funded from the command's APF resources. The Ombudsman Program rarely falls within any Non-Appropriated Funds (NAF) Instrumentality (NAFI) program or area of responsibility, thus expenditure of NAF is seldom justified. In the exceptional situation wherein an Ombudsman is appointed as a volunteer to serve a NAFI, expenditures from NAF resources are permitted to support the Ombudsman in proportion to the time and level of support devoted to service to the NAFI. Any exceptions require approval by the legal advisor of the command or NAFI, as applicable. This includes reimbursement of personal expenses incurred during performance of Ombudsman duties, when appropriate. It is important for the commander or CO and the Ombudsman to discuss the budget and determine what support can be provided and what will be reimbursed. The Ombudsman, based on the authorized budget, must document their expenses and submit OF 1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business to the command for reimbursement. When applicable, receipts must also be submitted.

2. Reimbursable Items. The Ombudsman must be acting in an official capacity as directed by the commander or CO to receive reimbursement for:

a. Child Care. Ombudsmen are encouraged to utilize Navy-operated child care programs at no cost. However, when Navy-operated care is unavailable, reimbursement for child care or babysitting will be paid with available command funds. Commanders and COs are encouraged to establish caps of reimbursement based on local commercial child care market rates.

b. Mileage, Parking and Tolls. Paid at the current government privately-owned vehicle rate. Mileage must be documented and parking and tolls require receipts.

c. Communication Equipment. Includes a computer, cell phone, pager or other electronic devices; long distance calling cards or plans; or Internet service. Command pre-authorization and approval of equipment expenditures is required for reimbursement. Command-owned equipment may be issued to the Ombudsman at the discretion of the commander or CO if they decide the Ombudsman Program will function more effectively as a result. This equipment must be accounted for and returned when the Ombudsman resigns the position. The Ombudsman must limit use of these items to execution of official duties only.

d. Pre-approved Travel Expenses. Pre-approved travel expenses incurred during command-directed and authorized participation in the activities in this subparagraph will be paid: training, conferences and other travel as needed, including Ombudsman-at-large travel to Navy sites with senior officials and Ombudsman-at-large visits to commands to meet with command Ombudsmen and family members (see enclosure (3), paragraph 2).

(1) Local commands may reimburse the Ombudsman for costs of child care and mileage incurred during Ombudsman basic and advanced training. To be eligible for reimbursement, the Ombudsman must have a letter of appointment and have signed the volunteer agreement. In locations where training is not available, a command may issue invitational travel orders, per reference (m), to enable the Ombudsman to complete the course at another installation.

(2) The command is authorized, budget permitting, to issue invitational travel orders and fund the associated travel, berthing, meals and incidental expenses for Ombudsmen to attend non-local training that will improve their effectiveness, per reference (m). Expenses may be reimbursed or travel advances may be authorized per reference (n) Volume 9, Chapter 5. DD Form 1351-2 Travel Voucher, sub-voucher or other command-approved travel claim process must be used to claim travel reimbursement. Local travel expenses are to be reported on OF 1164. Receipts must be submitted as required by the command. The listed expenses may be reimbursed when a determination is made that the expenses are necessary to obtain the Ombudsman's voluntary services and are reasonable in amount and relation to the value of the voluntary services involved.

3. Other Incidental Expenses. Other incidental expenses may be paid from APF, per reference (f). The expense can only be incurred and paid directly by the command at the discretion of the commander or CO. These are not expenses reimbursable to the Ombudsman.

4. Other Support. Administrative support (e.g., paper, envelopes, pens, copier service, clerical assistance, command telephone cards, use of government mail and government vehicle transportation) should be budgeted and may be provided from APF or non-appropriated funds, as command resources permit.

5. Newsletter Expenses. The command will assume all costs for production and delivery of the Ombudsman newsletter. Content must be approved by the command prior to printing or electronic distribution. If the newsletter is produced solely within the command, the command is responsible for providing technical and administrative support, paper, printer access and delivery costs (stamps, bulk mail, etc.). If the newsletter is printed and delivered by the Document Automation and Production Service, the command must approve and provide the funding. The local printing officer can provide guidance. Use of government mailing privileges is authorized for official information such as mailing of newsletters, per reference (o). For definitions and additional guidance on use of official mail privileges, see reference (d).

6. Responsibility for Supervision of the Ombudsmen. The Navy has the responsibility for the primary supervision of Ombudsmen when they are providing services to the Navy. This responsibility may be delegated to authorized supervisors, per reference (f).

a. Volunteer Agreement. The commander or CO and the Ombudsman, at the time of appointment, must complete a DD Form 2793. A copy of the signed agreement should be given to the volunteer prior to commencing volunteer services. Part II of the form will be completed at

the end of the Ombudsman's term of service in order to document the dates of the volunteer service. A copy of the completed volunteer agreement will be given to the Ombudsman upon termination of service. A sample of this form can be found in references (c) or (d), appointing an Ombudsman, at <https://ffr.cniv.navy.mil/Family-Readiness/Fleet-And-Family-Support-Program/Work-and-Family-Life/Ombudsman-Program/Commanders-Guide/Documents-List-Command-Leadership-Toolkit/>. Volunteer records will be retained for 3 years following the termination of volunteer service by the command receiving the service.

b. Violations. Commanders and COs will ensure neither they nor their paid or volunteer staff violates the provisions of reference (f).

7. Ombudsmen Appreciation and Recognition. Reference (p) encourages programs to recognize volunteers for their efforts in support of family readiness programs. Reference (q) authorizes a non-monetary-based system to recognize and award volunteer contributions that may include hosting volunteer recognition events and provision of a letter or certificate of appreciation for voluntary service. Each command will establish a program to recognize the volunteer contributions of their Navy family command Ombudsman. Some general guidelines are:

- a. Personally support the program, especially with their time.
- b. Value the Ombudsman's opinion and advice.
- c. Let the Ombudsman know they have done a good job, in writing or in person, and look for opportunities to provide official recognition at command functions and in publications.
- d. Celebrate Ombudsman Appreciation Day in an appropriate and timely way.
- e. Present a personally written letter of commendation or certificate of appreciation at the end of service.
- f. Issue an official nametag with command emblem attached and inscribed with the Ombudsman's title and name.
- g. Purchase an Ombudsman pin through the Navy Uniform Service of the Navy Exchange and present to the Ombudsman. While usually worn separately from the nametag, it can also be attached to it.
- h. Include the Ombudsman's name and e-mail address in the plan of the day or week.
- i. As per reference (q), the commander or CO may use appropriated funds, if available, for individual Ombudsman appreciation events, Ombudsman plaques and awards. Cash awards are

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not authorized. Exceptions to use NAF funds may be authorized when such events are in support of a NAFI and upon review and approval by the legal advisor of the command or NAFI, as applicable.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD ABUSE, DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL  
ASSAULT

1. Child and Intimate Partner Abuse. Incidents of child and domestic abuse must be reported per reference (r) and (s). When allegations of child or domestic abuse come to the attention of a command, the Family Advocacy Program (FAP) will be notified. FAP staff will inform the member's command and law enforcement officials, as indicated by case circumstances. Certain states now require any knowledge of child abuse to be reported directly to Child Protective Services (CPS). Local FAP representatives will advise if this is so in your state.

a. Definition of Child Abuse. Child abuse is defined as the physical or sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect of a child by a parent, guardian or caregiver (intrafamilial or extrafamilial) under circumstances indicating the child's welfare is harmed or threatened.

b. Child Protections. A child's safety and well-being is protected by Federal and State law. All states and U.S. territories have mandatory child abuse reporting laws. All Department of the Navy personnel, including Ombudsmen (with the exception of chaplains and attorneys who having confidential or privileged communication protections), must report to FAP any incident or suspected incident of child abuse occurring on a military installation or involving persons eligible for FAP services. FAP will report suspected child abuse incidents to the responsible State child protective services agency.

c. Definition of Domestic Abuse. Abuse occurring between spouses or adult intimate partners merits the same concern as similar incidents between unrelated persons. Domestic abuse and intimate partner are defined in reference (r).

d. Reporting Options. Ombudsmen should be aware that victims of domestic abuse have two avenues for reporting in the Navy.

(1) Unrestricted Reporting. Victims who want to pursue an official investigation should disclose that they are a victim of domestic abuse to appropriate command, base security, Naval Criminal Investigative Service and FAP personnel. This process is referred to as unrestricted reporting and results in command, FAP and law enforcement notification. Any report made to an Ombudsman is classified as unrestricted as the Ombudsman is an official representative of the command.

(2) Restricted Reporting. Victims who would like to receive support, advocacy and care while deciding whether they would like to pursue official investigation may now disclose domestic abuse to a domestic abuse victim advocate, FFSP clinical counselor or military medical or dental healthcare provider. This restricted report may not be disclosed to a command, law enforcement personnel or FAP for an incident status determination at the Incident Determination Committee, unless the victim authorizes disclosure in writing or another exception applies.



e. Reporting Guidance. All allegations of domestic and child abuse will be reported by the Ombudsman to FAP and the Commanding Officer (CO) or designee per ref (r) and (s).

(1) Domestic Abuse. All allegations of domestic abuse will be reported by the Ombudsman to FAP and the CO or designee. Reporting known or suspected abuse is a fundamental necessity to mitigate the damages imposed by acts of domestic abuse. Reporting abuse will allow the victim to seek aid, professional advice and access to educational resources regarding domestic abuse. It is the responsibility of the FFSP clinical counselor or domestic abuse victim advocate to meet with the individual, fully inform them of the benefits and limitations of each reporting option and provide a risk assessment, safety planning and other support. As a guide, the Ombudsman should consider all reports as valid incidents of abuse (e.g. disclosed by spouse or intimate partner, a third party (e.g., a child) or witnessed). Trained professionals will determine the validity of the allegations, not the Ombudsman or the command.

(2) Child Neglect and Abuse. All allegations of child abuse or child neglect must be reported by the Ombudsman to FAP and the CO or designee. Any individual within the chain of command of a Service Member who obtains credible information (which may include a reasonable belief) that a child in the family or home of the member has suffered an incident of child abuse must report that information to the appropriate FAP office as directed by section 575 of Public Law 114-328. Per state requirements, some Ombudsmen will also notify CPS. Check with FAP to see if your state qualifies. Additionally, Ombudsmen who receive child sexual abuse allegations will report them, per reference (r) and (s).

f. Reportables and Safety. If at any time the Ombudsman believes that the life, health or safety of an individual is in imminent danger of domestic abuse, the Ombudsman is required to report the situation immediately to FAP and appropriate command officials. Safety is the ultimate concern for anyone involved in an abusive situation.

2. Sexual Assault. Allegations of sexual assault Ombudsman must be reported to the CO per reference (u).

a. Definition of Sexual Assault. Intentional sexual contact characterized by the use of force, threats, intimidation or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault is further defined in reference (u).

b. Reporting Options. Ombudsmen should be aware that victims of sexual assault have two options for reporting sexual assault in the Navy.

(1) Unrestricted Reporting. An Unrestricted Report allows sexual assault victims to receive medical treatment, advocacy services and legal support. As part of this option, law enforcement initiates an investigation and the victim's CO is notified. Victims of sexual assault have a right to be reasonably protected and may also be eligible for other protections, including a

Military Protective Order or a civilian protective order. Victims may also be eligible for an expedited transfer. Victims who elect this option may not convert to a Restricted Report.

(2) **Restricted Reporting.** A Restricted Report allows victims of sexual assault to receive Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) legal advice and medical and advocacy services, but does not trigger an investigation. Information will be provided to Command that does not reveal the victims' identity, nor that of the alleged offender. The only professionals that can accept a Restricted Report are the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Victim Advocate (VA) and healthcare providers and healthcare support personnel.

c. Response Services.

(1) Confidential access to a SAPR VA, regardless of reporting option selected.

(2) Support from highly trained personnel, including Medical and Mental Healthcare providers, VLC and Chaplains.

(3) A variety of support, recovery and safety options, including Expedited Transfer, Military Protective Order, Catch a Serial Offender Program, Case Management Group (CMG) reviews and updates and victim safety assessments. Expedited Transfers and CMG reviews are only available to victims that have elected to file an Unrestricted Report.

(4) 24/7, worldwide, anonymous and confidential support at Safe Helpline – a specialized, secure online service that provides help and information anytime, anywhere. Find more information at <https://safehelpline.org/>.

d. Reporting Guidance. All allegations of sexual assault will be reported by the Ombudsman to the CO per ref (u). Upon receipt of an allegation of sexual assault, Ombudsmen should encourage the victim to speak to a SARC or SAPR VA to discuss reporting options and receive support and should also apprise the victim of their duty to report any details of the assault to the command.

(1) Ombudsmen do not possess Military Rules of Evidence 514 privilege and thus are required to report all allegations of sexual assault to the CO per ref (u). A disclosure of a sexual assault allegation to an Ombudsman does not preclude a victim's right to file a Restricted Report within the SAPR program, but will result in a third party report of the assault to the command and MCIO notification. Victims retain the right to refuse to participate in any MCIO investigation launched as a result of third party reports.

(2) Victims, witnesses, bystanders (who intervened), SARCs, SAPR VAs, responders and family members of victims who are experiencing retaliation associated with the sexual assault are eligible to file an official report of retaliation and receive assistance from the SAPR program in line with ref (u).