

# OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM



**COMDTINST 1750.4F**  
**November 2024**

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COMDTINST 1750.4F  
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COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1750.4F

Subj: OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

- Ref: (a) 28 U.S.C. Chapter 171 Tort Claims Procedure  
(b) Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, 42 U.S.C. §14503  
(c) 10 U.S.C. § 1588 Authority to Accept Certain Voluntary Services  
(d) The Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), The Per Diem, Travel, and Transportation Allowance Committee, U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)  
(e) Invitational Travel Authorizations, COMDTINST 12570.3 (series)  
(f) Limited Personal Use of Government Desktop Equipment, WIFI, and Mobile Devices, COMDTINST 5375.1 (series)  
(g) U.S. Coast Guard Personal Property Management Manual, COMDTINST M4500.5 (series)  
(h) Morale, Well Being, and Recreation, COMDTINST 1710.13 (series)  
(i) Mail Management Program Policy, COMDTINST 5110.1 (series)  
(j) Qualified Designated Organizations and the Use of Approved Non-Governmental Educational Materials and Presenters, COMDTINST 1740.3 (series)  
(k) The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2  
(l) Special Needs Program, COMDTINST 1754.7 (series)  
(m) U.S. Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST M5350.4 (series)  
(n) Sexual Assault Prevention, Response, and Recovery (SAPRR) Program, COMDTINST 1754.10 (series)  
(o) The Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a  
(p) Coast Guard External Affairs Manual, COMDTINST M5700.13 (series)
1. **PURPOSE.** This Instruction provides policy, program implementation guidance, and assigns responsibilities for the Coast Guard Ombudsman Program to improve Coast Guard family readiness and resilience through volunteer excellence. References (a) through (p) apply. This Instruction requires all Commanders/Commanding Officers (CO) and Officers-in-Charge (OIC) to appoint, support, and include an Ombudsman as a member of the command team.
- a. For the policy language used in this Instruction, the word “shall” means the action described is mandatory or required (i.e., same as “must”). The word “should” means the action described is highly encouraged, but not mandatory or required. The word “may” means the action is authorized but discretionary. The word “will” is descriptive, meaning it does not prescribe an action.

2. ACTION. All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commandants, and chiefs of headquarter directorates shall comply with the policies in this Instruction.
3. AUTHORIZED RELEASE. Internet release is authorized.
4. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Coast Guard Ombudsman Program, COMDTINST 1750.4E, is cancelled.
5. DISCUSSION. The Ombudsman Program is vital to Coast Guard readiness and mission execution. Ombudsmen are trained volunteers who advance unit and family readiness by serving as a communications link between a unit CO/OIC and unit families. Ombudsmen ensure that Coast Guard families have the information and resources necessary to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle. Ombudsmen assist and advise the CO/OIC to understand the needs and challenges of Coast Guard families. Ombudsmen provide information and create connections between the command and the family to help in both emergent situations and day-to-day challenges associated with the military life.
  - a. Ombudsmen are members of the command team. All CO/OICs shall provide necessary training and support to the unit Ombudsman as an essential part of their leadership team. Each Coast Guard command shall be supported by an Ombudsman.
  - b. Although not part of the chain of command, the Ombudsman is an official member of the unit command staff and the primary link and communicator of information between families and the command. Core Ombudsmen responsibilities include:
    - (1) Serving as a liaison between the command and families;
    - (2) Keeping the CO/OIC informed regarding the morale, health and welfare of unit's families;
    - (3) Regularly communicating and distributing information between the command and family members;
    - (4) Providing information and resource referrals to assist families with concerns or issues; and,
    - (5) Assisting commands and families to be prepared to meet emergent situations.
6. DISCLAIMER. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide administrative guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended nor does it impose legally binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
7. MAJOR CHANGES. This Instruction has undergone a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

8. SCOPE AND AUTHORITIES. In addition to the references already listed, both Ombudsmen and CO/OIC should become familiar with the directives and publications noted throughout this Instruction, listed here by order of series number:
  - Religious Ministry within the Coast Guard, COMDTINST 1730.4 (series);
  - Coast Guard Spouses Club, COMDTINST 1750.6 (series);
  - Family Advocacy Program (FAP), COMDTINST 1752.1 (series);
  - United States Coast Guard Regulations 1992, COMDTINST M5000.3 (series);
  - Accessible Systems and Technology Program (ASTP); Section 508, COMDTINST 5230.6 (series);
  - Coast Guard Operations Security (OPSEC) Program Manual, COMDTINST M5510.24 (series);
  - Financial Resource Management Manual, COMDTINST 7100.3 (series);
  - Handbook for Safeguarding Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information, Privacy Policy Directive 047-01-007, Rev. 3.
9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. The Office of Environmental Management, Commandant (CG-47) reviewed this Commandant Instruction, and the general policies contained within, and determined that this policy falls under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion A3. This Commandant Instruction will not result in any substantial change to existing environmental conditions or violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws relating to the protection of the environment. It is the responsibility of the action proponent to evaluate all future specific actions resulting from this policy for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), other applicable environmental requirements, and the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 (series).
10. DISTRIBUTION. Electronic distribution in the Directives System Library. Intranet/Pixel Dashboard: Directives Pubs, and Forms - PowerApps (appsplatform.us). If Internet released: Commandant Instructions (uscg.mil), Coast Guard Forms (uscg.mil).
11. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. Records created as a result of this Instruction, regardless of format or media, shall be managed in accordance with Records & Information Management Program Roles and Responsibilities, COMDTINST 5212.12 (series) and the records retention schedule located on the Records Resource Center Microsoft SharePoint site at: <https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/cg61/SitePages/CG-611-RIM.aspx>.
12. POLICY ON PROGRAM MANAGEMENT. The Ombudsman Program Manager provides program management from the Coast Guard Headquarters' Family Services Division, Commandant (CG-1K12). Area Regional Ombudsman Coordinators (AROCs) serve in Atlantic and Pacific Areas, to support program implementation within their respective areas. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice (RP) Ombudsman Coordinator's (OCs) plan, manage, and implement the HSWL RP responsibilities for the Ombudsman Program in their area.

13. POLICY ON COMMAND PARTICIPATION. All CO/OIC are required to appoint an Ombudsman according to the Office of Work-Life Ombudsman Program requirements. All CO/OIC shall provide their Ombudsmen with required training and support described in this policy. The guidelines and criteria for selecting an Ombudsman are available at [www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman](http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman), under “Command Cadre Toolkit.” If a volunteer cannot be identified, a spouse of the command cadre may be appointed in six-month increments. If efforts to recruit a spouse from the unit are unsuccessful, the CO/OIC may seek a non-spouse volunteer affiliated with the unit, spouse volunteer from another Coast Guard unit, or Coast Guard auxiliary member. CO/OICs should consider the following:
- a. CO/OICs may share an appointed Ombudsman from another unit or appoint a volunteer outside the unit. If an appointed Ombudsman agrees to represent more than one unit, the agreement should be in writing. Both units should support their Ombudsman as outlined in Ombudsman Program Support Guidance for Commands in Appendix A.
  - b. When sharing the services of an Ombudsman between commands, each CO/OIC shall provide a separate (1) CO/OIC signed appointment letter and (2) signed Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities or Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities, DD Form 2793. This is to ensure volunteer coverage for personal liability and grant legal protection per Reference (a) and (b). Each CO/OIC shall provide a command roster and family contact information to the Ombudsman for reference and communication.
14. POLICY FOR APPOINTING AN OMBUDSMAN-AT-LARGE (OAL). The Commandant may elect to appoint one or more volunteers to serve as Ombudsman-at-Large (OAL) and act as a representative for all Ombudsmen and address matters pertaining to active duty and reserve families. The OALs are encouraged to collaborate with the Coast Guard Headquarters’ Ombudsman Program Manager for training and to exchange best practices. See Commandant Ombudsman-at-Large (OAL) Duties found in Appendix B.
15. POLICY ON COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (CoP). CoPs support the Ombudsmen in the Program. Coast Guard District Commanders shall establish a CoP per the District Ombudsman Community of Practice guidance in Appendix C.
16. POLICY ON OMBUDSMAN TRAINING. Training provides Ombudsmen important program policies and guidelines, resources, and tools to support the performance of their duties. Coast Guard Ombudsman training is required within three months of appointment.
17. POLICY ON CONFIDENTIALITY AND REPORTING. Ombudsmen shall: (1) support the command’s mission; (2) respect the command and family members; (3) maintain confidentiality; (4) avoid conflicts of interest; and (5) maintain the highest standards of professionalism. Contact and communications with an Ombudsman are considered confidential, except in those circumstances described in this policy. Ombudsmen shall adhere to the following, as well as the Ombudsman duties set forth in Appendix D.
- a. If an Ombudsman learns of information indicating a life-threatening situation, the Ombudsman shall immediately call emergency services (911).
  - b. If an Ombudsman learns of information about a possible sexual assault, whether from a

victim or third party, the Ombudsman shall as soon as possible report that information to the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC). The Ombudsman shall then notify the CO/OIC as soon as possible of the following:

- (1) That the Ombudsman has (a) learned of information about a possible sexual assault; and (b) that the Ombudsman has notified the SARC.
  - (2) The Ombudsman shall not provide any additional detail regarding the possible sexual assault to the CO/OIC or anyone else other than the SARC.
  - (3) The CO/OIC shall not question the Ombudsman regarding the possible sexual assault but may contact the SARC for information on whether a report of sexual assault was taken by the SARC and, if so, whether that report is restricted or unrestricted.
- c. If an Ombudsman learns of information about possible child abuse or other domestic violence (including intimate partner violence), the Ombudsman is required to report that information to the Family Advocacy Specialist (FAS) as soon as possible.
- (1) The FAS, not the Ombudsman, is responsible for reporting the incident under Federal and State laws, as applicable, and responding to the report.
  - (2) The Ombudsman is then required to notify the CO/OIC as soon as possible of the report.
- d. If an Ombudsman learns of information about potential suicide or other behaviors indicating a person may be considering self-harm, the Ombudsman shall immediately notify the CO/OIC and HSWL Employee Assistance Program Coordinator. Ombudsmen who are trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) who encounter persons at risk of committing suicide are encouraged to provide suicide first-aid and intervention in accordance with their training.
- e. Ombudsmen may serve as a point of contact for emergency and crisis-related information as instructed by the CO/OIC.
- f. Ombudsmen may establish personal connections with others within the Coast Guard community, including military personnel, civilian, family members, and fellow volunteers. It is important, to emphasize a clear distinction between personal relationships and the execution of official Ombudsman duties to maintain the program's integrity and prevent conflicts of interest. When in doubt, an Ombudsman should consult with the command and/or AROC/HSWL RP OC. Policy program questions should be referred to the Office of Work-Life Program Manager, at Coast Guard Headquarters (CG-1K12).
- g. The Ombudsman, while fulfilling their official responsibilities, shall not engage in the following activities: provide childcare, lend money, offer transportation in their private vehicle (except in an emergency), provide temporary lodging in their home, or organize (plan or host) social events or functions not related to the Ombudsman Program, work-life, or other military support programs. Ombudsmen are encouraged to support and may participate in social activities sponsored and organized separately by Spouses' Clubs.

Social events that promote the morale, health, and welfare of command families may be included in an Ombudsman newsletter or communications. These requirements will ensure that the Ombudsman will focus solely on their official Ombudsman duties and remain ethically sound and limit potential personal liability, as per Reference (b).

18. POLICY FOR COMMAND CADRE SPOUSE PARTICIPATION. A command cadre spouse may share best practices and contribute to the command's Ombudsman Program only as part of broader command support or resource team unless appointed as an Ombudsman in a short-term capacity. Command cadre spouses are not eligible to be an Ombudsman on a permanent basis. Command cadre spouses should not provide task direction to an Ombudsman; however, they may attend Ombudsman training sessions. Training opportunities are subject to space availability. The Ombudsman Program shall not fund any expenses associated with command cadre participation in Ombudsman training.
19. POLICY ON ANNUAL COAST GUARD OMBUDSMAN APPRECIATION DAY. The Coast Guard commemorates "Coast Guard Ombudsman Appreciation Day" annually on 26 March to recognize the dedicated service of these important volunteers. Unit commands are encouraged to recognize and show appreciation for their Ombudsmen. Additional recognition should be considered throughout the year, as these recognition events raise awareness of the importance of Ombudsmen to the broader Coast Guard community.
20. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. The following are key roles and responsibilities in support of the Ombudsman Program:
  - a. Commandant of the Coast Guard (CG-00). The Commandant may appoint one or more volunteer(s) to serve as Ombudsman-at-Large (OAL) to represent all Ombudsmen and report at large on active duty and reserve family concerns. The OAL(s) are typically the spouse(s) of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPOCG), and/or the Master Chief Petty Officer – Coast Guard Reserve (MCPO-CGR). This appointment is at the discretion of the Commandant. See paragraph 13 above and Appendix B for additional details.
  - b. Assistant Commandant for Health, Safety, and Work-Life Commandant (CG-1K). CG-1K establishes and disseminates policy and guidance for the mandatory enterprise-wide Ombudsman Program.
  - c. Office of Work-Life Programs, Commandant (CG-1K1). CG-1K1 is tasked with formulating program policies and advancing program management initiatives across active duty, reserve, civilian, and Auxiliary forces.
  - d. Family Services Division, Commandant (CG-1K12). The Family Services Division provides direct oversight of the Ombudsman Program. The Ombudsman Program Manager provides day-to-day program and policy guidance. The Ombudsman Program Manager coordinates with the HSWL Service Center on technical matters and with all OC's (Area and HWSL RP). The Ombudsman Program Manager's duties are found in Appendix E.



- e. Atlantic and Pacific Area Regional Ombudsman Coordinators (AROC). AROCs are responsible for oversight and support of the Ombudsman program within their respective Area. They conduct regular meetings with Area Commanders, Deputy Commanders, and designated staff to address program delivery, collaborate on standardization efforts, and offer advice on family support. They assist in identifying program needs, report unresolved issues to appropriate leadership, and create outreach plans. They also ensure information in the Ombudsman Registry is accurate and manage training initiatives. Additionally, the AROCs administer awards, develop peer support guidance, and advocate for program support and compliance. This role serves as a central hub for coordination, guidance, and promotion of the Ombudsman Program. AROC duties are defined in Appendix F.
- f. District Commander. District Commanders coordinate Ombudsman related activities with the local HSWL RP OC and AROC. District Commanders shall establish one or more district Ombudsman “Community of Practice(s)” (CoPs) and appoint a chairperson as defined in Appendix C.
- g. Coast Guard Chaplain. A Chaplain is a source of support for the Ombudsman, acting as a reference point and direct connection for the families’ needs related to the capabilities of the Chaplain Corps. Location details and contact information can be found at: [www.uscg.mil/Leadership/Senior-Leadership/Chaplain-of-the-Coast-Guard/Locations/](http://www.uscg.mil/Leadership/Senior-Leadership/Chaplain-of-the-Coast-Guard/Locations/).
- h. Health, Safety, & Work-Life Service Center (HSWL SC). HSWL SC provides technical and operational oversight to all Regional Practices and their detachments. HSWL SC responsibilities include program and process standardization, quality assurance inspections and reports, data gathering and analysis, training, and job aid development, as well as identifying program issues/barriers, lessons learned, and best practices. Additional duties are defined in Appendix G.
- i. HSWL Regional Practice (HSWL RP). The HSWL RP is the regional management structure for operational, technical, and professional authority and responsibilities of the HSWL SC within a designated Area of Responsibility (AOR). Administrative authority of the HSWL RPs resides with the Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard Base or Training Center (TRACEN) to which the HSWL RP is assigned. For the specific duties of the HSWL RP Regional Manager (RM)/Work-Life Supervisor (WLS) in support of the Ombudsman Program see Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice (RP) Regional Manager RMs/WLS Duties found in Appendix H.
- j. HSWL RP Ombudsman Coordinator (OC). The HSWL RP OC is a collateral duty that is assigned to any member of the Work-Life staff. OCs provide guidance, advice, and support to commands and local Ombudsmen. For the specific duties of the HSWL RP OC in support of the Ombudsman Program see Appendix I.
- k. Coast Guard Area, District, Operational Logistics Command (LOGCOM), Sector Commanders and Base Commanding Officers, Commander Force Readiness Command and (FORCECOM), and all Unit Commands. All CO/OICs execute the Ombudsman Program per this Instruction. The roles and responsibilities of the Ombudsman may vary between commands and should be tailored to meet the needs of each command. The

CO/OIC defines the Ombudsman's role within the scope of the program and determines how these functions will be accomplished. See Appendix J for specific duties.

1. The Ombudsman. An Ombudsman is a formally appointed volunteer. Refer to Appendix D for duties.
21. FORMS. Refer to Appendix L for a complete list of required Ombudsman forms. Submit suggested changes and/or corrections for immediate action to [USCG.Forms@uscg.mil](mailto:USCG.Forms@uscg.mil).
22. SECTION 508. This policy is created to adhere to accessibility guidelines and standards as promulgated by the U.S. Access Board with consideration of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) requirements. If accessibility modifications are needed for this artifact, please communicate with the Section 508 Program Management Office (PMO) at [Section.508@uscg.mil](mailto:Section.508@uscg.mil). Concerns or complaints for non-compliance of policy and/or artifacts may be directed to the Section 508 PMO, the Civil Rights Directorate (<https://www.uscg.mil/Resources/Civil-Rights/>) for the Coast Guard, or to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security at [accessibility@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:accessibility@hq.dhs.gov).
23. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Units and individuals may recommend changes by writing through the chain of command to: Commandant (CG-1K12); U.S. Coast Guard Stop 7907; 2703 Martin Luther King Jr, Ave; Washington, DC 20593-7907.

/THOMAS G. ALLAN/  
Vice Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard  
Deputy Commandant for Mission Support

- Appendix A. Ombudsman Program Support Guidance for Commands
- Appendix B. Commandant Ombudsman-at-Large (OAL) Duties
- Appendix C. District Ombudsman Community of Practice
- Appendix D. Ombudsman Duties
- Appendix E. Ombudsman Program Manager
- Appendix F. Atlantic and Pacific Area Regional Ombudsman Coordinators (AROCs)
- Appendix G. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Service Center (SC) Duties
- Appendix H. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice (RP) RMs/WLS Duties
- Appendix I. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice (RP), Ombudsman Coordinators (OC) Duties
- Appendix J. Coast Guard Area, District, LOGCOM, Sector Commanders, and Base Commanding Officers, FORCECOM, Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy and all unit COs/OICs Duties
- Appendix K. Social Media Guidance
- Appendix L. List of Required Ombudsman Program Forms

## Appendix A. Ombudsman Program Support Guidance for Commands

1. Funding. CO/OICs shall identify appropriated funds to support the unit command's Ombudsman Program. CO/OICs shall ensure that the use of appropriated funds for the support of the unit's Ombudsman Program complies with the Financial Resource Management Manual, COMDTINST 7100.3 (series).
2. Reimbursement of Incidental Expenses. To receive reimbursements for the specified items, the Ombudsman must be fulfilling official duties as directed by the CO/OIC, possess an appointment letter signed by the CO/OIC, and have signed the volunteer agreement. Reference (c) is the authority to accept certain voluntary services.
  - a. Mileage, Parking, and Tolls. Reimbursement for mileage is at the current government privately owned vehicle rate. Proper documentation of mileage is required. Receipts are necessary for parking and toll expenses.
  - b. Invitational Travel Authorizations (ITA). Expenses incurred during participation in training, conferences, and other approved events are eligible for reimbursement and must be pre-approved. Reimbursements must adhere to the guidelines in Reference (d). ITAs are permitted for Ombudsmen and must be completed as provided in Reference (e). Commands may issue ITAs to individuals officially appointed as Ombudsman in support of the Ombudsman Program. Other volunteers providing volunteer services to the Ombudsman Program are not entitled to expense reimbursement under this program. Ombudsmen are allowed to ride in government vehicles while on ITAs, following the guidelines specified in DHS Policy Directive 118-02 Rev. 1 dated November 15, 2018, Transportation of Non-Government Personnel/Family Members in Government Owned/Leased Vehicles within the Department of Homeland Security.
  - c. Communication Equipment. Access to a computer, cell phone, or any electronic device, as well as long distance calling cards or plans and internet service, is permitted in accordance with the guidelines stated in References (c) and (f). Reimbursements for equipment expenditures require prior authorization and approval from the command.
    - (1) The CO/OIC may choose to provide equipment to the Ombudsman if they believe it would enhance the effectiveness of the Ombudsman Program. This equipment must be accounted for in accordance with References (f) and (g) and returned when the Ombudsman resigns. The Ombudsman shall limit use of these items to the execution of official Ombudsman duties.
    - (2) The decision to provide communication equipment, telephone service, or other electronic devices in the home of an Ombudsman is determined by the CO/OIC and reviewed with a District legal officer or the Legal Service Center (LSC) before installation. Reference (c) permits the installation of communication equipment in the private residences of individuals offering voluntary services. Careful consideration must be taken in the installation of such equipment as a necessary step for the Ombudsman Program to function effectively and should not be carried out as regular practice.

- d. Volunteer Childcare Reimbursement. Reimbursement of childcare may be justified if it is reasonably necessary and directly contributes to the Coast Guard's ability to carry out its responsibilities. The Ombudsmen must be acting in an official capacity as directed by the CO/OIC to receive childcare reimbursement.
  - (1) The childcare reimbursement may not exceed the local rate of the Coast Guard Child Development Center (CDC).
  - (2) If Coast Guard operated care is unavailable, reimbursement for childcare will be paid with available unit funds. COs/OICs should establish caps of reimbursement based on local commercial childcare market rates.
3. Morale Funds. Local Ombudsmen should collaborate with their CO/OIC and designated unit morale officer to assess opportunities to engage with service members and their families during unit morale events.
4. Administrative Support. Administrative assistance includes paper, envelopes, pens, basic copier services, and access to government mail for official correspondence. This may be supplied from appropriated funds only depending on the availability of command resources.
5. Newsletter Expenses. Electronic content shall be Section 508 compliant to ensure accessibility. The General Services Administration provides content creation guidance at <https://www.section508.gov/> . Further questions may be directed to [Section.508@uscg.mil](mailto:Section.508@uscg.mil). Newsletters should be sent using the most cost-effective method as outlined in Reference (i).

## **Appendix B. Commandant Ombudsman-at-Large (OAL) Duties**

1. OAL Appointment. The Commandant may choose to appoint in writing one or more volunteers to serve as OAL. The OAL will directly report to the Commandant, or their designated official Coast Guard representative. The term of service for an OAL automatically expires if the OAL's spouse retires or transfers to a different duty location, and/or if a new Commandant is appointed; a resignation letter is required from the OAL to the Commandant in these situations. However, the new Commandant may temporarily appoint the current OAL to continue serving until a replacement is found, may gap the appointment, or reappoint the incumbent to continue serving for continuity.
2. OAL Duties Responsibilities. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Serve in an advisory role related to the purpose of the Ombudsman Program specifically on the status of active duty and reserve families at-large.
  - b. Engage in communications and collaboration on topics potentially impacting the Ombudsman Program at-large.
  - c. Engage in communications with the Coast Guard Headquarters Ombudsman Program Manager and AROCs on topics related to the implementation of the program.
  - d. Act as an advocate for awareness and participation in the Ombudsman Program, promoting its importance and benefits.
  - e. Develop a comprehensive understanding of Work-Life programs and other official resources such as family emergency preparedness.
  - f. Develop travel plans in consultation with the Commandant or their appointed representative for pre and post travel; developing a forecasted annual travel schedule that may include visits to Coast Guard units, engagement with Ombudsmen, and active duty and reservist family members. Inform the Ombudsman Program Manager of key plans and findings from travel and engagement activities.
  - g. Participate in training and relevant meetings aligned to the scope of voluntary responsibilities. For travel meetings, ensure that ITAs are approved before traveling, as outlined in Reference (e).
  - h. At the request of the Commandant, travel to Coast Guard units, meet with Ombudsmen and family members, and attend meetings and conferences. During these visits, they may gather valuable information relevant to the effective functioning and enhancement of the Ombudsman programs.
  - i. Write reports after any field visits and submit them to the Commandant upon request, with a copy provided to the Assistant Commandant for Health, Safety, and Work-Life (CG-1K).

- j. Follow up with the Ombudsman Program Manager after trips to foster continuous improvement and success of the Ombudsman Program; this coordination may occur during the quarterly OAL meetings.
  - k. As a volunteer of the CG, the OAL shall Complete a DD Form 2793, Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities. Part II of this form, which pertains to Appropriated Fund Activities, is executed by the Commandant.
  - l. Participate in training to include attending the Coast Guard Ombudsman Training (CGOT) as soon as possible after appointment. Costs to participate in required training may be supported by Commandant (CG-1K1) when Ombudsman Program training funds are available.
  - m. Participate in other relevant training opportunities to become well-acquainted with the Ombudsman Program and other Work-Life programs ensuring the OAL is well-prepared to carry out their responsibilities effectively.
3. OAL Limitations. The OAL shall not engage in policymaking, supervise paid employees or military personnel, or perform any inherently governmental functions. This includes tasks like determining entitlements to benefits, authorizing expenditures, or making decision on rights and responsibilities of any party under Coast Guard requirements. Their role is focused on representing Ombudsmen, reporting on family concerns, and advising the Commandant on matters related to Coast Guardsmen and their families. Additionally, the OAL shall not serve as Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) peer. Their role does not involve providing actual Work-Life services, including CISM interventions.

### **Appendix C. District Ombudsman Community of Practice**

1. The District Ombudsman Community of Practice (CoP). The District CoP exists to support the appointed Ombudsmen, but it is not a policymaking or supervisory entity. The CoP is a collaborative environment for sharing and exchanging of information, provide peer support, receive program and policy updates, and may serve as a venue for ongoing training. A District CoP may meet monthly, quarterly, or bi-annually. All Ombudsmen within the district are expected to participate and represent their unit and families' interests. Command leadership, including COs/OICs, XOs, CMCs, chaplains, and their spouses, are encouraged to attend. The District Commander may establish one or more CoPs. The District CoP falls under the responsibility and guidance of the District Commander. Confidentiality must be maintained during these meetings. Functions include:
  - a. Support the professional development of the Ombudsmen by providing supplementary training in accordance with Reference (j).
  - b. Facilitate the exchange of information.
  - c. Offer suggestions about community matters affecting the well-being of Coast Guard families.
  - d. Be a local guide between the Ombudsmen and relevant local authorities, such as representatives of Morale, Well-Being, and Recreation, Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, childcare services to facilitate policy discussion and seek clarification on various matters affecting Coast Guard families.
  - e. Carry out additional tasks as instructed by the District Commander.
  - f. CoPs must not interfere with the relationship between the Ombudsman and the command.
  - g. CoPs must not engage in collecting dues, soliciting, or holding any form of monetary transactions.
2. Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Individual Ombudsmen within the CoP are authorized and encouraged to share their personal opinions and recommendations. When issues arise, Ombudsmen within a CoP may offer support by listening, clarifying issues/challenges, and providing insights on matters, including assisting in developing potential solutions to issues/challenges. However, a CoP is not and is not intended to be a Federal Advisory Committee as defined in reference (k), and the Coast Guard will not seek consensus advice from the CoP. Questions should be directed to the servicing Coast Guard legal office.

3. District CoP Chair. The District Commander shall appoint a CoP chair in writing for a specific term, not to exceed 4 years. The chairperson should be an existing Ombudsman, whose spouse serves in an active duty or reserve capacity within a command in the district. The chairperson's term automatically ends if their spouse transfers outside of the district, separates, or retires. Additionally, a letter of resignation is required during a change of command, but the incoming District Commander may request the current Ombudsman to continue until a new chairperson is appointed. The HSWL RP Ombudsman Coordinator is not eligible to serve as the chairperson but may advise. CoP chairperson duties include:
  - a. Presiding over COP meetings.
  - b. Offer information and support to all district Ombudsmen within the AOR.
  - c. Collaborate with the HSWL RP Ombudsman Coordinator to plan and schedule trainings.
  - d. Act as a representative for the district, participating in committees, boards, or group meetings as requested by the District Commander.



### **Appendix D. Ombudsman Duties**

1. The Ombudsmen shall agree to execute the duties outlined in this appendix; duties include:
  - a. Attend an Ombudsman “orientation” if unable to attend the formal Coast Guard Ombudsman Training (CGOT) course within four weeks of appointment.
  - b. Participate in CGOT within three months of becoming an Ombudsman. If a previous Ombudsman is reappointed, CGOT attendance is optional, unless more than eighteen months has elapsed since their last appointment/assignment.
  - c. Annually complete Information Technology Security Awareness and Privacy at DHS: Protecting Personal Information trainings at <https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-security-and-training-requirements-contractors> and upload completion certificates in the Ombudsman Registry.
  - d. Serve as liaison between the command and families and report directly to the CO/OIC or the unit POC of the general welfare, morale, and health of the unit families.
  - e. Maintain communication with the command and families. Contact members and families upon arrival to the command to introduce themselves and explain how they can be of service to the family. Communication may be in the form of electronic mail, newsletters, or other command approved forms of communication. Third-party social media platforms, such as Facebook, must never be used as substitutes for official sources of information. For further instructions on social media usage, refer to Appendix L.
  - f. Seek approval from the CO/OIC for all official correspondence before proceeding with printing, distribution, posting, or mailing.
  - g. Keep an accurate and current roster that includes phone numbers and email addresses. This roster is used to notify unit families about command-related updates. Note that all contact information contains Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and Ombudsmen should follow the guidelines in the Handbook for Safeguarding Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information, Privacy Policy Directive 047-01-007, Rev. 3.
  - h. Collaborate with spouse clubs/associations and relevant associations on behalf of the unit and command. Ombudsmen may not hold positions (such as president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, or in any other role) within a military spouses’ club or similar association in any branch of the military. Ombudsmen may participate in spouse clubs/associations in a personal capacity. An Ombudsman is not permitted to use his/her title, position, or status to solicit any non-federal source for any cash or non-cash donations for a spouse club/association.
  - i. Provide information, resources, and referrals to families. Ombudsmen should:
    - (1) Use the local unit and servicing HSWL RP Work-Life staff as the first option in their referral process;

- (2) Be knowledgeable about all programs offered from the servicing HSWL RP, chaplains, local DOD agencies, and other support agencies;
  - (3) Maintain accurate information on resources available by support service agencies, military and civilian, to include telephone numbers, location and point-of-contact; and
  - (4) Per Reference (1) inform active duty and family members about the requirement of mandatory enrollment in the Special Needs Program and provide Active Duty and family members with information regarding Special Needs Program point of contacts within the local area.
- j. Serve as a source of emergency and crisis information as directed by the CO/OIC.
  - k. Coordinate services for families including during mobilization or geographic separation. For any situation in which family members remain in one community while the member reports to another location for duty, the local Ombudsman retains responsibility for local support services and the active-duty command Ombudsman assumes responsibility for official command communication with the member and their family members. This should ensure family members are receiving local resource information and official command information. Ombudsmen from both commands may share responsibility for those family members who do not accompany the member to the area of active-duty assignment.
  - l. Operate within the defined scope of responsibilities, functions, and duties as outlined in this Instruction and as also specified by the appointing CO/OIC. Ombudsmen who act without authority or contrary to this policy may increase legal risk to themselves and the Service. There could be emergency circumstances in which a person serving as an Ombudsman decides on their own initiative to act outside the scope of their authorized Ombudsman duties in an emergency. For example, an emergency occurs in which a person is severely injured and the person serving as an Ombudsman is also independently licensed under State law (e.g., physician, nurse, EMT) or trained in first aid and desires to take action in that emergency situation to immediately render first aid. This Instruction does not prohibit any person from saving a life. However, in such case because providing medical care or first aid is not within the scope of an Ombudsman's duties, the person's actions would not be covered by this Instruction or done under Coast Guard authority. The act of providing first aid in an emergency would instead be governed by applicable State law.
  - m. Complete the Ombudsman worksheet and enter data monthly into the Ombudsman Registry. Data should include services provided and time spent performing Ombudsman duties unit families. It aids in recognizing patterns for families during periods of deployment and non-deployment. The worksheet aids in pinpointing training that could prove valuable for both the unit and families.
  - n. Engage in Yellow Ribbon reintegration and unit deployment events, when applicable.
  - o. Promote general awareness of family readiness planning to ensure family members are prepared to deal with the unique roles and responsibilities of service members.

- p. Abide by the highest standards of confidentiality to safeguard the privacy of individuals and uphold the credibility of the Ombudsman Program.
- q. At the CO/OICs discretion, may act as consultants to represent the unit on boards, committees, or family outreach events that aid both the unit and families.
- r. Attend the District Ombudsman CoP as outlined in Appendix C.
- s. Prevent conflicts of interest when interacting with both the command and family members. The legal framework concerning conflicts of interest is outline in Title 18 U.S.C Chapter 11 and the Joint Ethics Regulations (DOD 5500.7R, November 2011).
- t. Fulfill any additional official roles, functions, or responsibilities assigned by the CO/OIC.
- u. Submit Letters of Resignation to the CO/OIC in the following circumstances:
  - (1) Transfers and Military Status Changes. Ombudsmen shall submit a letter of resignation when the Ombudsman's spouse transfers from the command or transitions out of the service.
  - (2) Change of Command. When an incoming OC/OIC assumes a command of a CG unit, they have the option to reappoint the current Ombudsman in writing. If the incoming CO/OIC chooses not to reappoint the existing Ombudsman, the existing Ombudsman should submit a letter of resignation.
  - (3) Voluntary Resignation. If the Ombudsman wishes to resign from their position, they should submit a Letter of Resignation to the CO/OIC.
  - (4) Command Decision. If the CO/OIC determines that their service is not aligned with the needs of the command or the Ombudsman Program, the CO/OIC shall communicate that to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman may submit a Letter of Resignation to the CO/OIC.

Note: The outgoing Ombudsman should communicate with the new CO/OIC or the designated command POC regarding the transition of unresolved matters to the incoming Ombudsman. Ombudsman Program-related documents must be disposed of following the command's established procedures for handling Privacy Act-protected information. The command roster should be handed over to the CO/OIC, and the Ombudsman's email listing must be deleted.

- v. Must not discriminate against members of the unit or their families, regardless of military paygrade, race, creed, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, or disability. Reference (m) provides further guidance on this matter.

- w. Must not serve as CISM peer support personnel. While Ombudsmen play a vital role in assisting families during critical incidents by facilitating communication and linking families with necessary services, they should not provide direct work-life services such as CISM peer interventions.
- x. Prohibited from acting as Victim Advocate for sexual assault cases or attend VA training following the guidelines of Reference (n).
- y. Must not create or maintain records on family members beyond providing information and referrals to services and programs. Their role is centered around helping and connecting families with appropriate resources, rather than maintaining personal records.
- z. Must not seek cash or non-cash donations from external, non-federal sources for the Coast Guard or any Coast Guard personnel. This includes activities like using platforms such as “Go Fund Me” and organizing “Meal Trains” for such purposes. Ombudsmen shall not solicit donations from non-federal sources.
- aa. Must not advocate for, or endorse, any “for-profit” business or entity. Their role should remain focused on providing information, support, and resources to assist unit families without promoting commercial interests.
- bb. Per the guidelines in Reference (c), when functioning in their official capacity CO/OIC:
  - (1) Must not place the person in a policymaking position; or
  - (2) Must not compensate the person for the provision of such services
- cc. Additionally, Ombudsmen shall not:
  - (1) Supervise paid employees or military personnel or carry out inherently governmental functions such as determining benefits, authorizing expenses, or setting disputes under Coast Guard regulations.
  - (2) Replace paid employees or substitute for authorized paid personnel positions.
  - (3) Provide case management or counseling services, even if they possess professional training in these areas.

### **Appendix E. Ombudsman Program Manager**

1. The Ombudsman Program Manager (PM) provides enterprise-wide management from within the Coast Guard Headquarters' Family Service Division, Commandant (CG-1K12) and shall:
  - a. Develop strategic planning, policy, and guidance for the Ombudsman Program.
  - b. Collaborate and communicate with AROCs and HSWL SC to ensure unity of effort, overall uniformity in administration, and standardization of the Ombudsman Program including emerging information that could potentially impact the Ombudsman Program.
  - c. Perform research on best practices and actively seek opportunities to exchange insights on volunteer matters, trends, and initiatives with other federal entities including DoD to address family and service member resilience.
  - d. Publish the Ombudsman Program training materials in collaboration with the HSWL SC. Post supplementary guidance, procedures, training opportunities, and resources on the Ombudsman Program website at [www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman](http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman).
  - e. Distribute information, announcements, and updates through the Ombudsman Registry.
  - f. Annually, coordinate the Wanda Allen-Yearout Ombudsman of the Year Award process, with roll up of district finalists from the AROCs.

## **Appendix F. Atlantic and Pacific Area Regional Ombudsman Coordinators (AROCs)**

1. Atlantic and Pacific Area Ombudsman Coordinators (AROCs). AROC duties and responsibilities:
  - a. Meet with the respective Area Commander, Deputy Commander, and/or designated staff members, to address Ombudsman Program implementation, and provide recommendations on work-life and family support programs.
  - b. Collaborate with the Ombudsman Program Manager and HSWL SC to ensure unity of effort and overall uniformity in administration and standardization of the Ombudsman Program. Notify them regarding emergent issues that could impact the program.
  - c. Develop a communications plan for the respective AORs to raise awareness of the program. Communicate using plain language with accessible electronic content.
  - d. Distribute information, announcements, and updates through the Ombudsman Registry where content is specific to district information or guidance. Ensure accuracy and currency of information in the Ombudsman Registry.
  - e. Coordinate with District Commanders to ensure District Ombudsman CoP meetings are held as directed in Appendix C and encourage participation from Ombudsmen, command cadre members, coordinators, and trainers.
  - f. Provide the Ombudsman Program Manager with a list of District CoP Chairs, including names and contact information.
  - g. Collaborate with the Ombudsman Program Manager and HSWL SC to develop a Coast Guard Ombudsman Program training and assist in promulgation and end-user training.
  - h. Certify and decertify Coast Guard Ombudsman Training (CGOT) instructors. AROC shall:
    - (1) Collaborate with Ombudsman Program Manager to establish CGOT training requirements and ensure only certified instructors use approved curricula for training.
    - (2) Coordinate with Ombudsman Program manager to train CGOT instructors;
    - (3) Maintain a listing of certified CGOT instructors and forward listing to the Ombudsman Program manager and HSWL SC as changes occur;
    - (4) Identify CGOT instructors for recertification who have not taught CGOT for over 18 months; and,
    - (5) Ensure sufficient training is held to support requirements to include Online Core Training, CGOT, Virtual CGOT (vCGOT), Train the Trainer, and standardized Ombudsman Advanced Training. process all CGOT trainer applications for attendance training and final approval to the Ombudsman Program Manager.

- i. Work in coordination with the Ombudsman Program Manager, HSWL SC, and Area/District Commanders to ensure the implementation of the Ombudsman Program is in accordance with this Instruction and standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- j. Annually, Administer the District Ombudsman of the Year awards process. Advance district winners as finalists for nomination for the Coast Guard's Wanda Allen-Yearout Ombudsman of the Year Award.
- k. Collaborate with the Ombudsman Program Manager and HSWL SC to develop Ombudsman Peer Support standards. Ombudsman Peer Support occurs when an individual uses their own experiences to help another within their peer group and in turn support each other.

**Appendix G. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Service Center (SC) Duties**

1. The HSWL SC shall:
  - a. Collaborate with the Ombudsman Program Manager and AROCs to create and manage training materials for Ombudsmen, including advanced and virtual training sessions.
  - b. Provide technical guidance to the HSWL RPs to ensure implementation of the Ombudsman Program per this Instruction.
  - c. Distribute program funding to HSWL RPs based on budget models and local requirements. This funding covers essential aspects such as training, materials, website management, and promotional efforts.
  - d. Collaborate with the Ombudsman Program Manager and AROCs in developing and implementing SOPs for the Ombudsman Program.
  - e. Communicate policy and program updates to HSWL RMs/WLS and AROCs.
  - f. Establish and maintain the Coast Guard Ombudsman Registry to gather data on Ombudsmen workload and performance metrics.
  - g. Collaborate with the Ombudsman Program Manager and AROCs to identify and develop program quality assurance monitoring standards, processes, and metrics for the Ombudsman Program.
  - h. Develop and maintain an online platform as a central repository of resources and guidance for HSWL RP OC.
  - i. Notify the Ombudsman Program Manager and AROCs of HSWL RP staff delegated as HSWL RP OC.



**Appendix H. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice (RP) RMs/WLS Duties**

1. HSWL RP RMs/WLS shall:
  - a. Select an appropriate staff member or members to fulfill the role of HSWL RP OC through a formal designation letter and forward a copy of the letter to the HSWL SC. The HSWL SC shall forward copies to Commandant (CG-1K12) and AROC's.
  - b. Actively encourage the use of the Ombudsman Program among Coast Guard members and their families, particularly emphasizing its importance during HSWL outreach events and programs.
  - c. Promote a collaborative environment where other HSWL RP staff members offer guidance and assistance to Ombudsmen.
  - d. Serve as advocates for the well-being of Coast Guard families, ensuring that activities, outreach initiatives, and training opportunities in areas of primary prevention are accessible to Ombudsmen and actively promoted to family members.
  - e. Whenever feasible, provide access to programs like SafeTALK or Applied Suicide Intervention Training (ASIST) to Ombudsmen and other family members. These programs enhance awareness of potentially harmful behaviors and offer initial intervention strategies. Availability will be subject to space constraints.
  - f. Ensure at least one HSWL RP staff member is a certified CGOT instructor.
  - g. Ensure CGOT is offered quarterly and coordinate with AROCs to schedule additional trainings as needed.

**Appendix I. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice (RP), Ombudsman Coordinators (OC) Duties**

1. HSWL RP OC shall:
  - a. Plan, manage and, execute the HSWL RP's duties within the Ombudsman Program per this Instruction and the HSWL Ombudsman Coordinator SOP at the HSWL SC SharePoint page under the Ombudsman Program category.
  - b. Organize, coordinate, and instruct standardized Ombudsman training sessions at least quarterly. This includes:
    - (1) Promote the training, reserve classroom facilities, and ensure students receive a paper copy of the CGOT Student Guide (if not previously provided by CO/OIC);
    - (2) Arrange for certified instructors who will follow the CGOT Instructor Guide for training;
    - (3) Report instances of incomplete CGOT training to the CO/OIC;
    - (4) Collaborate with other HSWL RP OCs to accommodate Ombudsmen who cannot attend training in their own AOR. Every effort should be made to reschedule the Ombudsmen for the next available training in another location as soon as its feasible. Commands can fund travel through Invitational Travel Authorizations (ITA) for Ombudsmen attending training, as per Reference (e); and,
    - (5) Ensure usage of CG approved virtual platforms for virtual CGOT (vCGOT).
  - c. Keep an up-to-date roster of Ombudsmen within their AOR and communicate updates to the AROC, District Commander, chaplain, HSWL RP RM/WLS, and the respective command center. Ombudsmen rosters must match the Ombudsmen assigned in the Ombudsman Registry.
  - d. Add newly appointed Ombudsmen to the Ombudsman Registry (immediately upon official appointment) at <https://www.Ombudsmanpfmpregistry.org> . The HSWL RP OC shall consistently update the registry with any changes. Guidelines for using the registry are available at <https://www.Ombudsmanpfmpregistry.org> .
  - e. Provide support, guidance, resources, and clear policy explanations to commands to ensure proper recognition of the Ombudsman Program.
  - f. Act as an advisor to local Ombudsmen, the District Ombudsman CoP, and commands.
  - g. Notify the CO/OIC and AROCs about any issues that may adversely impact the program and/or family members. Keep the HSWL RM/WLS informed of such issues and their resolution.

- h. Direct families to their assigned Ombudsman and provide general details about the Ombudsman Program.
- i. Aid geographically dispersed family members in connecting with an available Ombudsman.
- j. Assist the District Ombudsman CoP chairperson (see Appendix C); this may include:
  - (1) Provide logistical support such as teleconference phone numbers;
  - (2) Recommend training topics and potential speakers;
  - (3) Offer information about local resources;
  - (4) Promote the CoP as appropriate; and,
  - (5) Route meeting minutes provided by CoP chairperson to the District Commander.

**Appendix J. Coast Guard Area, District, LOGCOM, FORCECOM, Cyber Command, Sector Commanders, Air Station Commanding Officers, Base Commanding Officers, Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, and all other unit CO/OIC Duties**

1. Coast Guard Area, District, Operational Logistics Command, Force Readiness Command, Cyber Command, Sector Commanders, Air Station Commanding Officers, Base Commanding Officers, Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, and all other unit CO/OICs shall:
  - a. Establish and execute the Ombudsman Program per this Instruction.
  - b. Ensure all command/unit members and their families have access to an Ombudsman.
  - c. Appoint an Ombudsman per paragraph 13 of this Instruction. CO/OIC of larger units should consider appointing additional Ombudsmen to share in the responsibilities of the Ombudsman Program. Further guidance for CO/OIC on the selection and appointment of Ombudsmen is available on the Ombudsman website at [www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman](http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman).
  - d. Meet the following requirements prior to appointing Ombudsmen:
    - (1) Prospective Ombudsmen candidates shall submit Application to Volunteer as a Coast Guard Ombudsman, Form CG-6078, and COs/OIC shall inform prospective Ombudsmen that the information on page one (1) of the application is for a Family Advocacy Central Registry Check.
    - (2) Completed Family Advocacy Central Registry Check. CO/OICs shall not appoint an Ombudsman before the completion of the Central Registry Check. CO/OICs shall submit the Form CG-6078 to the servicing HSWL RP OC. Potential Ombudsmen with a previously “substantiated” case of domestic violence are not eligible to volunteer as an Ombudsman.
    - (3) Term of the Ombudsman Appointment.
      - (a) The Ombudsman’s term expires when the Ombudsman’s spouse transfers from the command, separates, or retires.
      - (b) The appointment ends when there is a change of Command. The incoming CO/OICs may reappoint, in writing, the current Ombudsman. If the incoming CO/OIC does not reappoint the current Ombudsman, the Ombudsman’s term ends, and the Ombudsman shall submit a letter of resignation.
      - (c) Termination of Service for Cause. The CO/OIC will terminate the Ombudsman appointment if the Ombudsman violates the provisions of this Instruction, knowingly fails to execute their reportable duties, knowingly submits an unauthorized reimbursement claim, knowingly misuses command issued property, or when the CO/OIC considers the Ombudsman’s behavior is detrimental to the Coast Guard, the command, and/or command families.

- (4) Voluntary services from host-nation or third country national (TCN) may be accepted if the responsible CO/OIC determines that acceptance of such voluntary services will not subject the Coast Guard to potential liability or unacceptable expenses. This includes payment of employment benefits for a volunteer because of host-nation labor and voluntary service laws, United States/host nation treaties, Status of Forces Agreement, or other agreements. CO/OIC should seek legal advice for a review of the provision of voluntary services from host-nation and TCN at overseas locations prior to appointment of the Ombudsman Program. For example, a spouse of an active-duty member holding host nation or third country citizenship.
- e. Ensure accuracy of command/unit information, Ombudsman information, and monthly worksheets submissions in the Ombudsman Registry. Update as changes occur.
  - f. In accordance with Reference (m), when accepting Ombudsman volunteer services, CO/OIC shall not discriminate based on race, creed, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, or disability when appointing an Ombudsman.
  - g. Complete DD Form 2793, Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities, Part II when accepting the Ombudsman's volunteer service. Provide a copy of the signed DD Form 2793 to the Ombudsman. CO/OIC will maintain the original in the unit's administrative file along with the appointment letter. Destroy the administrative file four years after the volunteer Ombudsman departs.
  - h. Ensure the Ombudsman receives adequate equipment, material, an Ombudsman nametag, business cards, and funding support per Appendix A.
  - i. Approve purchases or expenditures for support of the Ombudsman program in accordance with the Financial Resources Management Manual, COMDTINST M7100.3 (series). The CO/OIC and the Ombudsman should discuss proposed purchases and determine approved reimbursement expenses. The Ombudsman, based on the authorized budget, shall document expenses and submit a Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, OF 1164 to the appropriate unit representative for reimbursement. The command shall reimburse travel and training expenses per Appendix A. CO/OIC shall ensure the Ombudsman reimbursements are only for authorized expenses.
  - j. Ensure that all current and incoming personnel (including single personnel) and their family members know the name of and contact information for the Ombudsman and are aware of the services the Ombudsman provides. CO/OICs should list the Ombudsmen contact information on the unit check-in sheet for newly arriving members to ensure their families are aware of the program.
  - k. Ensure Ombudsmen are provided contact information for the Coast Guard Yellow Ribbon Program when reserve member(s) who deploy under Title 10 orders are required to have access to Yellow Ribbon events.

1. Ensure that the Ombudsman receives required training outlined below and are provided with a copy of this Instruction, the Ombudsman Training Manual, and appointment letter. Additional guidance and a sample appointment letter are available on the Ombudsman website at: [www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman](http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman) .
  - (1) Ombudsman training is required for all Ombudsmen. CO/OIC will coordinate with the servicing HSWL RP OC to ensure their Ombudsman attends training within three months of appointment. An Ombudsman unable to attend training within their AOR may be referred to the servicing HSWL RP OC to reschedule for the next available training or coordinate attendance at an approved alternate training.
  - (2) Ombudsmen shall complete the Ombudsman orientation as soon possible after being appointed. It is advisable for an Ombudsman to complete the Ombudsman orientation before attending CGOT.
  - (3) Ombudsmen shall annually complete Information Technology Security Awareness Training and Privacy Training located at <https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-security-and-training-requirements-contractors> . Ombudsmen shall upload training certificates into their profile in the Ombudsman registry.
  - (4) Whenever possible, invite Ombudsmen to attend the unit sexual assault prevention, response, and recovery annual mandatory training; and,
  - (5) CO/OIC may request ITAs through the first Flag/SES in the chain of command for Ombudsmen to attend Ombudsman training in another AOR if it is in the best interest of the command. Ensure the following:
    - (a) Ombudsman ITAs have concurrence with HSWL RP Ombudsman Coordinator:
    - (b) The Ombudsman has an appointment letter; and,
    - (c) ITA requirements are met per Reference (e).
- m. Ensure appointed Ombudsmen receive a regularly updated command roster to include inbound personnel and families. References (b) and (o) provide for the release of roster information to the Ombudsman to perform their official duties. Additional guidance on rosters is available in the Command Cadre Toolkit (Appointing Ombudsman) at: [www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman](http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Ombudsman) .
- n. Communicate regularly with the Ombudsman and determine whether to assign a unit advisor to become the primary point of contact (POC) for the Ombudsman (i.e.: XO, XPO, Command Chief, CSEL). If a POC is assigned, decide what issues and events should be handled through the POC and which should go directly to the CO/OIC. However, responsibility for supervisory oversight of the Ombudsman must always remain with the CO/OIC.
- o. Be knowledgeable about personal protections afforded to Ombudsmen. See Appendix D.

- p. Host appropriate functions that express gratitude and appreciation for their Ombudsmen. Ombudsmen may be recognized at a unit luncheon, reception, all-hands meeting, Ombudsman training, or other appropriate events. Appreciation may be in the form of a letter of recognition, special mention in a unit newsletter, a Swivel Shot award submission, nomination for the Wanda Allen-Yearout Ombudsman of the Year Award, or through other appropriate acknowledgement of the services provided to unit families.
- q. Ensure appropriate roles for Ombudsmen by asking the Ombudsman to serve as consultants on boards or committees that provide support for the unit members and their families and by including Ombudsmen in operational unit disaster plans and exercises.
- r. Support and encourage Ombudsman attendance at specific command functions to include All Hands, morale, events, etc.

### **Appendix K. Social Media Guidance**

1. The Coast Guard's social media program offers unit CO/OICs a unique chance to utilize their Ombudsman to communicate command messages to Coast Guard families and to gather feedback from them.
2. An Ombudsman can enhance their impact and serve as a knowledgeable expert on matters of significance to Coast Guard dependents.
3. Every participant in the Ombudsman Program is obligated to adhere to all rules always related to Operations Security (OPSEC) and Information Security (INFOSEC).
4. Ombudsman Program members need to understand the distinction between official, unofficial, and personal use of social media for Coast Guard communication, as specified in Reference (p).
  - a. Official Communication. This occurs when an Ombudsman represents the command. For instance, announcing a unit-sponsored town hall meeting to discuss changes in Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits for military dependents through the unit's official Meta Platforms, Inc. Facebook page or on a nonofficial platform.
  - b. Unofficial Communication. This occurs when an Ombudsman talks about official duties, but not as a representative of or at the command's request. For instance, leaving a comment on a non-official platform to correct information about changes in VA benefits for military dependents.
  - c. Personal Communication. Personal communication may be written, spoken, printed, or online on topics that do not relate to Coast Guard topics. Example: Leaving a comment on an official or non-official site/social network regarding his/her personal experiences with the VA education benefits program would be considered unofficial communications.
5. As command representatives, all official communication by members of the Ombudsman Program is governed by Reference (p) and the public affairs posture of the CO/OIC.
6. When engaging in official communication on non-official sites the Ombudsman is required to self-identify by name, position, and shall use approved Coast Guard disclaimers, located in Chapter 3 of Reference (p). This is to avoid any perception of endorsement by the Coast Guard of third-party sites or tools.
7. There may be only "one" official U.S. Coast Guard Ombudsman Meta Platforms, Inc. Facebook page, which is the OAL page. This page may be administered by the OAL for the release of official information regarding the Ombudsman Program, family support programs, and information on Coast Guard programs and policies.



8. Unit Ombudsmen may not create additional official or unofficial Meta Platforms, Inc. Facebook pages to communicate about or on behalf of the unit or discuss Coast Guard families or issues. A unit Ombudsman may, represent their unit in an official or unofficial capacity on a non-official site and should work with their unit to:
  - a. Engage as part of the command team on the unit's official Meta Platforms, Inc. Facebook page; or,
  - b. Work with the unit to establish and serve as the administrator of an official Facebook page for the unit to ensure Coast Guard families are receiving information.

**Appendix L. List of Required Ombudsman Program Forms**

1. Coast Guard Forms.

Retrieve latest version at Search for Directives Pubs, Forms, and GM - PowerApps (appsplatform.us) internal Coast Guard. External access <https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/forms/> .

Application To Volunteer as a Coast Guard Ombudsman, Form CG-6078

Family Check-in Form for Ombudsmen, Form CG-1750.4

2. Department of Defense (DoD) Forms.

Retrieve latest version from [www.esd.whs.mil/Directives/forms/](http://www.esd.whs.mil/Directives/forms/)

Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities, DD Form 2793

3. Option Forms (OF).

Retrieve latest version from [www.gsa.gov/forms](http://www.gsa.gov/forms)

Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, Optional Form 1164