



OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Public Workers Union Building, Tanteen, St. George's, Grenada

13th May, 2023

H.E. Dame Cecile La Grenade GCMG, OBE, PhD
Governor-General
Office of the Governor-General
P.O. Box 369
Point Salines
St. George's

Dear Excellency,

Annual Report – Office of the Ombudsman

I have the honour to submit to you the fourteenth Annual Report of the activities of the Office of the Ombudsman, for the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023.

This Report is made pursuant to Section 32(3) of the Ombudsman Act 24 of 2007.

Yours respectfully

Mr. Ronnie Marryshow
OMBUDSMAN (Ag.)



OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Public Workers Union Building, Tanteen, St. George's, Grenada

13th May, 2023

Hon. Leo Cato
Speaker
House of Representatives
Parliament Building
Mt. Wheldale
St. George's

Dear Mr. Speaker,

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OMBUDSMAN (Ag.)



OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Public Workers Union Building, Tanteen, St. George's, Grenada

13th May, 2023

Dr. the Hon. Dessima Williams
President of the Senate
Parliament Building
Tanteen
St. George's

Dear Mr. President,

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Office Location



Office of the Ombudsman
Public Workers Union Building
Tanteen, St. George's, Grenada.

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FOREWORD 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



It is, once again my distinct privilege to be writing this Foreword for the fourteenth Annual Report of the Office of the Ombudsman.

Throughout 2023 we have been working at various levels for and on behalf of many who lodged complaints with us, and generally sought our assistance in different ways. Forty-five (45) new complaints were received at the Office from citizens and visitors. Of these, seven (5) were resolved (one without our intervention), and as many as twenty-seven (27) either referred and/or given advice. Eight (8) were unresolved and therefore ongoing, and five (5) deemed to be outside the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.

There continues to be a significantly high number of unresolved or “roll-over” complaints from year to year due, in part, to the fact that several Ministries and Statutory Institutions have not been collaborating with the Office as they should in order to bring resolutions to some of these complaints. I therefore ask, here and now, for greater collaboration between Permanent Secretaries and other senior Ministerial Heads and the Ombudsman

Office to secure more timely results for all concerned.

As was the case in 2022, we have had to operate with budgetary constraints which limited the scope of outreach work that was possible. We were, however, still able to visit a number of primary and secondary schools in the parishes of St. George and St. David during Child Month. The Ombudsman was quite pleased to be a panelist on a Panel Discussion at TAMCC marking T.A. Marryshow Day. Later that week, the Office held interactive sessions with students for the Community College Health Fair and Social Awareness Day.

The Ombudsman Office continues to be sought after by persons for counseling, general advice, and assistance with referrals. Several indeed present with complaints about human rights violations and various other forms of injustice. The establishment of a National Human Rights Institution for Grenada remains a fairly distant dream despite the work and promise over the years, beginning in 2016. Grenada, in fact, each country in the Caribbean, needs to have functioning independent National Human Rights Institutions to deal with much more than matters of maladministration.

Additionally, some Ministries and Statutory Bodies must be commended for the stellar, high quality service they consistently provide to the general public. In my humble opinion, the Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority is one such entity. I exhort them to keep up the good work and call on others to do likewise.

As usual, I would like to sincerely thank my colleagues in the Office of the Ombudsman. We are a small but quite dedicated team. I thank them, my family, and several other special persons for their encouragement and support.

2023 ended with the ushering of promised nationwide excitement to mark Grenada's 50th Anniversary of Independence celebrations, following the launch on October 31st. Let us all be resolved to build on the solid foundations laid by the many generations before us who toiled to make these "Islands in the Sun" become the Gem of the Caribbean. May God bless our Nation!



MISSION STATEMENT

To provide effective service through complaints handling procedures that are timely, while ensuring that the highest levels of confidentiality and impartiality are always maintained.

VISION

The furthering of good governance by protecting the individual from injustice and unfairness.

CORE VALUES

Independence

The Office operates with autonomy and the absence of control from Government, political or other parties.

Confidentiality

The Office believes in ensuring that its business is conducted in the most professional and confidential manner and without any possibility of compromise.

Impartiality

The Office shall always hold true to the practice of neutrality and objectivity to arrive at the truth and thus not seek to take sides in any investigation being undertaken.

Integrity

The Office seeks to ensure that all its activities are carried out in ways that bespeak high levels of professionalism, trust, honesty and in an atmosphere of concern for the rights and feelings of all.

In consideration of all the above the Office of the Ombudsman pledges always to carry out its activities with **accountability** and **transparency**.

Present staff of the Office of the Ombudsman



*Ms. Beverley Baptiste
Executive Secretary*



*Ms. Allison Gay Data Entry Clerk/
Administrative Assistant*



*Mr. Marlhon Benjamin
Investigations Officer*

SAMPLE COMPLAINTS



Sample of Complaints

SAMPLE COMPLAINT #1

In 2019, some months before the onset of COVID, a lady from St. Andrew lodged a complaint with the Office about the Ministry of Health. It effectively concerned a neighbour who had begun to rear pigs very close to her home, which led to a persistent unpleasant smell to her and other neighbours. Several coordinated attempts were made to get the matter addressed in due course, including phone calls to the then Chief Environmental Health Officer and letter to the Permanent Secretary, and his successor. The Attorney General's Office was sought for a legal opinion as well. After more than four (4) years, the matter was eventually resolved to the complainant's relief and satisfaction.



SAMPLE COMPLAINT #2

This complainant first reported her complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman in June, 2022, approximately five months after it was made to the Ministry of Labour. She had worked at a restaurant in St. George's from July 2010 to September 2021. When she was inevitably sent home due to COVID! She had been seeking compensation ever since without success, and claimed that she was being treated unfairly while "other workers received their monies". As of the end of 2023 the matter, despite our best efforts, remains unresolved.

SAMPLE COMPLAINT #3

This gentleman's complaint is one of the most challenging complaints ever lodged with the Office of the Ombudsman. It emerged following the acquiring of private lands to facilitate the construction of the Maurice Bishop International Airport. Since 1999, attempts have been made by the Ministries of Legal Affairs, Agriculture, and Finance to provide mutually satisfactory compensation for the land acquired. The Ombudsman's Office first became aware of the matter in 2017 and has since been actively involved in efforts to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. This outstanding matter remains unresolved, with the complainant still yearning for fairness and justice.

SAMPLE COMPLAINT #4

An elderly woman.....called to lodge a complaint against the Ministry of Infrastructure/Works. She was worried and very scared that the large tree close to her boundary would collapse on her house, and sought help in at least getting it trimmed. The complainant said she had already made several unsuccessful attempts for assistance from the Ministry. The Ombudsman intervened, discuss the matter with the relevant Senior Officer and, a few days later, the tree was trimmed to the complainants delight and satisfaction. Resolved!

ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS



Table 1: Status of Complaints made against State-owned Entities in 2023

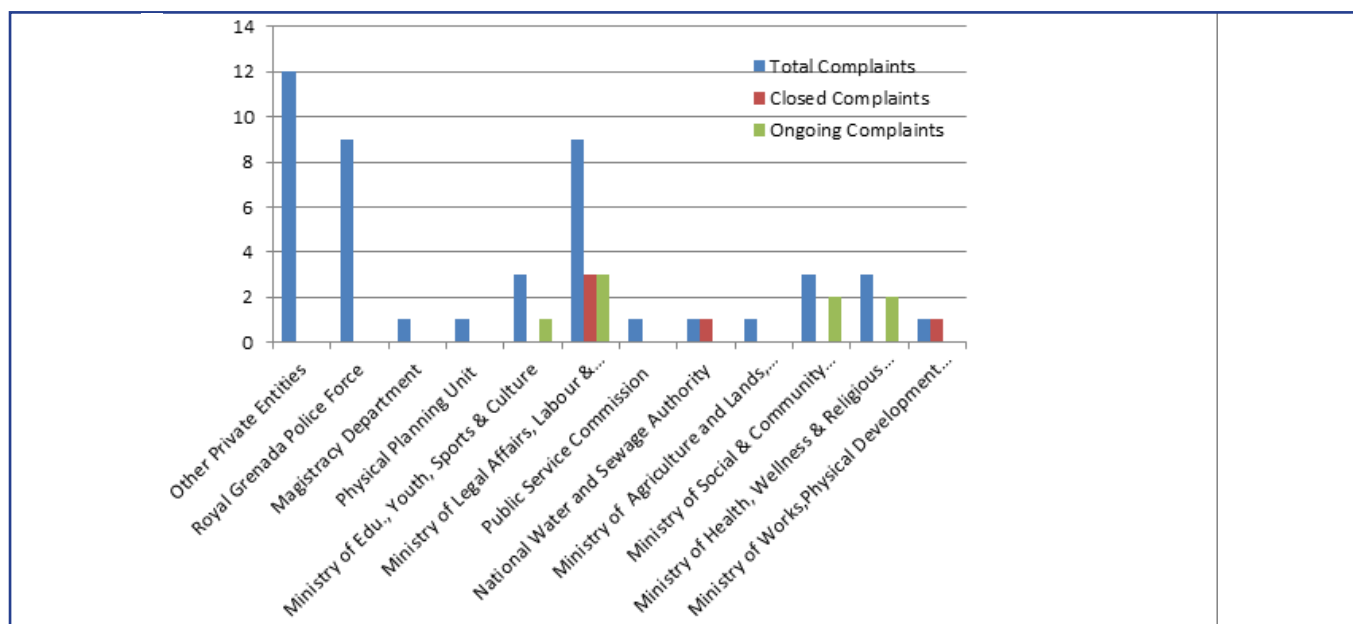
PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Advice/ Referrals	Discontinued	Beyond Jurisdiction
Other Private Entities	12			9		3
Royal Grenada Police Force	9			8		1
Magistracy Department	1			1		
Physical Planning Unit	1			1		
Ministry of Edu., Youth, Sports & Culture	3		1	2		
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	9	3	3	3		
Public Service Commission	1					1
National Water and Sewage Authority	1	1				
Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries & Coopera- tives	1			1		
Ministry of Social & Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs	3		2	1		
Ministry of Health, Wellness & Religious Affairs	3		2	1		
Ministry of Works, Physical Development and Public Utilities	1	1				
TOTAL	45	5	8	27	0	5

Table 1 illustrates a total of forty-five (45) complaints in 2023. The largest number of these, twelve (12) came from Private Entities which has become customary in recent years. The other obvious significant statistic is that nine (9) complaints each were received from the Royal Grenada Police Force and the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour and Consumer Affairs.

The other very noticeable statistics is that 60% of the total number of complaints was either given "advice" or "referred". Also, eighteen or two-thirds of them were complaints from Private Entities and the RGPF.

Analysis of Complaints

The graph below is a representation of the status of complaints in Table 1 above



Rollovers

Rollovers are unresolved complaints for the calendar year in which the complaints were lodged at the Office of the Ombudsman. The investigation of these complaints continues into subsequent years until they are resolved. These are therefore referred to as "Rollovers".

Table 2: Status of Rollovers from 2022 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Advice/Referrals	Discontinued	Beyond Jurisdiction
Ministry of Edu., Youth, Sports & Culture	1		1			
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	1		1			
National Water and Sewage Authority	2	1	1			
Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries & Cooperatives	2		2			
Child Protection Authority	1		1			
Ministry of Health, Wellness & Religious Affairs	1		1			
Royal Grenada Police Force	1		1			
TOTAL	9	1	8			

Analysis of Complaints

Table 2 reports that nine (9) complaints were “roll-overs” from 2022; with only one (1) of them “closed”.

Table 2: Status of Rollovers from 2022 into 2023

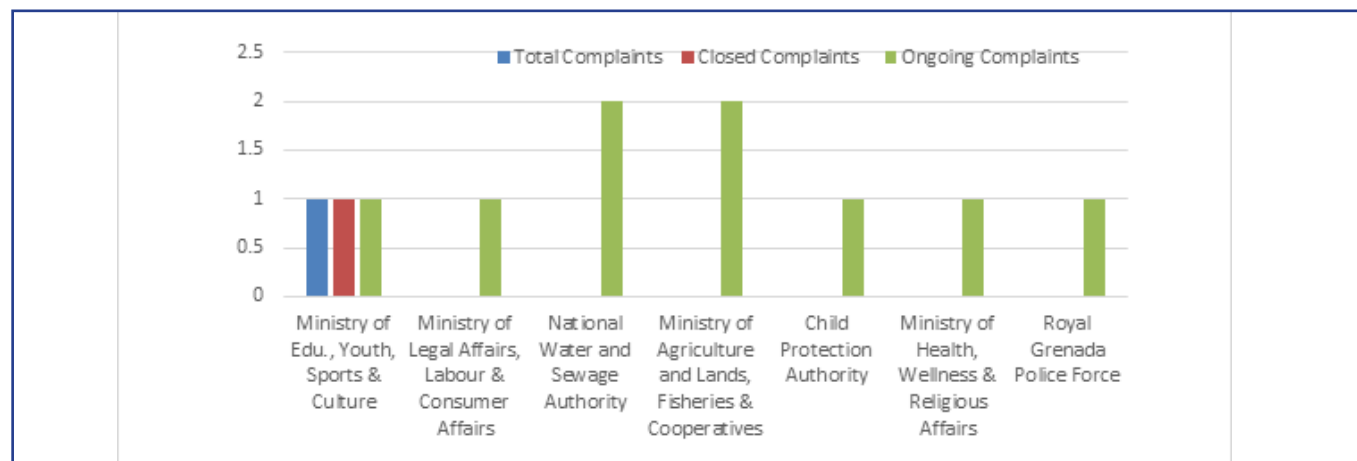


Table 3: Status of roll over complaints from 2021 to 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Advice/Referrals	Discontinued	Beyond Jurisdiction
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	3	2	1			
Ministry of Health, Wellness & Religious Affairs	1		1			
TOTAL	4	2	2			

Table 4: Status of roll over complaints from 2020 to 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS MADE						
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Advice Given	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Ministry of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, ICT, Creative Economy, Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries & Cooperatives	1	1					
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	1	1					

Analysis of Complaints

Physical Planning Unit	1		1				
Royal Grenada Police Force	1		1				
TOTAL	4	2	2	0	0	0	0

Table 3 and **Table 4** describe roll-over complaints from 2021 and 2020. The figures are the same for each table: a total of four (4) complaints; with two (2) "closed" and two (2) "ongoing".

Table 5: Status of roll over complaints from 2019 to 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Advice/Referrals	Discontinued	Beyond Jurisdiction
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	5		5			
Supreme Court Registry	1		1			
Ministry of Health, Wellness & Religious Affairs	2	1	1			
Ministry of Infrastructure Development, Public Utilities, Energy, Transport & Implementation	1		1			
Physical Planning Unit	1	1				
TOTAL	10	2	8	0	0	0

As is clearly the case in **Table 5**, eight (8) of the ten (10) roll-over complaints from 2019 were "ongoing"; two (2) being "closed". All five (5) of the ongoing complaints are from the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour, and Consumer Affairs.

Table 6: Status of roll over complaints from 2018 to 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES						
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Advice/Referrals	Discontinued	Beyond Jurisdiction
Physical planning Unit	1		1			
Ministry of, Agriculture and Lands	2		2			
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	1		1			
TOTAL	4	0	4	0	0	0

Analysis of Complaints

Table 7: Status of Rollovers from 2017 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Ministry of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, ICT, Creative Economy, Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries & Cooperative	2		2			
Ministry of Infrastructure Development, Public Utilities, Energy, Transport & Implementation	1		1			
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	1		1			
TOTAL	4		4	0	0	0

Co-incidentally, another four (4) roll-over complaints each are shown in Tables 6 and 7 for 2018 and 2019. None of these same complaints are closed as yet.

Table 8: Status of Rollovers from 2016 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES						
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Ministry of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, ICT, Creative Economy, Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries & Cooperative	1	1				
Ministry of education, Human Resource & Religious Affairs	1		1			
TOTAL	2	1	1	0	0	0

Analysis of Complaints

Table 9: Status of Rollovers from 2015 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Min. of com. Works, Physical Dev. Public Utilities ,ICT & com. Dev.	1		1			
Physical Planning Unit	1		1			
TOTAL	2	0	2	0	0	0

There are two (2) roll-over complaints each from 2016 and 2015, according to **Tables 8** and **9**. One (1) was “closed” in 2016, whereas both complaints in 2015 remained “ongoing”.

Table 10: Status of Rollovers from 2014 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINT MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour & Consumer Affairs	1		1			
TOTAL	1	0	1	0	0	0

Table 11: Status of Rollovers from 2013 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	STATUS OF COMPLAINT MADE					
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Min. of com. Works, Physical Dev. Public Utilities ,ICT & com. Dev.	1		1			
TOTAL	1		1	0	0	0

The status of roll-over complaints from 2014 and 2013 remain unchanged as shown in Tables 10 and 11, as evidenced from the one (1) “ongoing” complaint each.

Analysis of Complaints

Table 12: Status of Rollovers from 2011 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES						
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Min. of com. Works, Physical Dev. Public Utilities, ICT & com. Dev.	2	1	1			
Ministry of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, ICT, Creative Economy, Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries & Cooperatives	1		1			
TOTAL	3	1	2	0	0	0

Table 13: Status of Rollovers from 2011 into 2023

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES						
	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Discontinued	Advice / Referrals	Beyond Jurisdiction
Min. of com. Works, Physical Dev. Public Utilities, ICT & com. Dev.	2	1	1			
Ministry of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, ICT, Creative Economy, Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries & Cooperatives	1		1			
TOTAL	3	1	2	0	0	0

Tables 12 and **13** also reveal similar roll-over complaints figures for 2012 and 2011 – a total of three (3) complaints for each year, two (2) of which were “ongoing” and one (1) “closed”.

Table 14: Comparison of status of complaints: 2023 vs. 2022

Year	Total	Closed	Ongoing	Advice / Referral	Discontinued	Beyond Jurisdiction
2023	45	5	8	27	0	5
2022	35	5	9	15	1	5

There were ten (10) more complaints lodged with the Office in 2023 (45) than in 2022 (35) as shown in **Table 14**, a small but significant difference. Similar numbers of complaints were “closed”, “beyond jurisdiction”, or even “ongoing”. More “referrals” were, however, made in 2023 than in 2022 (60%, compared to 43%).

Analysis of Complaints

Table 15: Distribution and comparison of Complainants per month 2023

MONTHS	2022	2023
January	3	5
February	2	3
March	5	6
April	4	4
May	2	1
June	2	4
July	1	4
August	2	2
September	2	4
October	6	5
November	3	4
December	3	3
Total	35	45

Table 16: Residence of complaints per parish 2023 and 2022

Parish	2023	2022
St. George	17	17
St. David	3	3
St. Andrew	9	5
St. Mark	1	1
St. Patrick	3	
Out of State	2	0
Carriacou & Petite Martinique	1	
St. John	6	2
Address Not Defined	3	7
TOTAL	45	35

Table 17: Forms of initial contact 2023

Phone	Letter	Email	Walk-In	Appointment	TOTAL
19	1	3	20	2	45



Ways the ombudsman can assist you

1. Fair and Impartial Investigation:

The Ombudsman will conduct an unbiased investigation into your complaint. We are trained to assess issues impartially, ensuring that all parties are heard and that your concerns are addressed fairly.

2. Resolution of Disputes:

If you have a complaint against an organization or public body, the Ombudsman can help resolve the issue by mediating between you and the entity involved. Our goal is to reach a fair resolution without the need for formal legal action.

3. Access to Justice:

If you feel that your complaint is not being handled properly through conventional channels, the Ombudsman provides an alternative route for seeking redress. This can be particularly useful if you lack the resources for legal proceedings.

4. Confidentiality:

Your complaint will be handled with confidentiality. This means that details of your case will not be disclosed without your consent, helping to protect your privacy and reduce the risk of retaliation.

5. Cost-Effectiveness:

Filing a complaint with the Ombudsman is free. This makes it a cost-effective option compared to pursuing legal action, which can be expensive and time-consuming.

6. Efficient and Timely Resolution:

The Ombudsman can provide a quicker resolution compared to formal legal processes. Our procedures are designed to handle complaints efficiently, which can help resolve your issue in a timely manner.

7. Guidance and Advice:

The Ombudsman can offer guidance on how to proceed with your complaint, including what evidence is needed and how to present your case. This can help you navigate the complaint process more effectively.

8. Recommendations for Improvement:

If the Ombudsman identifies systemic issues or recurring problems, they can recommend changes to policies or practices. While these recommendations are often not legally binding, they can lead to significant improvements and prevent similar issues in the future.

9. Non-Legal Resolution:

The Ombudsman provides a non-legal approach to resolving disputes, which can be less formal and more flexible than court proceedings. This can be advantageous if you are seeking a practical solution rather than a legal judgment.

10. Education and Awareness:

The Ombudsman can help you understand your rights and the complaint process. They may provide information on how similar issues are typically resolved and what you can expect from the process.

11. Documentation and Evidence:

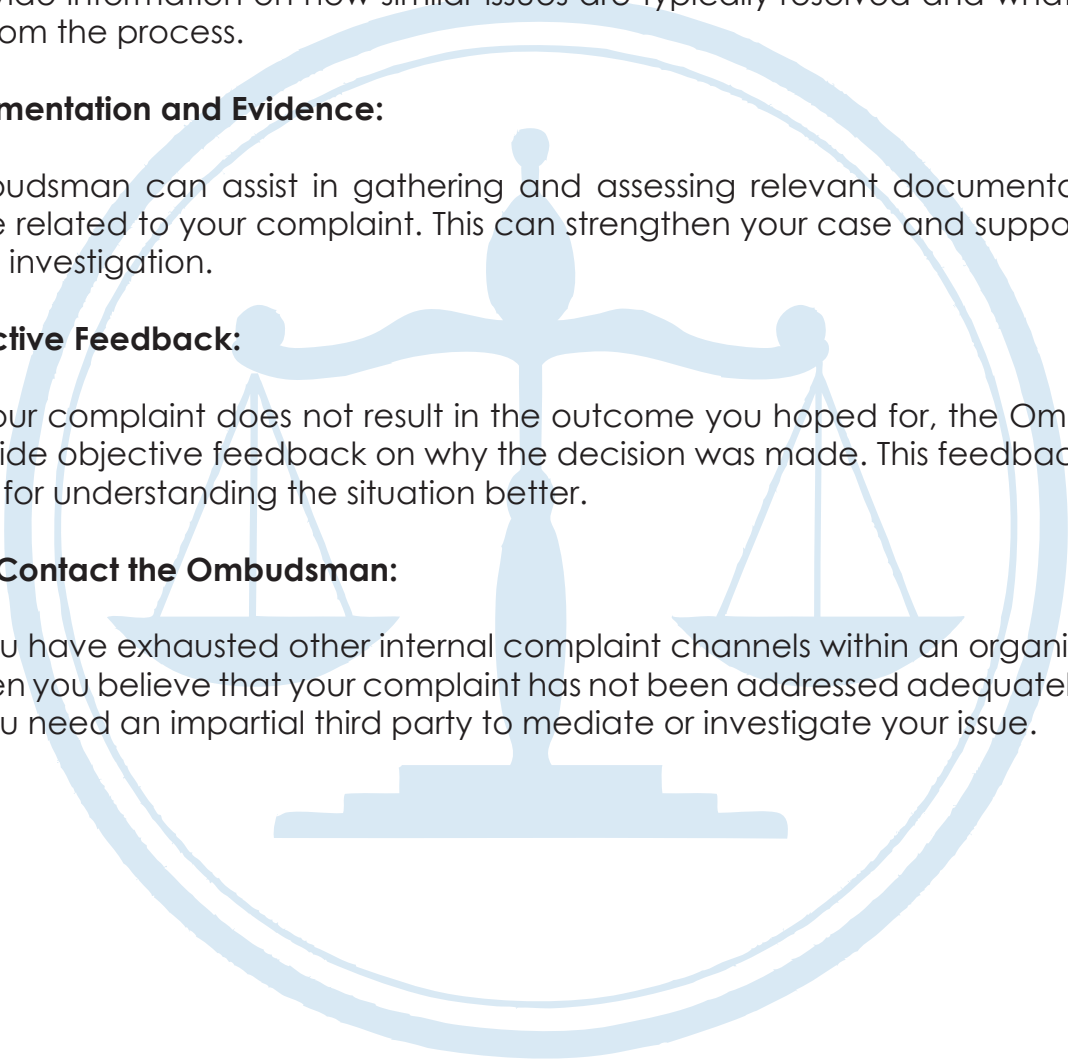
The Ombudsman can assist in gathering and assessing relevant documentation and evidence related to your complaint. This can strengthen your case and support a more thorough investigation.

12. Objective Feedback:

Even if your complaint does not result in the outcome you hoped for, the Ombudsman can provide objective feedback on why the decision was made. This feedback can be valuable for understanding the situation better.

When to Contact the Ombudsman:

- If you have exhausted other internal complaint channels within an organization.
- When you believe that your complaint has not been addressed adequately or fairly.
- If you need an impartial third party to mediate or investigate your issue.



LYRICS AND NARRATION FOR OMBUDSMAN JINGLE

If you're a victim of maladministration – see the Ombudsman

Abuse of power, discrimination – check out the Ombudsman;

From any Government Ministry, Department, or Statutory Body

Come in, the service is free – at the Office of the Ombudsman.

"Have you been treated unjustly and, after complaining to the supervisor or manager of the offending Government Department or Statutory Body, you are still dissatisfied? Then contact us at the Office of the Ombudsman.

We are located at the Public Workers' Union Building, next to the Port Highway in St. George's. Telephone numbers are 435-9315/9316; Opening hours are 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

The Ombudsman's Office: here to serve you, free of charge; assuring Justice and Fairness for all!"

Check out the Ombudsman! The Office of the Ombudsman!

Go, see the Ombudsman!



Copies of the Act may be found on the Government of Grenada website and Ombudsman's website.

Government of Grenada website

www.gov.gd

Ombudsman's website

www.ombudsman.gd