ISU Ombuds Program

An informal problem resolution process offered to ISU faculty and staff

For additional information about the program, please contact:

Stacey Marshall
ISU Ombuds Coordinator
marsstac@isu.edu
(208) 282-3081
General Ombuds Program Guidelines

The ISU Ombuds program provides a resource to assist faculty and staff with informal problem solving activities on campus. An ombuds is not empowered to change departmental or institutional decision, but through unbiased intervention or a clarification of matters, information may emerge to assist in the resolution of a dispute. Employees are encouraged to contact an ombuds or the Coordinator of the Ombuds program if they would like to discuss possible assistance.

The Idaho State University Ombuds Committee is comprised of employees from all University areas, through either self-nomination, or nomination by their peers and appointed by the President, to provide an informal means of problem resolution to University-related disputes.

Faculty and staff with problems, possible grievances, questions or concerns may contact any member of the committee and request they review matters as a facilitator on their behalf. There is no fee to contact an ombuds and inquiries are confidential.

Ombuds may provide information, direct the affected party to the appropriate resources, and if needed, provide an informal means of problem resolution for individual employees who have problems, potential grievances, questions or concerns regarding the University. Ombuds are prepared to deal with many types of problems and may use informal mediation and/or other problem-solving techniques to facilitate communication and problem resolution between disputing parties where appropriate*.

If ombuds intervention proves unsuccessful, and the parties move to formal problem resolution proceedings, the ombuds will not disclose any matter discussed with either party. All information received by ombuds is confidential, unless otherwise required by law *. The Ombuds Program is not an office of record. Ombuds will not testify or provide statements about cases in which they were involved in formal grievance proceedings or other University committees or review boards, unless required by law*.

The Idaho State University Ombuds Committee will operate under the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics as described by the International Ombudsman Association, (IOA) and as described in this packet.

*If the complaint provides evidence of illegal discrimination, sexual harassment, and/or a Title IX violation, the ombuds will immediately consult with the Office of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Diversity for appropriate action.

*Ombuds cannot intervene if the employee has already contacted an attorney or if the employee has already begun to address their concerns through other formal proceedings. If an employee is already involved in a matter that has reached a disciplinary or dismissal process, it is no longer an informal matter and is not subject to ombuds intervention. Termination of a classified employee during his/her probationary period, or contract non-renewal of a non-classified employee or non-tenured faculty member is not subject to ombuds intervention.

*Ombuds cannot intervene in a personnel dispute if a hearing before a University grievance panel has already occurred and/or if a grievance panel has already convened to hear a respective grievance, or if a grievant is represented by counsel.
ISU Principles and Standards of Practice

The ISU Ombuds Program is dedicated to the following principles and standards of practice in accordance with the IOA Code of Ethics:

Informality
Use of the Ombuds Program is not a substitute for formal procedures, such as filing a grievance. The role of an ombuds is to listen, receive, and provide information to/from parties, provide informal facilitation between parties when requested in an effort to facilitate informal problem resolution. Ombuds follow no prescribed sequences of steps and do not participate in any formal grievance process.

Independence
The ISU Ombuds Program operates independently from the university’s administrative structure. In the legitimate performance of his/her duties, an ombuds shall be free from interference, retaliation, or influence of others outside the Ombuds Program.

Neutrality
As designated neutrals, ombuds advocate for fair processes, consider the rights and interests of all parties, and do not take sides. Ombuds have no decision making authority and do not judge, discipline, or reward anyone. Ombuds have no personal stake in the outcome of any situation.

Confidentiality
The Ombuds Program is confidential. Ombuds will not identify program participants or discuss particular concerns with anyone unless given permission to do so. Exceptions to the principle of confidentiality include when an ombuds A) believes there is a reasonable risk of serious personal injury to anyone or future criminal activity B) has knowledge of past criminal activity, or C) where information is legally required to be disclosed.

Nominations
All nominations for ombuds candidates may be submitted via email or campus mail to Stacey Marshall, Assistant HR Director and Ombuds Coordinator at marsstac@isu.edu or Stop 8107. All nominees and employees interested in serving as an ombuds will be asked to complete the enclosed ISU Ombuds Program Application for the review and consideration of the employee’s respective management chain, up to and including their Vice President. In considering applications, each Vice President may confer with any management teams or the Faculty Senate and/or Staff Council as needed. Upon approval by the respective Vice President, completed applications will be forwarded to the Ombuds Coordinator for final consideration and appointment with the Office of the President. Applications will also be reviewed with the Director of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Diversity in an effort to achieve as broad and diverse Ombuds Committee as possible. Serving as an Ombuds is considered as fulfilling a university service role, similar to serving on a major standing university committee.

Thank you for your interest in the ISU Ombuds Program. This program will be available for Idaho State University faculty, classified and non-classified staff beginning in the fall of 2015. Please contact Stacey Marshall, HR Assistant Director and Ombuds Coordinator at marsstac@isu.edu or 208-282-3081 for further information.
ISU Ombuds Program Application

Instructions: If you wish to serve as an Ombuds, please attach a current resume or CV to this application and submit it to your management chain for consideration. Vice Presidents will forward management approved applications to Stacey Marshall, HR Assistant Director and Ombuds Coordinator at marsstac@isu.edu, Mail Stop 8107, or fax to 208-282-4976 for final consideration and appointment by the Office of the President.

Name:___________________________________  Job Title:___________________________________

Email:___________________________________  Work Phone:______________________________

Organization/Department:___________________________________________________________

Office Location:_________________________________________________________________

Is there any information you would like to provide for the consideration of your management chain regarding training and experience that has prepared you to be an effective ombuds as a supplement to your resume/CV (attach additional sheets if necessary)?

By signing below, the employee confirms their dedication and commitment to upholding the operating principles of Independence, Neutrality, Confidentiality, and Informality as described in this application packet. By signature below, management recommends the employee as someone to be considered as an effective ombuds who will uphold the core operating principles. Furthermore, management understands if the employee is selected as an ombuds, that this service role will be part of the employee’s workload.

Employee Signature______________________________ Date:___________________

Supervisor Name:______________________________ Phone___________________

Supervisor Signature:______________________________ Date:___________________

Dean/Director Name:______________________________ Phone___________________

Dean/Director Signature:______________________________ Date:___________________

VP Name:____________________________________________ Phone:____________________

VP Signature:____________________________________ Date:___________________
Please Attach a Current Resume or CV to this Application