

Role Description

Agency	NSW Ombudsman
Role Title	Whistleblower Support Specialist
Branch/Division/Unit	Public Interest Disclosures and Complaints-Handling Systems Oversight Branch, Public Interest Disclosures Unit
Location	Sydney CBD
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 7/8
Senior Executive Work Level Standards	NA
Kind of Employment	Ongoing or temporary
ANZSCO Code	224412
PCAT Code	1321691
Date of Approval	16 July 2024
Agency Website	www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

The NSW Ombudsman is an independent integrity agency that pursues fairness for the people of NSW. We strive to ensure that those entrusted with public power and resources fulfil their responsibilities and treat everyone fairly.

The Ombudsman has a range of statutory functions. These can be broadly grouped into the following 3 categories, which align with the office's 3 organisational divisions:

- handling complaints about, and where necessary investigating, the conduct of public authorities and community service providers – primarily the focus of the Complaints and Investigations Division
- overseeing compliance and performance of certain NSW Government and community sector programs and systems through monitoring, auditing, inquiries, conducting reviews and reporting – primarily the focus of the Systems Oversight and Reviews Division
- delivering tools, guides and other resources, and providing educational and training services, to support capacity building by public authorities and community service providers – primarily the focus of the People, Performance and Sector Improvement Division.

The People, Performance and Sector Improvement Division is also responsible for the office's strategic, corporate and supporting functions.

Primary purpose of the role

The Whistleblower Support Specialist provides information and support to people who have made, or are seeking to make, a public interest disclosure (PID) under the PID Act. The role also contributes to the delivery of selected Ombudsman's functions under the PID Act.

Key accountabilities

- Provide accurate information and confidential one-to-one support to whistleblowers through a range of service channels to empower them to make informed decisions about 'speaking up' on serious wrongdoing.
- Contribute to the design, delivery and review of support services, communication materials and referral pathways that meet the needs of whistleblowers as well as aligning with related Ombudsman internal procedures, guidelines and outreach initiatives.
- Gather information on the further support needs of individual whistleblowers, provide selected referrals to appropriate external services in accordance with internal procedures, and contribute to effective collaborative relationships with external services.
- Facilitate appropriate referral of selected matters to other teams within the NSW Ombudsman's Office including where a public official wishes to make a public interest disclosure to the Office and where a person alleges that detrimental action has been or may be taken by an agency against a public official.
- Seek feedback from whistleblowers and other stakeholders about the Team's support services, and about the needs of whistleblowers generally, to support continuous improvement in the Team.
- Maintain related case management information while ensuring necessary confidentiality, and provide timely advice to senior and other relevant staff about cases and other relevant matters.
- Assist with research and prepare submissions, correspondence, briefings and other material to support the Ombudsman and senior staff in strategic office initiatives.
- Deliver agreed deliverables on time and to the standard required, including communications plans.

Key challenges

- Exercising sound judgement and a high degree of sensitivity in dealing with complex issues and client needs while providing accurate information and advice often within short timeframes.
- Identifying cases and issues which require escalation within the Team in order to determine the appropriate response.
- Ensuring the confidentiality of the information provided by whistleblowers and the protection of the identity of whistleblowers including within the Ombudsman's Office where required, and identifying any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Statutory officer, other senior staff of the division including supervisor	• Report to the Manager Whistleblower Support through to the Deputy Ombudsman Systems Oversight on work performance and operational priorities • Discuss serious and/or sensitive matters with the Senior Whistleblower Support Specialist or Manager Whistleblower Support • Provide advice about the progress of work undertaken and other matters of interest to the office to inform decision-making and manage risks • Contribute to the ongoing business planning and intelligence gathering in respect of the work of the division and the office more broadly
Staff within the Whistleblower Support Team, the PID Unit and the PID & Complaints Handling Systems Oversight Branch	• Communicate effectively with staff to ensure consistent advice • Build and maintain relationships with staff from across the office to ensure the Whistleblower Support Team and PID Unit work effectively
Staff throughout the office	• Develop and maintain effective working relationships with all staff • Encourage and promote a positive workplace culture
External	

Key agencies	Assist in the PID Unit's engagement with NSW public sector agencies
Service providers	Assist in the development and maintenance of effective relationships with external service providers to enable referral pathways and networks for whistleblowers to appropriate support services

Role dimensions

Decision making

Legislation, office procedures, delegations and directives guide the work of the occupant of the role. The occupant of the role acts with limited guidance in planning, directing and managing their work. Specifically, the occupant of the role identifies priority areas for managing their workload in consultation with senior staff and within the parameters set by the Ombudsman and division management, the corporate plan, business plans and other policy documents.

The occupant of the role prepares correspondence and reports and can communicate selected decisions and outcomes, exercising judgement in dealing with specific cases.

The occupant of the role may seek guidance from senior staff.

Reporting line

This role reports to the Manager, Whistleblower Advice & Support Team, Grade 11/12.

Direct reports

This role has no direct reports.

Budget/expenditure

The role does not have budgetary responsibility.

Essential requirements

Employment at the NSW Ombudsman is subject to the satisfactory completion of security and related vetting including, in part, a criminal records check; signed understanding and acceptance of a range of policies; two statutory declarations relating to conflicts of interest, arrests, charges, convictions and a health declaration.

The occupant of the role is required to have appropriate tertiary qualifications or demonstrated equivalent professional experience.

It is expected the occupant of the role can demonstrate:

- an understanding of the statutory functions and work of the NSW Ombudsman
- strong communication skills, including the ability to communicate well with diverse stakeholders, and to prepare correspondence and reports
- experience analysing sensitive matters and providing associated advice
- demonstrated ability to work independently and as part of a team
- relevant tertiary qualifications (such as law or social work) or equivalent working experience.

Capabilities for the role

The NSW Public Sector Capability Framework applies to all NSW public sector employees. The Capability Framework is available at [The Capability Framework | NSW Public Service Commission](#).

Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Capability group	Capability name	Level
 Personal attributes	Display resilience and courage	Adept
	Act with integrity	Intermediate
	Manage self	Intermediate
	Value diversity and inclusion	Intermediate
 Relationships	Communicate effectively	Adept
	Commit to customer service	Intermediate
	Work collaboratively	Intermediate
	Influence and negotiate	Intermediate
 Results	Deliver results	Intermediate
	Plan and prioritise	Intermediate
	Think and solve problems	Intermediate
	Demonstrate accountability	Intermediate
 Business enablers	Finance	Foundational
	Technology	Intermediate
	Procurement and contract management	Intermediate
	Project management	Intermediate

Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal attributes	Display resilience and courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	- Be flexible, show initiative and respond quickly when situations change - Give frank and honest feedback and advice - Acknowledge when someone challenges your ideas, seek to understand why and respond appropriately - Raise and work through challenging issues and seek alternatives - Respond professionally when under pressure and in challenging situations	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal attributes	Act with integrity Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	• Represent your organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way and encourage others to do so • Act professionally and support a culture of integrity • Identify and explain ethical issues and set an example for others to follow • Promote a workplace culture that values high ethical standards and behaviour • Act to prevent and report misconduct and inappropriate behaviour • Put strategies in place to manage and monitor conflicts of interest • Ensure that others are aware of and understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate	Intermediate
 Personal attributes	Manage self Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	• Adapt your existing skills to new situations • Commit to achieving work goals • Be aware of your strengths and areas for growth, and develop and apply new skills • Seek feedback from colleagues and stakeholders • Persist when tasks are difficult	Intermediate
 Relationships	Communicate effectively Communicate clearly, pay attention to others, and respond with understanding and respect	• Tailor communication to suit the needs, backgrounds and perspectives of diverse audiences and address barriers to participation • Clearly explain complex ideas and arguments to individuals and groups • Create opportunities for others to contribute • Share information with other teams and business units to enable informed decision-making • Write clearly and concisely in a range of styles and formats • Use contemporary communication channels to share information, engage and interact with diverse audiences • Pay attention and encourage others to express their views	Adept
 Relationships	Commit to customer service Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	• Focus on providing a positive customer experience • Support a customer-focused culture in your organisation • Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the available services and share relevant information with customers • Identify and respond quickly to customer needs • Consider different customer needs and experiences when developing solutions to meet needs • Resolve complex customer issues • Cooperate across work areas to improve outcomes for customers	Intermediate

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Results	Think and solve problems Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	• Understand a problem or explore an opportunity by finding data that is relevant, trustworthy and high quality • Research and analyse information to make recommendations based on relevant evidence • Identify and find appropriate solutions for issues that may stop people from completing their tasks • Be willing to seek others' input and share your ideas to achieve best outcomes • Come up with ideas and identify ways to improve systems and processes to meet organisational and customer needs	Intermediate