

# Staff Ombuds Office

<http://staffombuds.berkeley.edu> • (510) 642-7823



Established in 1984, the Staff Ombuds Office is an independent department that provides informal conflict resolution and problem-solving services for all Staff, Non-Senate Academics, and Faculty who perform management functions. The Staff Ombuds Office is strictly confidential and is a safe place to voice and clarify concerns, understand conflict situations, and find effective ways to respond. Ombuds services include:

- Conflict analysis
- Strategies to resolve and prevent disputes
- Identification of options and information
- Effective communication coaching
- Mediation
- Group facilitation
- Tailored trainings in conflict resolution
- Resource referrals

As a designated neutral, the Staff Ombuds Office does not take sides or advocate on behalf of any individual. Based on general observations from its caseload, the Staff Ombuds Office provides regular feedback to University officials and the campus community. Since 1993, the Staff Ombuds Office has published reports regarding workplace conflict issues and recommendations for systemic change.

Language interpretation services are made available free of charge, and the office is wheelchair accessible.

The Staff Ombuds Office abides by the International Ombuds Association Standards of Practice, including:



**Confidentiality.** The Staff Ombuds Office holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence unless there is an imminent risk of serious harm. Communications made to the ombudsperson do not place the university on notice.

**Impartiality.** The ombudsperson is neutral, impartial, and unaligned in the handling of staff conflicts, disputes, or issues.

**Independence.** The Staff Ombuds Office is independent from other university entities or authorities. The Ombuds Office reports to the Associate Chancellor for administrative purposes only and does not report on the substance of individual cases or concerns.

**Informality.** The Staff Ombuds Office assists individuals in resolving conflicts at informal levels. While the Ombuds Office may refer individuals to formal grievance resources, it does not participate in any internal or external investigative or adjudicative procedures.