

# Metropolitan King County Council

## Position Description



Position: Deputy Ombuds for Transit	FLSA: salaried, overtime exempt
Department: Office of Citizen Complaints/Tax Advisor	Salary Grade: 128
Council Approved: July 30, 2018	Revised:

### **Series Summary**

All staff in the Ombuds series investigate complaints and make recommendations regarding administrative conduct by King County agencies, possible violations of the King County Employee Code of Ethics (KCC 3.04), reports of improper governmental action and retaliation under the Whistleblower Protection Code (KCC 3.42), and possible violations of the Lobbyist Disclosure Code (KCC 1.07).

### **Job Summary**

The Deputy Ombuds for Transit investigates and makes determinations on complaints about the County's operations, including some ethics, whistleblower, and lobbyist disclosure allegations, with an emphasis on services provided by King County Metro Transit. The Deputy Ombuds for Transit conducts planning, fieldwork and analysis, report development, presentation, and consultation regarding investigative findings and implementation of recommendations to significantly improve the performance, accountability, and efficiency of County government, focused on King County Metro Transit. The Deputy Ombuds for Transit facilitates informal resolution of issues and complaints concurrent with or in lieu of investigation. The Deputy Ombuds for Transit is a salaried, at-will, overtime exempt classification. This position reports to the Director (Ombuds).

### **Distinguishing Career Features**

The Deputy Ombuds for Transit is a special classification at the first level in a two-tiered career path of the Ombuds series that provides investigative and dispute resolution services, giving access and opportunity to members of the public and County employees to raise concerns and voice complaints about administrative acts, and offering objective resolutions and remedies. Qualification for the Deputy level requires compliance with the stated qualifications, ability to investigate and apply the codes and laws that guide the position and function, and the ability to perform intake on a range of complaints and issues. This specialized position requires expertise with King County Metro Transit services, processes, and customer issues, including transit and paratransit operations.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities**

The Deputy Ombuds for Transit:

- Conduct investigation, including intake, determining a proper scope of inquiry, and doing documentary and testimonial fact-finding on issues affecting users of King County Metro

Transit services, including both fixed-route transit and paratransit. May work in conjunction with Senior Deputy Ombuds in more complex investigations.

- Perform analyses on transit and specialized mobility needs, including the application of appropriate legal and evidentiary standards.
- Prepare formal written findings with analytical depth and precision.
- Develop recommendations to remedy issues and to improve the accountability and performance of King County Metro Transit operations and functions.
- Provide problem-solving assistance and conflict management guidance to clients countywide. Advise and coach complainants regarding formal and informal administrative options, and consult with agency staff and management on a variety of matters including, but not limited to transit related complaints.
- Facilitate conflict management processes, while maintaining credibility as independent and objective.
- Provide referrals and direct assistance to customers, including advocacy in navigating King County Metro Transit processes and access to services.
- Conduct outreach with advocates and public interest groups that focus on transit and specialized mobility needs.
- May assist in preparing public reports and other office communications.
- Assist in identifying complaint trends and patterns, and recommends initiatives to the Director (Ombuds) for responding to systemic and entrenched issues.

## **Qualifications**

### **Required Knowledge and Skills**

- Working knowledge of codes, regulations, administrative, and legal procedures as they apply to the operation and jurisdiction of the Office of Citizen Complaints/Tax Advisor.
- Knowledge of the programs and services provided by King County Metro Transit, including accessible services, paratransit, reduced fare programs, and the fixed route system.
- Understanding of the issues and experiences of transit customers, especially for populations that have been historically underserved or have specialized mobility and transit needs.
- Basic knowledge of the ethics, whistleblower, and lobbyist disclosure codes.
- Working knowledge of the principles and practices of public administration, and the organization of County functions, operations, and interrelationships.
- Basic knowledge of the principles, methods, and techniques used in the research and investigation of complaints.
- Skill and background in the research and analysis of legal issues.
- Working knowledge of privacy, public information, record retention laws, including those involving the handling of information and communications of a confidential and sensitive nature.
- Knowledge of, and skill in using personal computers, common desktop productivity software, and specialized research tools.
- Advanced knowledge of the English language to write reports requiring discretion in choosing grammar and syntax to deal with sensitive issues.
- Advanced human relations skill to adapt to diverse personalities including extremely confrontational styles, gain trust while working with others in sensitive and difficult situations, resolve conflict, employ lines of questioning for fact finding, deliver reports.
- Sufficient math skills to develop and interpret statistical and operating information.

### **Required Abilities**

- Ability to carry out the functions of the position.
- Ability to objectively review, investigate and recommend resolution of complaints and allegations of wrongdoing.
- Ability to collect, evaluate, and interpret a range of data in electronic, written, statistical, or narrative form.
- Ability to conduct thorough, objective investigations of complaints, reach appropriate neutral, objective, and expert conclusions based on investigation results, and maintain confidentiality regarding process and outcomes in accordance with all legal requirements.
- Ability to analyze and define sensitive issues and problems, evaluate alternatives, and develop independent conclusions and recommendations in accordance with policies, codes, and laws, and the public interest.
- Ability to learn and apply the King County Code, and local, regional, state and federal laws, mandates and programs.
- Ability to present information, proposals, and recommendations clearly, logically and persuasively, and effectively handle sensitive and confidential matters.
- Ability to maintain productive and cooperative relationships with those encountered on work-related matters, including elected officials, the media, County employees, representatives of other governmental agencies, and the public.
- Ability to conduct investigations at various hours and in the field at remote locations.
- Consistent attendance and punctuality.

### **Required Physical Abilities**

- Ability to function indoors engaged in work of primarily a sedentary nature with sufficient ambulatory ability to move about office environs and locations.
- Ability to attend meetings off-site throughout King County.
- Ability to use a personal computer, multi-media presentation, and other office equipment.
- Ability to communicate in one-on-one and large group settings.
- Ability to observe the behaviors of others and read printed materials.

### **Education and Experience**

The position typically requires an advanced degree in law or a discipline that will enable job performance and four years of experience performing professional level work in an investigative, analytical, legal, dispute resolution or related capacity, or any combination of education and experience that clearly demonstrates the ability to perform the job duties of the position. Knowledge of mobility and transit issues in King County, as well as investigative experience with a focus on writing detailed analytical findings is strongly desired.

### **Working Conditions**

The majority of the work is performed indoors and may require travel. Special attention to security precautions may be necessary due to nature of work and possible strong emotions of parties involved in complaint issues.