



**Ombudsman
Saskatchewan**
Promoting Fairness



**Public Interest
Disclosure
Commissioner**
Speak out. Safely.

Annual Report 2022

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**Ombudsman
Saskatchewan**
Promoting Fairness

April 2023

The Honourable Randy Weekes
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of Saskatchewan
Room 129, Legislative Building
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As required by subsection 38(1) of *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*, I am pleased to submit to you the annual report of the Saskatchewan Ombudsman for 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Sharon'.

Sharon Pratchler, K.C.
Ombudsman

FIFTY YEARS OF FAIRNESS



**Sharon Pratchler, K.C.
Ombudsman**

Former Saskatchewan Ombudsman

**1973 - 1976
Ernest C. Boychuk Q.C.**

**1977 - 1987
David A. Tickell**

**1987 - 1993
Gerald P. McLellan Q.C.**

**1994 - 2004
Barbara J Tomkins K.C.**

**2004 - 2013
Kevin Fenwick K.C.**

**2014 - 2022
Mary McFadyen K.C.**

On May 3, 1973, the office of the Ombudsman for Saskatchewan was opened and the first Ombudsman, Ernest Carl Boychuk, took his oath of office. In the fifty years since then, the office has received and responded to over 160,000 requests for assistance from the citizens of Saskatchewan. A total of seven Ombudsmen have been appointed since the office was created and it is my great pleasure to serve the public in this role, as of November 1, 2022.

While processes and practices have evolved over time, what has remained constant over the last fifty years is the dedication of the Ombudsman staff. Every day, the team makes a difference in the lives of Saskatchewan citizens by listening to complaints, providing information, and by using problem solving and conflict resolution skills to achieve fair and timely resolutions in the delivery of public services.

In addition to talented staff, Saskatchewan has benefitted from the innovations of the individuals who have held the office of Ombudsman. Each in their own way has assisted in establishing the credibility of the office and the respect in which it is held. Early resolution approaches, the Fine Art of Fairness training, and the visual of the fairness triangle, have all been created to provide practical tools to assist in conflict resolution.

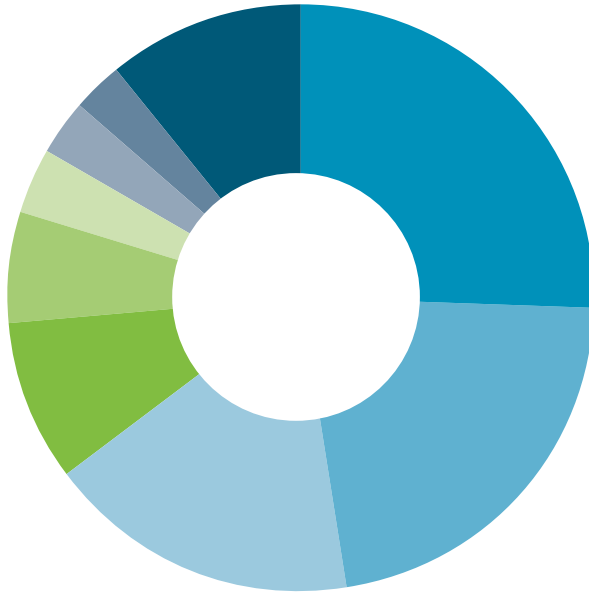
The heart of our mandate is to ensure administratively fair processes and outcomes in provincial and municipal government programs and services. The key to delivering on that mandate is maintaining humanity within the decision-making of systems of government.

The priorities of the office keep evolving and currently include using trauma-informed practices in our dealings with citizens, a commitment to Call to Action 57 in our office's journey to Truth and Reconciliation, and providing appropriate services for newcomers to Saskatchewan.

OUR WORK IN 2022

Our office received a total of 3,656 requests for assistance in 2022. Of those, 2,701 fell within our office's jurisdiction.

FILES RECEIVED WITHIN JURISDICTION



- Social Services: 691
- Corrections, Policing & Public Safety: 597
- Municipalities: 465
- Health: 236
- SGI: 170
- SaskPower: 95
- Justice: 83
- WCB: 78
- Other: 286

Each file received within our jurisdiction represents an individual person and a specific circumstance, but can also point to broader trends. Later in this report, we offer some case examples with a focus on two areas: service delivery issues with Social Services and the regulation of facilities for older adults.

For the 955 files that were outside our jurisdiction, we still listened to concerns and provided referrals to help citizens find an appropriate option.

Staff

As of March 31, 2023

Femi Atilola

Complaints Analyst

Jessica Beals

Complaints Analyst

Christy Bell

Assistant Ombudsman

René Descottes

Assistant Deputy Ombudsman,
Investigations

Leila Dueck

Director of Communications

Penny Foulds

Practicum Student

Jennifer Hall

Assistant Ombudsman

Kyla Iron

Practicum Student

Adrienne Jacques

Assistant Ombudsman

Ryan Kennedy

Executive Administrative Assistant

Pat Lyon

Assistant Ombudsman

Lindsay Mitchell

Assistant Ombudsman

Charlene Mouly

Manager, Administration and Systems

Promi Osman

Complaints Analyst

Sherry Pelletier

Assistant Ombudsman

Nicole Protz

Complaints Analyst

Hannah Quách

Complaints Analyst

Shelley Rissling

Administrative Assistant

Andrea Smandych

Director of Corporate Services

Niki Smith

Complaints Analyst

Jason Stamm

Complaints Analyst

Greg Sykes

General Counsel

Laurie Taylor

Executive Administrative Assistant

Kathy Upton

Complaints Analyst

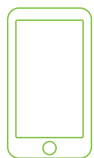
Harry Walker

Assistant Ombudsman

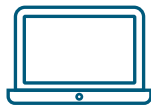
Rob Walton

Deputy Ombudsman

HOW FILES WERE RECEIVED



3,061
Phone Calls



485
Internet Forms



50
Emails

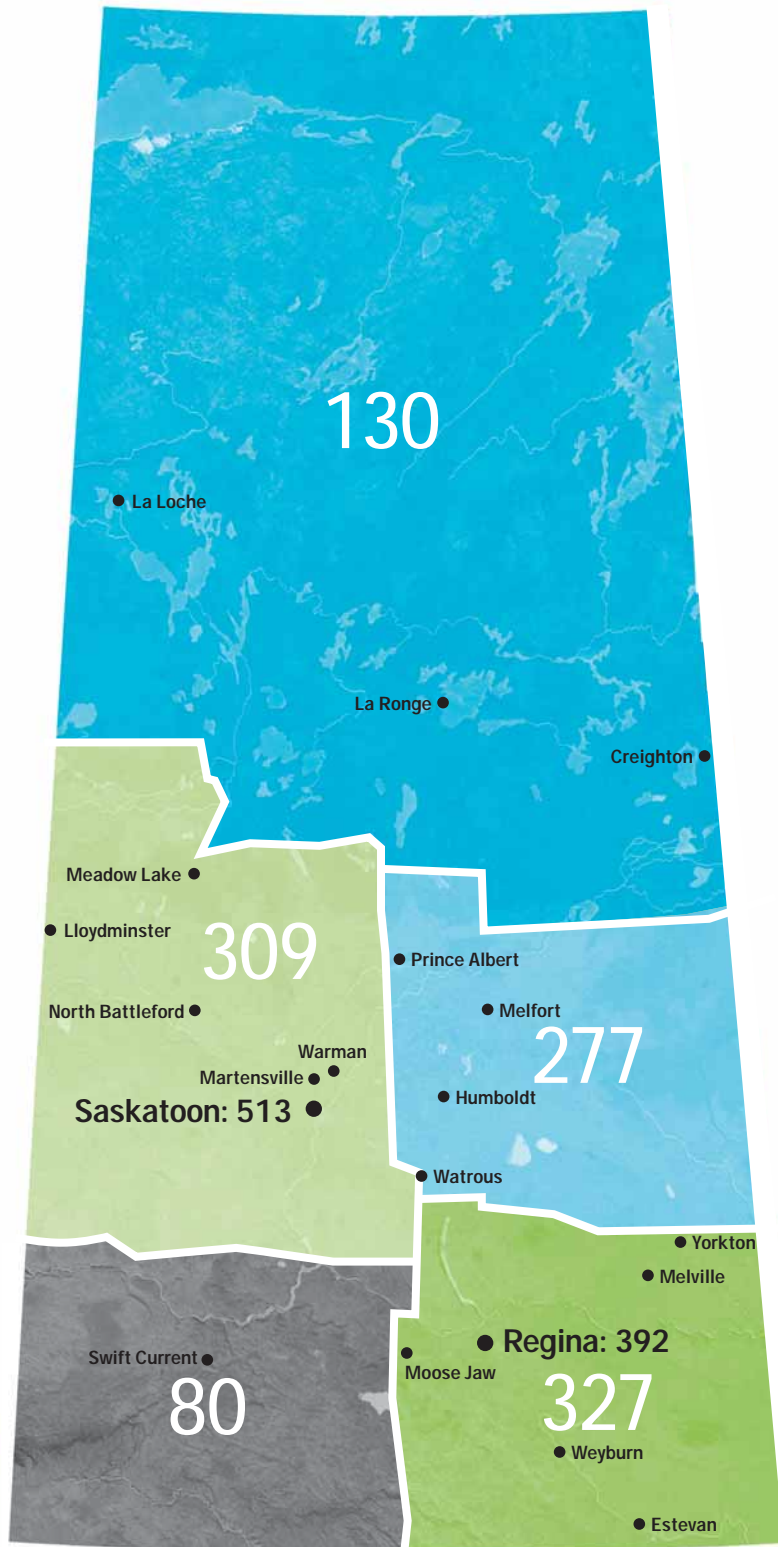


27
Letters



33
Walk-ins

FILES RECEIVED BY REGION



This map provides an overview of the files we received within our jurisdiction separated into five regions, plus Regina and Saskatoon. Complaints received from inmates in correctional centres have been counted separately since they do not necessarily represent the home communities of the prisoners.

Regions & Larger Cities

North	130
West Central	309
East Central	277
Southwest	80
Southeast	327
Regina	392
Saskatoon	513

Other Locations

Correctional Centres	532
Out of Province	39
Unknown	102

TOTAL Complaints

TOTAL	2,701
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USING THE FAIRNESS LENS IN OUR WORK

In our office we use the visual of a fairness triangle to review decisions made by the entities that fall within our jurisdiction, including the provincial government and its agencies and Crown corporations, as well as local authorities such as municipalities. The fairness triangle is an innovative adaptation of dispute resolution concepts which Saskatchewan's fifth Ombudsman, Kevin Fenwick, began using as a way to measure fairness. The ombuds community across Canada is familiar with Saskatchewan's fairness triangle and it has helped provide a way to visually depict the work we do.

When our office reviews a decision we consider whether a fairness issue is involved.

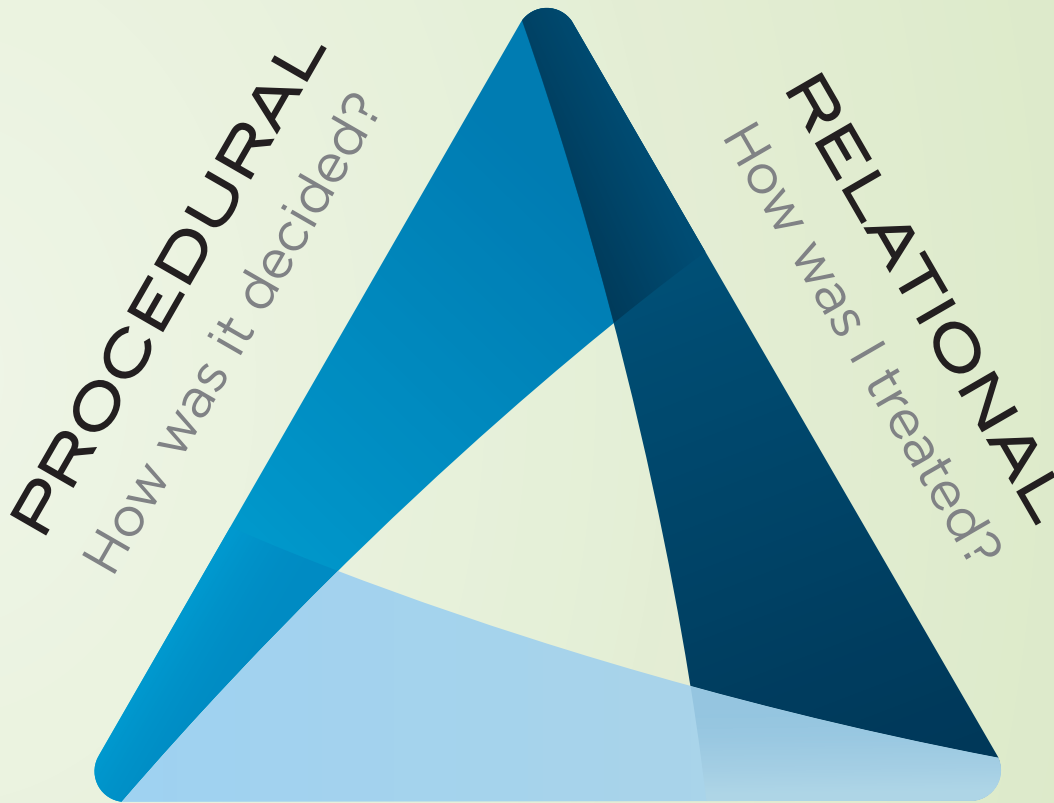
There are three fairness aspects to any decision: substantive, procedural, and relational fairness.

Substantive fairness involves the decision itself. Was there legal authority to make the decision and did it align with the legislative and policy framework under which it was made?

Procedural fairness focuses on the process that was used to arrive at the decision. Was the individual given an opportunity to participate in the process?

Relational fairness deals with how the person was made to feel as the decision was being made. Did they feel heard?

50 Years of Fairness: The fairness triangle is an innovative adaptation of dispute resolution concepts, which Saskatchewan's fifth Ombudsman, Kevin Fenwick, began using as a way to measure fairness.



SUBSTANTIVE
What was decided?

Substantive Fairness

Social Services: A Disconnect Between a Policy Change and Its Implementation

The experience of an 81 year old woman fleeing Ukraine, who was initially denied income benefits by Social Services, perfectly illustrates why the role of Ombudsman is important.

In this instance, there was a disconnect between the stated government policy and its implementation at Social Services because the official assessing the claim was not using the most current version of the Ministry's policy manual.

Olena* contacted us because she didn't think it was fair that Social Services refused her application for the Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) program. She had recently fled the war in Ukraine and arrived in Saskatchewan as a temporary resident. The letter she received from Social Services in response to her application said that since she was neither a permanent resident nor a refugee, she could not receive SIS. It also provided her information about appealing the decision and invited her to request temporary benefits in the interim if she needed them.

We encouraged her to appeal the decision, which she did. In her letter to Social Services, she pointed out that the SIS policy eligibility list includes people who "are in Canada under the Canada Ukraine authorization for emergency travel." Social Services soon replied, acknowledging their mistake and stating that they had missed this recent update to their policy and that, based on this policy update, she was now approved to receive SIS benefits.

Implementation of the new policy to assist individuals fleeing Ukraine did not appear to be a general problem but there was a disconnect in this particular case between the government's change in policy and its implementation.

*Not her real name. Complainants are confidential. Throughout this report, complainants are given a pseudonym unless otherwise noted.

What our office offered to this individual in this case:

1. **Timeliness of response** – Olena received a denial of benefits on June 6 and contacted our office that day. We responded to the call the same day and encouraged a quick appeal. By June 8, just two days later, the appeal was granted and benefits were approved.
2. **Information** – We provided relevant information from the current SIS policy manual and regulations, highlighting the provision in the policy manual as of May 2022, providing eligibility to Ukrainians fleeing the war.
3. **Guidance through the system and identifying options** – We emphasized the importance of a quick appeal with information from the SIS policy manual. We also identified other options Olena could try, including calling her MLA or contacting us again if she felt the outcome of the appeal was unfair.
4. **Support** – Olena thanked us for the support we provided in this situation.



Procedural and Relational Fairness

Social Services: A Year's Delay in Assessing Benefits to Heat a Home



It is important for decision makers to recognize that even if a decision is ultimately made in favour of a citizen, if there is an inordinate delay in the decision-making, this raises both procedural and relational fairness issues for citizens, as well as our office.

An example of this is a delay of over a year in assessing eligibility for benefits to heat a home with a wood stove.

Stephen came to our office for help in getting a decision on his claim for benefits for wood heat under the Saskatchewan Income Supplement (SIS) program. He had not yet had a decision from the previous winter and was heading into another winter, where he was going to struggle to heat his home without the benefits being approved.

His only source of heat was a wood stove.

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By the time he came to our office, Stephen had been attempting to get a decision on his claim for benefits for wood heat for over a year without a resolution. He had resubmitted his paperwork four times, as requested by the Ministry of Social Services, but was still awaiting a decision.

Our office reached out to a supervisor at Social Services, who reviewed the file and confirmed Stephen was eligible for benefits to use a wood stove as an alternative heat source. Monthly benefits of \$130 were approved going forward but no explanation was provided for the delay in approving the benefits. In addition, \$1,950 of benefits were approved dating back to when he was first eligible for the benefits, over a year before.

Stephen was happy with the outcome and thanked our office for the assistance but he was frustrated that he had been working to get approval from Social Services for over a year without a decision. He had followed all the rules and direction provided to him about submitting his request but it had taken the involvement of our office to get a decision.

Stephen also experienced difficulties in reaching anyone at the Social Services' Client Service Centre because he would be put on hold for a long time and then would be disconnected. He had no internet access so could not send or receive email. He received better service previously, when he could contact a local official at Social Services.

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The supervisor made the decision that Stephen was eligible for benefits for his wood stove the same day our office contacted them. Social Services did not provide an explanation for the previous delay in reaching this decision.

Social Services did not provide an explanation for the previous delay in reaching this decision.

Procedural Fairness: Municipal Matters

Complaints about municipal matters often involve issues of procedural fairness.

The first full year of our jurisdiction over municipal administrative decisions and council member code of ethics contraventions was 2016. Since that time, municipalities have consistently been the third-most complained about entities to our office, right behind Social Services and Corrections.

The majority of municipal complaints are resolved through coaching – walking citizens through the process of addressing their complaints directly with decision-makers (i.e. council as a whole) through an in-person or written delegation. Citizens have successfully resolved concerns about road and road allowance maintenance, nuisance abatement, water and sewer billing, opposition to development, property assessment, and bylaw enforcement with the guidance of our Complaints Analysts.

One of the most common complaints we receive is about the behaviour of council members. Council members are elected by their peers and neighbours to make decisions in the best interest of their municipality. They take an oath to act impartially, to abide by a code of ethics and to declare any conflicts of interest that may arise while running the business of a municipality. It is not a responsibility that should be taken lightly and council members note that citizens are taking a greater interest in local politics than ever before. With that comes greater scrutiny of their decisions as well as their actions and behaviour.

Councils are required to have a code of ethics bylaw which lays out the ethical standards and values council members must adhere to. It must also provide a process for citizens to make a complaint if they feel a council member has violated the code.

Citizens may not be aware that they can submit a code of ethics complaint for action by council so we first encourage them to access this process to address the matter directly. Some citizens have used the code of ethics complaint process available through council and are not satisfied with the result. While it is not our role to conduct initial code of ethics complaints or to re-investigate complaints, it is our role to ensure that councils are using a fair process when investigating and deciding whether council members have violated their code of ethics.

Citizens may not be aware that they can submit a code of ethics complaint for action by council so we first encourage them to access this process to address the matter directly.

In one complaint presented to our office, a council member of a town alleged that an investigation into a code of ethics complaint against them was unfair. The complaint against them had been made by another member of council.

In this case, council decided to hire a third party to conduct the investigation. Not all municipalities have the budget to outsource investigations. Any council member(s) not involved in the complaint may complete the investigation so long as they have no public or personal interest in the outcome, and can set aside their personal views about the complaint and act impartially. Some municipalities with small budgets have been innovative in their approach to complaints by entering into agreements with other municipalities to conduct the investigation to avoid perceptions of bias.

In our assessment we learned that the investigator interviewed any party who had witnessed and/or had first-hand knowledge about the complaint, including other council members, municipal staff and members of the public. After the investigator made preliminary findings and conclusions, the affected council member was presented the report for comments and submissions, which were taken into consideration. The final report was presented to council with the exclusion of the affected council member and the complaining council member who had both declared a conflict of interest and removed themselves from the room for the discussion and vote on the matter.

Council members agreed with the report's findings and conclusions. They imposed a number of sanctions against the affected council member which were in compliance with the sanctions indicated in the bylaw.

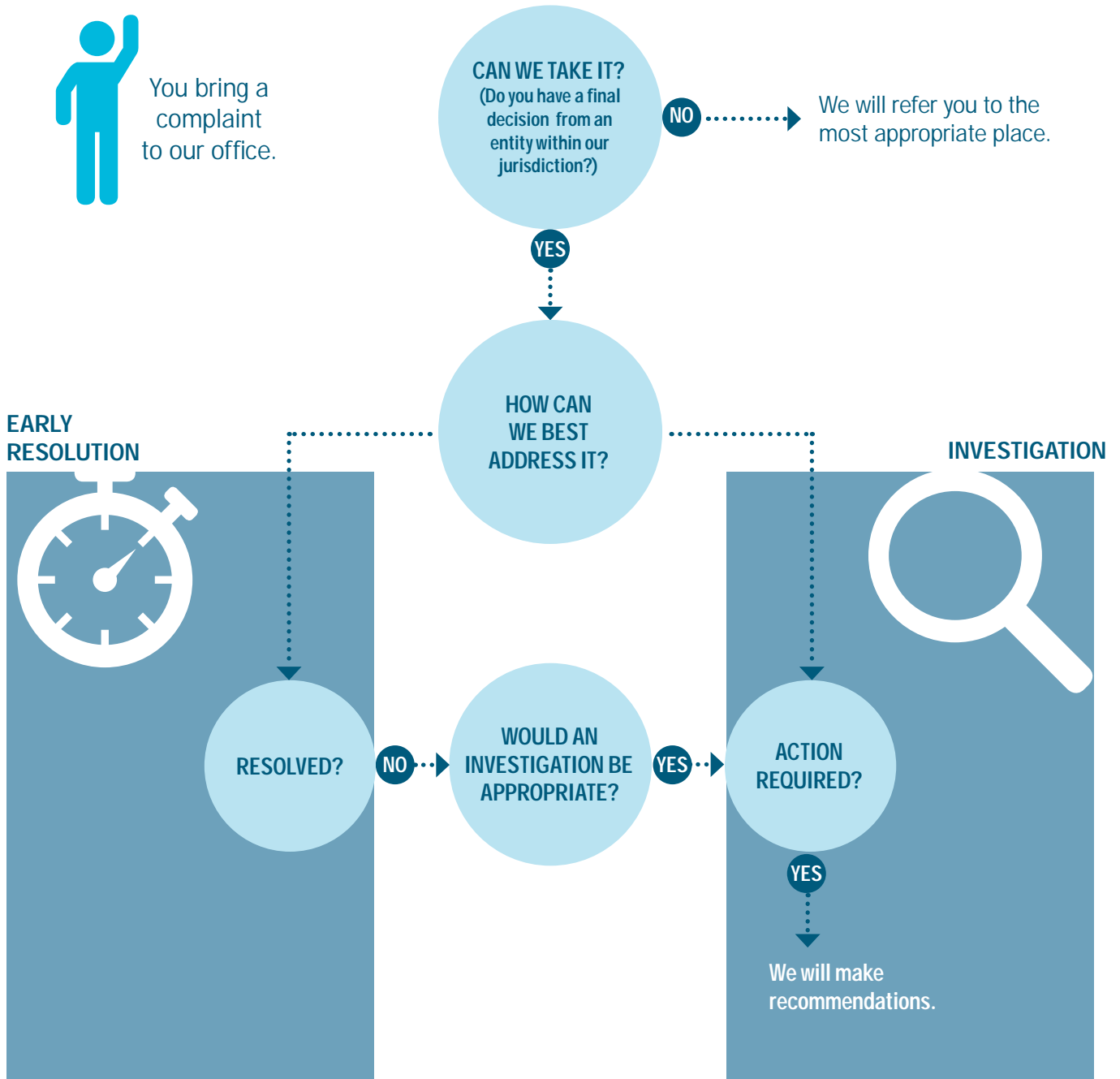
We concluded that there was no role for our office as the council had used a fair process by hiring an unbiased and uninvolved party to do the investigation and by giving the affected council member an opportunity to present their case and to respond to the findings.

Process Flowchart

Each time our office receives a request for assistance, we follow the process below.



You bring a complaint to our office.



EARLY RESOLUTION OF FILES

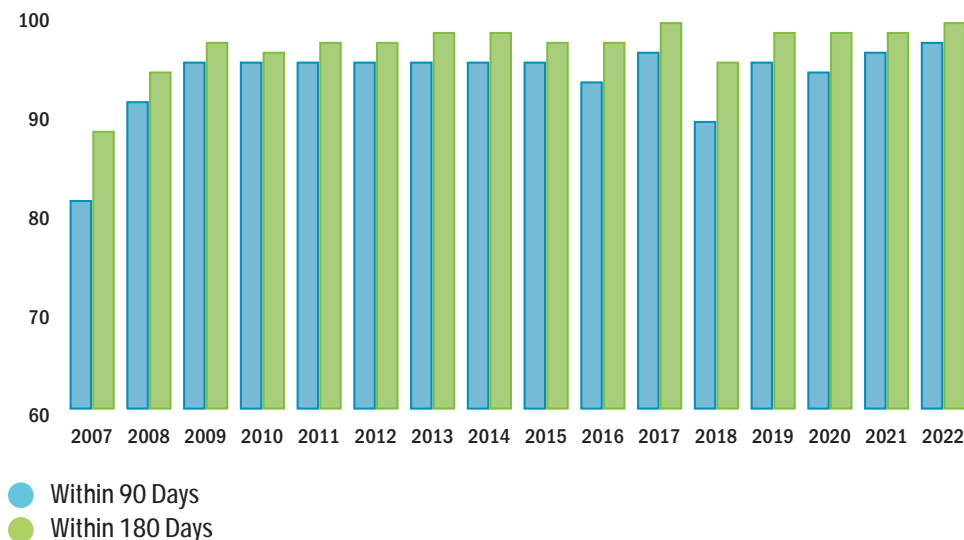
Our office strives to resolve files at the earliest possible opportunity. An early resolution provides the best outcome for citizens. Given the volume of files received in our office, an early resolution philosophy also provides the most effective use of our resources.

Our office is authorized to use early resolution methods by virtue of subsection 14(5) of *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*. This subsection gives our office the authority to try to resolve any problem raised in a complaint through the use of negotiation, conciliation, mediation, or other non-adversarial approaches.

In 2007, our office adopted targets for timeliness in resolving files, with the ambitious goal of resolving 90 percent of our files within 90 days and 95 percent within 180 days.

Since those targets were established, they have been consistently met by our office, as demonstrated in the graph below. In 2022, 95 percent of files were resolved within 90 days and 97 percent of files were resolved within 180 days.

PERCENTAGE OF FILES CONCLUDED...



Examples of Early Resolution

Incorrect Assessment of Historical Arrears by Social Services

Shelley contacted our office because she was upset by a phone call from Social Services advising she owed arrears of \$400 and if these were not paid within a month, Social Services would start clawing back her GST rebate.

Shelley had previously received benefits from the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID), but had been off the program for a few years when she received the call about the arrears. She wanted an explanation of what the arrears were for and

She questioned why Social Services was contacting her so many years later.

for someone to review the file history because she believed that any issues about arrears had been resolved earlier. She questioned why Social Services was contacting her so many years later.

Our office contacted Social Services and spoke with a supervisor, who reviewed the file. The supervisor confirmed that the overpayment was applied due to an entry error when Shelley's file had been closed. The supervisor also noted that Shelley had attempted to resolve the matter on at least three occasions but the supervisor was unable to say why the matter was not previously resolved.

Social Services agreed to issue a letter confirming that no funds were owed and to ensure that the closed file was updated.

The issue was resolved within 24 hours after we reached out to Social Services.

The issue was resolved within 24 hours after we reached out to Social Services.

Early Resolution: Use of Discretion

Timing of Delivery of Death Certificate by eHealth

Most government programs allow decision-makers to use some discretion, because applying policy the same way in all situations can sometimes create an unfair result, depending on the citizen's circumstances. If discretion was needed but not used, we can point out what was unfair, which can often lead to an early resolution.

Lucy contacted our office with the assistance of an interpreter because English was not her first language. Her husband had died in Saskatchewan. Her family lived outside Canada and could not come on compassionate travel visas until eHealth issued the official death certificate.

Her family lived outside Canada and could not come on compassionate travel visas until eHealth issued the official death certificate.

eHealth had told Lucy that once it received the application for the death certificate, it would take four to six weeks to process it - and that the only way to expedite this was if there was a travel date. But in this case, a travel date could not be obtained until the official death certificate was available.

Our office contacted the Director of Vital Statistics and Health Registries and explained the impact that the delay in processing the death certificate was having on Lucy's family. The Director agreed to expedite the death certificate, given the circumstances.

The issue was resolved within three days of us reaching out to the director to explain this family's circumstances.

The issue was resolved within three days of us reaching out to the Director to explain this family's circumstances.

Early Resolution: Review of Processes and Outcomes

Corrections: Inmate Discipline Hearings and Sanctions

The Government of Saskatchewan operates adult provincial correctional facilities. In each facility there is an inmate discipline system to deal with such things as fights, assaults, possession of contraband or weapons, and other behaviour that may affect order and safety within the institution.

Corrections workers operate the inmate discipline system and there are various sanctions which can result from the process, including loss of privileges, disciplinary segregation, and the assignment of extra duties.

Our office receives many calls from prisoners about inmate discipline, particularly about the sanctions imposed. It is important to provide a timely response to these calls, otherwise the prisoner may end up having served the sanction before it can be reviewed.

In 2022, there were a number of instances where our office received and reviewed complaints from inmates about the outcome of their discipline where we were able to provide assistance.

For example, an inmate at the Regina Correctional Centre complained to our office that a discipline panel unfairly found him guilty for participating in a fight. He had been sanctioned to ten days of cell confinement and thirty days of lost privileges. The panel's decision had also been upheld on appeal to the director of the institution.

We went to the correctional centre and viewed the video of the fight. We also reviewed the paperwork related to the charge. We determined there was no evidence on the video to show this inmate's involvement in the incident and met with Corrections officials to discuss the matter. After hearing from us, Corrections officials reversed the decision and removed the disciplinary charge from the inmate's record.

After hearing from us, Corrections officials reversed the decision and removed the disciplinary charge from the inmate's record.

In another instance, we reviewed a sanction and identified that Corrections staff had charged the prisoner twice for the same incident. We noted that the cumulative effect of the sanctions imposed exceeded the maximum sanctions permitted by *The*

Correctional Services Regulations, 2013 in this situation. Corrections staff agreed with our review and reinstated the inmate's phone privileges.

The officials at Corrections have proven to be responsive to our office's suggestions and interventions to reach early resolutions on matters.

Fifty Years of Fairness: In 2002, Ombudsman Barb Tomkins issued a special report titled "Locked Out" in which she extensively reviewed Inmate Services and Conditions of Custody in Saskatchewan Correctional Centres, including the prisoner discipline process.

INVESTIGATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In most instances, our office is able to achieve early resolution and obtain the same result we would have obtained if the matter proceeded to investigation and recommendations were made.

However, there remain cases where early resolution cannot be achieved and an investigation is necessary.

Health Care for Older Adults

Although we do not track complaints specifically by the person's age, we regularly hear from older adults and their loved ones about issues affecting their health, safety and well being. These concerns range from access to subsidized housing and accessible transit to not being made aware of government programs for which they may be eligible. But consistently, the majority of concerns we hear from older adults relate to health care, whether provided in the community, acute care settings, or in long-term care.

Over the past year, we heard from people concerned about delayed access to services (e.g. surgery and home care), timeliness of care, quality of care, and a lack of respect and dignity. Many of these individuals expressed their opinion that inadequate staffing levels were a contributing factor to their situations.

While our office does not have the mandate to comment on human resource matters such as staffing levels, or to assess clinical outcomes, we do strive to ensure that citizens can raise concerns, are listened to, and are provided a response in a timely manner. To do this, we typically take an early resolution approach designed to bring the parties together, often achieving a much quicker outcome than if we choose to initiate a formal investigation.

Investigation: Placement in Hometown Care Home Refused

In some situations, an investigation is unavoidable. One such case involved an elderly person accepted into long-term care but awaiting a transfer to a special-care home in their hometown. The resident was refused admission to the local special-care home on the grounds that their children had a reputation for being loud and outspoken, and staff did not want to engage with them.

The home made the decision unilaterally, with no opportunity for the family to respond to the allegations. When the family approached the Saskatchewan Health Authority, they were advised that little could be done because the long-term care home was an affiliate operating outside of the Authority's mandate for concern-handling. We attempted to address the issue informally but without success.

Our investigation found that the reasons and process used to prevent an elderly resident from living her final days in her home community were unfair and contrary to the province's guiding policy.

Our investigation found that the reasons and process used to prevent an elderly resident from living her final days in her home community were unfair and contrary to the province's guiding policy.

Additionally, we found that the Authority should have played an active role at the outset, but there was confusion over its jurisdiction as laid out in its principles and services agreement with the home.

We recommended the home apologize in writing to the family, that it develop policies for a fair appeal process, and that it revise its principles and services agreement to ensure adherence to the Authority's concern-handling protocols. These were accepted. We recommended the Authority revise its principles and services agreement with the home to ensure compliance with Authority policies, and that it also standardize and clarify its role and concern-handling policies with affiliated homes province-wide. These recommendations were accepted. Our office expects this work to be completed quickly because citizens of the province should receive the same access to concern-handling services, no matter which special-care home they or their loved ones reside in.

Investigation: Personal Care Services in an Assisted Living Setting

On rare occasions, government agencies do not accept our recommendations. This was the case following an investigation into the Ministry of Health, Community Care Branch. We were contacted by the family of an older adult who fell while a resident of an assisted living facility. While these facilities are considered private businesses and operate without any government oversight, we thought it was curious that it housed an on-site personal care services business which employed nursing staff. These staff advised the family that their parent was fine after the fall. However, several days later, family visited and immediately rushed the parent to hospital, who was diagnosed with significant injuries that led to a permanent loss of function.

Our review found that the personal care services company and the facility itself, while having different names, shared business ties, including the same corporate registry address in Ontario. We concluded that the facility and the on-site provider were, in essence, providing the same scope of services as licensed personal care homes, which are subject to Ministry oversight and regulation.

The Ministry disagreed with our interpretation of the legislation and concluded that, in part because residents are not obligated to use the services of the onsite company, that it did not meet the criteria of a personal care home as defined in legislation. However, the Ministry did agree that based on the findings in our report, it would review this facility's practices in light of the legislation to ensure its operations did not fit the description of a personal care home.

Out-of-Province Medical Services

Investigation: Funding Assessment Process

Sometimes we investigate unique situations that may not fit neatly into existing government policies, but draw attention to the need for adapting or adjusting a process to ensure it is fair. We saw just such a case with the family of Conner Finn.*

Conner was diagnosed with childhood cerebral adrenoleukodystrophy (CCALD), a severe condition that causes degeneration in the brain. His parents, Craig and Kirsten, learned that once this degenerative process begins, the result is total disability within six months to two years. Given how rare CCALD is, a Saskatchewan specialist recommended the Finns seek an opinion about a bone marrow transplant from an expert in Boston who could also provide gene therapy. Since the Finns had already been in touch with an expert in Minneapolis who could also provide gene therapy, the Saskatchewan specialist was comfortable asking for the review from this doctor. The Minneapolis specialist advised that Conner needed therapy urgently. He told the Finns he would like to get Connor into a gene therapy trial, though there was limited space, and he recommended a bone marrow transplant be done immediately, which he was prepared to do.

The Finns believed this would be the best option for Conner and began making plans with the Minneapolis doctor. However, to be approved for funding from the provincial government, they would have to apply to the Ministry of Health's Medical Services Branch. The Branch has rules in place to help ensure that the funding for out-of-country medical procedures is properly vetted. For example, they will only fund procedures that they pre-approve, based on specific criteria, including a request for coverage submitted by a Saskatchewan specialist.

*Craig and Kirsten Finn have provided their permission for us to use their names and their son Conner's name in relating the events of this case. We believe it is in the public interest to publish this information about our investigation.

During the next week, the Ministry reviewed available options and determined that the transplant could be done in Canada, so they denied the Finns' request to fund the bone marrow transplant in Minneapolis. The Finns did not think the Ministry's decision was fair because they questioned whether experts in CCALD had verified the Canadian option and were not convinced the Canadian option would be timely. The Finns appealed the Ministry's decision to the Health Services Review Committee (HSRC).

The Ministry later wrote to the Finns to tell them that the appeal was denied. The appeal and the Ministry review had taken about two months. In the meantime, Conner's operation had taken place in Minneapolis, funded by his family. Since pre-approval was one of the Ministry's requirements, this became an added reason for the Ministry to reject the appeal.

Our investigation found that the Ministry did not consider whether Conner's situation presented an exceptional circumstance in which it ought to provide coverage. While the Ministry determined that a bone marrow transplant could have been done in Canada, it did not confirm whether the transplant could be done in a comparable timeframe and, given the lack of experience with CCALD in Canada, whether getting the transplant in Canada would result in a comparable outcome for Conner.

While the Ministry determined that a bone marrow transplant could have been done in Canada, it did not confirm whether the transplant could be done in a comparable timeframe and, given the lack of experience with CCALD in Canada, whether getting the transplant in Canada would result in a comparable outcome for Conner.

The Ministry also did not explain to the Finns that the Minister could decide to make an *ex gratia* payment to them.

We provided recommendations to the Ministry to pay the Finns for the cost of Conner's out-of-country bone marrow transplant, either at a rate that the Minister considers to be fair and reasonable, or at the same rate as if it had been provided in Saskatchewan.

On November 22, 2021, the Minister's office issued the following public statement:

On November 15, I ordered a review of the Conner Finn Case. As a result of the review, and through additional discussions with officials from the Ministry of Health and the Saskatchewan Health Authority, a decision has been made that is satisfactory for the Finn Family.

In addition to implementing the recommendations that have already been released from the Ombudsman, the Ministry of Health will also be looking at how to improve our processes in the future for similar cases. We will also be creating a Rare Disease Strategy to look at how Saskatchewan can best take care of individuals in similar circumstances.

On April 8, 2022, an *ex gratia* payment of \$801,569.36 to Mr. Craig Finn for coverage of Conner's medical expenses was approved.

OUTREACH

A Proactive vs. a Reactive Approach

An important part of our statutory framework is the use of education, which is a powerful tool because it encourages using a proactive approach to avoid issues, rather than having to react to issues after they happen.

Within the public sector, we regularly participate in the Corrections Induction Training Program (ITP), which provides training to new correctional workers. Other education opportunities in the public sector include short presentations about the role of the Ombudsman at staff meetings and other employee gatherings. We are also invited to provide presentations to community groups and other independent offices. Here is an overview of groups we made presentations to in 2022.

Outreach in 2022

Public Sector Employees

City of Regina - Property Revenue Services

Orientation for Corrections Staff

- Saskatoon Correctional Centre
- Regina Correctional Centre
- Prince Albert Correctional Centre
- Pine Grove Correctional Centre
- Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford
- Probations

Saskatchewan Cancer Agency

Community Outreach

Radius Community Centre, Saskatoon

Regina Open Door Society - Community Fair

Royal West Collegiate - Adult Education

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism Conference

Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association - Conference Presentation

Other Independent Offices

Forum of Canadian Ombudsman - Ombuds Essentials Course

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner - Staff Workshop

STATISTICS

SOCIAL SERVICES

Files Received

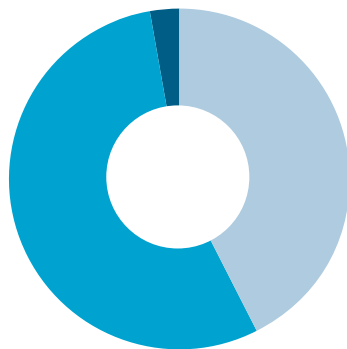
Ministry of Social Services	2022	2021	2020
Child & Family Service Delivery	124	118	90
Housing Programs	81	58	60
Community Living Service Delivery	0	7	6
Income Assistance Service Delivery - Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability	233	206	157
Income Assistance Service Delivery - Saskatchewan Assistance Program	6	54	99
Income Assistance Service Delivery - Saskatchewan Income Support	218	168	92
Income Assistance Service Delivery - Transitional Employment Allowance	0	9	28
Income Assistance Service Delivery - Income Supplement Programs - Other	6	7	12
Regional Appeal Committees	2	0	0
Adjudicator, SK Employment Supplement Program	1	0	0
Social Services - Other	20	18	10
Total	691	645	554

CORRECTIONS

Files Received

Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety	2022	2021	2020
Besnard Lake Correctional Camp	1	0	1
Pine Grove Correctional Centre	90	104	87
Prince Albert Correctional Centre	58	61	89
Regina Correctional Centre	226	211	189
Saskatoon Correctional Centre	191	155	220
Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford (Corrections)	6	15	13
White Birch Female Remand Unit	1	2	2
Whitespruce Provincial Training Centre	7	13	3
Adult Corrections - Other	9	10	7
Corrections, Policing and Public Safety - Other	8	9	8
Total	597	580	619

FILES RECEIVED FROM SENTENCED VS. REMANDED INMATES



- Remanded: 328
- Sentenced: 254
- Other/Unknown: 15

MUNICIPALITIES

Files Received

Municipalities	2022	2021	2020
Cities	138	136	127
Towns	87	113	103
Villages	55	92	58
Resort Villages	15	23	13
Rural Municipalities	150	161	126
Northern Municipalities	15	15	24
Other / Not Disclosed	5	6	8
Total	465	546	459

HEALTH

Files Received

Health Organizations	2022	2021	2020
MINISTRY OF HEALTH	30	86	65
3S HEALTH	3	0	0
eHEALTH SASKATCHEWAN	14	19	9
SASKATCHEWAN CANCER AGENCY	3	1	1
SASKATCHEWAN HEALTH AUTHORITY	167	188	156
OTHER HEALTH ENTITIES	22	27	26
Total	239	321	257

CROWN CORPORATIONS

Files Received

Crown Corporations	2022	2021	2020
CROWN INVESTMENTS CORPORATION	0	1	0
FINANCIAL & CONSUMER AFFAIRS AUTHORITY	6	1	4
SASKATCHEWAN CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION	0	4	4
SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT INSURANCE (SGI)			
Auto Fund	24	45	35
Claims Division - Auto Claims	65	51	49
Claims Division - No Fault Insurance	37	27	31
Claims Division - Other / SGI Canada	27	23	22
Other	18	8	2
TOTAL - SGI	171	154	139
SASKATCHEWAN LIQUOR AND GAMING AUTHORITY	1	1	2
SASKATCHEWAN PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY	1	0	0
SASKENERGY	43	41	21
SASKPOWER	95	94	79
SASKTEL	22	38	23
WATER SECURITY AGENCY	2	3	2
Total	341	337	274

NOTE: Crown corporations about whom we received no complaints in the last three years are not listed in this table.

NOTE: eHealth complaints are reported under the Health section.

MINISTRIES

Files Received

Ministries & Executive Council	2022	2021	2020
ADVANCED EDUCATION	4	6	7
AGRICULTURE	0	1	2
CENTRAL SERVICES**	n/a	n/a	5
EDUCATION	4	5	2
ENVIRONMENT	4	10	8
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL	4	1	0
FINANCE	10	4	6
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	6	6	4
HIGHWAYS	4	4	8
IMMIGRATION AND CAREER TRAINING	6	3	3
JUSTICE			
Court Services	13	19	13
Maintenance Enforcement Branch	29	25	37
Public Guardian and Trustee	19	39	19
Office of the Public Registry Administration	3	3	5
Justice - Other	19	17	15
TOTAL - JUSTICE	83	103	89
LABOUR RELATIONS AND WORKPLACE SAFETY	7	11	9
PARKS, CULTURE AND SPORT	5	2	5
SASKBUILDS AND PROCUREMENT**	5	2	0
TRADE AND EXPORT DEVELOPMENT	0	0	2
MINISTRY NOT DISCLOSED	0	2	0
Total	142	160	150

** On November 9, 2020, SaskBuilds and the Ministry of Central Services were replaced by the Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement.

NOTE: Ministries about whom we received no complaints in the last three years are not listed in this table.

AGENCIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Files Received

	2022	2021	2020
AGENCIES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & COLLEGES			
ANIMAL PROTECTION SERVICES OF SASKATCHEWAN	4	3	3
APPRENTICESHIP AND TRADES CERTIFICATION COMMISSION	4	0	0
AUTOMOBILE INJURY APPEAL COMMISSION	2	2	1
HIGHWAY TRAFFIC BOARD	0	5	1
OFFICE OF RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES	49	83	64
PROVINCIAL CAPITAL COMMISSION	0	0	1
PROVINCIAL MEDIATION BOARD	1	0	1
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION	1	3	1
REGIONAL COLLEGES	1	2	0
SASKATCHEWAN ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY	2	2	1
SASKATCHEWAN EMPLOYMENT ACT ADJUDICATORS	0	1	1
SASKATCHEWAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION	16	12	9
SASKATCHEWAN LABOUR RELATIONS BOARD	1	2	0
SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION	35	27	23
SASKATCHEWAN MUNICIPAL BOARD	2	1	0
SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC	5	5	2
SASKATCHEWAN PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMISSION	18	11	9
SASKATCHEWAN SOCIAL SERVICES APPEAL BOARD	4	4	3
TECHNICAL SAFETY AUTHORITY OF SK (TSASK)	3	0	0
WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD	78	73	59
Total	226	236	179

NOTE: Entities about whom we received no complaints in the last three years are not listed.

BUDGET

	2020-2021 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT*	2021-2022 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT*	2022-2023 BUDGET**
REVENUE			
General Revenue Fund Appropriation	\$3,213,318	\$3,279,649	\$4,452,000
Miscellaneous	\$739	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	\$3,214,057	\$3,279,649	\$4,452,000
EXPENSES			
Salaries & Benefits	\$2,310,034	\$2,432,728	\$3,378,000
Office Space & Equipment Rental	\$562,933	\$564,816	\$581,000
Communication	\$34,104	\$34,710	\$35,700
Miscellaneous Services	\$79,997	\$94,469	\$130,400
Office Supplies & Expenses	\$20,049	\$13,647	\$17,500
Advertising, Promotion & Events	\$60,719	\$41,731	\$65,500
Travel	\$14,339	\$16,918	\$43,900
Amortization	\$121,358	\$109,705	-
Dues & Fees	\$65,265	\$29,596	\$49,500
Repairs & Maintenance	\$65,869	\$45,732	\$150,500
Capital Asset Acquisitions	-	-	-
Loss on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,334,667	\$3,384,052	\$4,452,000
ANNUAL (DEFICIT) SURPLUS	(\$120,610)	(\$104,403)	-

*These columns are based on our audited financial statements, which follow our fiscal year (April - March) and our annual report follows the calendar year. The audited financial statements are available on our website at www.ombudsman.sk.ca.

**Due to the timing of this report, 2022–2023 numbers reflect the budgeted amount rather than the actual.

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Reach
Us*

