

Metropolitan King County Council Position Descriptions	
Council unit:	Ombuds/Tax Advisor
Job description:	Senior Deputy Ombuds (Ombuds 2)
Salary range:	73 (KC Squared Table)

Classification Summary

The Ombuds series is a three-level career progression. The primary responsibilities of this position classification include performing initial screening and preliminary investigation of complaints involving King County government. The work of the Senior Deputy Ombuds is governed by the King County Charter Section 270, King County Code 2.52, King County Employee Ethics Code KCC 3.04, and Whistleblower Protection Code in KCC 3.42. This classification 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.

Distinguishing Features of the Position

Senior Deputy Ombuds plans, conducts, and communicates work under the guidance of the King County Ombuds Director or designee(s). Senior Deputy Ombuds investigates and makes determinations on complex complaints about the County's operations, including some ethics, whistleblower, and lobbyist disclosure allegations. The Senior Deputy Ombuds may work on ten or more projects concurrently, meeting statutory timeframes for completion. These projects require managing large amounts of information, qualitative and quantitative analyses, synthesizing multi-faceted findings, participation in public meetings, and interfacing with county leaders and staff. Senior Deputy Ombuds generally require some supervisory support, coaching, and editing of written products. This is a salaried, represented, overtime-exempt position that reports to the Ombuds Director.

Career Progression

Senior Deputy Ombuds is the second level within a three-level Ombuds professional classification series. The primary differences between Senior Deputy Ombuds and Principal Deputy Ombuds are the volume and complexity* of complaints assigned, the maturity with which staff apply skills, efficiency with which staff complete work, level of independent judgment used to make recommendations, and amount of supervision required.

Advancement to Principal Deputy Ombuds requires that the Senior Deputy Ombuds establish an expert understanding of the principles of ombuds work, including office policy/process, objectivity, professional ethics, professional judgement, workload management, application of equity principles, and teamwork/culture. In addition, to advance the Senior Deputy Ombuds must have demonstrated expert competency in intake, investigations, complaints and/or assistance, scoping, case research, investigative plans, evidence collection and review, and analyses. Finally, the Senior Deputy Ombuds must have demonstrated extremely effective skills in building positive relationships with internal and external parties, navigating sensitive situations, and the ability to balance and deliver on competing priorities and high workload.

* Complex work is defined by the presence of one to two of the following: involvement of multiple agencies or department-wide issues; layered legal environments; political sensitivities; multi-faceted equity issues; complainants experiencing crises; multi-system or multi-jurisdiction involvement; and other complexities.

Job Description: Senior Deputy Ombuds	Council Adoption:
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Essential Duties and Responsibilities

In addition to performing the same duties and responsibilities as the Deputy Ombuds with less supervision and support, the Senior Deputy Ombuds will also:

- Conduct routine and complex intake, investigations, complaints, and/or assistance within statutory timeframes.
- For routine and complex assignments, develop multi-faceted preliminary case research, define scope of inquiry, conduct equity analyses, and develop investigative plans for review by the Ombuds Director or designee.
- For routine and complex assignments, execute investigative plans, collect and review evidence, conduct analyses, apply appropriate legal and evidentiary standards. Research and evaluate issues, policies, laws, and procedures.
- Independently develop formal written reports for review and issuance by the Ombuds Director or designee that include well-supported findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
- May be assigned to review and comment on portions of investigative or other work of less senior staff.
- Plan for and conduct work in which conflict or complexity is expected.
- Lead complex internal and external party relationships and navigate sensitive situations.
- Perform other duties as assigned that support the overall objective of the position.

Qualifications

Required Knowledge and Skill

- Specialized professional knowledge of the principles, methods, and techniques used in the research and investigation of complaints. Knowledge of the principles and practices in one or more of the following areas: government ombuds, administration, management analysis, research, planning, social work, or the equivalent that can aid investigation and complaint resolution work.
- Advanced knowledge of codes, regulations, administrative, and legal procedures as they apply to the operation and jurisdiction of the Office of Ombuds.
- Advanced knowledge of local government operations and services provided.
- Well-developed quantitative and qualitative analysis skills, including sufficient math skills to develop and interpret statistical and operating information.
- High emotional intelligence and public relations skills to adapt to diverse and sometimes challenging personalities and styles, gain trust while working with others in sensitive and difficult situations, resolve conflict, and employ lines of questioning for fact finding.
- Advanced understanding of the concepts of institutional and structural racism and bias and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities, especially related to King County government.
- Advanced knowledge in the research and analysis of legal issues.
- Working knowledge of privacy, public information, and records retention laws.
- Excellent organization, project management, and communication skills.
- Advanced knowledge of office applications, including word processing, databases, spreadsheets, presentations, and working knowledge of other applications used by the office.

- Advanced knowledge of English usage, grammar, and writing frameworks to write investigative or complaint reports.
- High emotional intelligence and public relations skills to adapt to diverse and sometimes challenging personalities and styles, gain trust while working with others in sensitive and difficult situations, resolve conflict, and employ lines of questioning for fact finding.
- Advanced working knowledge of trauma-informed interviewing or comparable skills in working with people experiencing high emotion and/or mental health crises.

Required Ability

- Work independently and manage workload with multiple and concurrent cases and tight deadlines.
- Set up and sequence steps in conducting investigations.
- Use logic and reasoning to analyze and organize data.
- Listen, consider, and respond with composure to people who may be experiencing and/or expressing strong emotions.
- 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.
- Understand and apply principles of objectivity, independence, professional skepticism, and professional ethics including appropriate applications of confidentiality.
- Present facts and information in a clear, concise, logical, and objective manner, both orally and in writing.
- Conduct observations and analyses in the field at remote sites, with varying schedules.
- Travel throughout King County or surrounding areas in a timely manner.

Education and Experience

Advanced degree in law, public administration, or related discipline, plus six years of experience performing professional-level investigative, analytical, legal, dispute resolution or related capacity, including extensive specialized knowledge in a field that would contribute to the provision of investigative and dispute resolution services. An equivalent combination of education and experience that clearly demonstrates the ability to perform the job duties of the position may be substituted. Investigative experience with a focus on writing detailed analytical findings is strongly desired.

Levels Within the Same Series

Deputy Ombuds (Ombuds 1)

Senior Deputy Ombuds (Ombuds 2)

Principal Deputy Ombuds (Ombuds 3)