

# About the NSW Ombudsman

***Our vision is that everyone receives the right services and fair treatment from those we oversight.***

The NSW Ombudsman is an independent integrity agency. The current NSW Ombudsman is Paul Miller PSM, appointed in May 2021 for a 7-year term.

Our [Strategic Plan 2020-25](#)<sup>1</sup> sets out our vision, outcomes, and values.

Our four strategic outcomes are:

1. Complaints to us are resolved effectively and individuals are satisfied with our service
2. Public authorities and community service providers are held to account for serious wrong conduct
3. Improvements in public administration and community services delivery occur as a result of our work
4. Parliament gets support from us in the exercise of its functions.

We seek to achieve these objectives through undertaking our statutory functions set out below.

## Our statutory functions

### Complaint handling

We assist in resolving complaints through a variety of ways, including conciliation or mediation services, referring the complaint to the relevant agency for action, conducting preliminary inquiries, and provision of information and comments to the public authority.

We can handle complaints about:	We are not able to handle complaints about:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NSW Government agencies including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o NSW corrective services (including privately managed facilities) and youth justice</li><li>o NSW hospitals and health administration (but not of individual clinical treatment)</li><li>o NSW education and schools, TAFE, and public universities</li><li>o State-owned corporations</li><li>o Statutory bodies (including arts institutions)</li></ul></li><li>• Local Councils</li><li>• NSW Government funded community service providers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministers or other MPs</li><li>• Courts, tribunals, or related officials</li><li>• NSW Police Force and its members</li><li>• Commonwealth Government services (including Centrelink, Medicare, the ATO (Australian Taxation Office))</li><li>• NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) providers (registered or unregistered)</li><li>• Private commercial entities (including banks, phone companies, insurers, travel service providers and privately owned utilities)</li><li>• Privacy complaints</li><li>• Industrial/employment disputes</li></ul>

1. [www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/138551/NSW-Ombudsman-Strategic-Plan-Mid-Point-Refresh-2020-2025.pdf](http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/138551/NSW-Ombudsman-Strategic-Plan-Mid-Point-Refresh-2020-2025.pdf)



# Our statutory functions

## Investigations

We can formally investigate the conduct of public authorities (whether a complaint has been made or not) where it appears there has been wrong conduct and we consider a formal investigation is warranted. When we are undertaking a formal investigation, we have coercive powers similar to a Royal Commission.

## Oversee public interest disclosures (whistleblowing)

We oversee the operation of the Public Interest Disclosures Act. We provide advice, resources and guidance to public authorities and public officials. We monitor the exercise of functions by public authorities and audit agencies' compliance with the Act.

We are also supporting agencies to prepare for the new *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*.

## Monitor community services

We monitor and review community services delivered by government and non-government agencies. This includes child protection, out-of-home care and homelessness services. We conduct inquiries into matters affecting service providers and receivers, and report to Parliament on our inquiries and reviews.

## Monitor and assess Aboriginal programs

We monitor the delivery of the NSW Government's Aboriginal programs and engage with the community to improve the delivery of services to Aboriginal communities and peoples.

## Oversight the *Mandatory Disease Testing Act*

We monitor the operation and administration of the Act and report to Parliament on our monitoring.

## Review deaths of children

We review deaths that occur in circumstances of abuse or neglect, and the deaths of children in care. We also convene and support the Child Death Review Team (CDRT). The CDRT maintains a register of the deaths of all children in NSW. We analyse the causes and patterns of the deaths of children and identify ways in which deaths could be prevented or the risk of death reduced. We report to Parliament biennially on this work.

## Supporting our functions

- **Encourage good administration in the public sector:** we provide advice, training and resources to agencies to identify and encourage good administrative practice.
- **Community engagement:** we run and participate in events and forums across NSW to raise awareness about our role and services.
- **Parliamentary support:** we support Parliament and its committees by tabling public reports and making submissions to Parliamentary Committees about evidence and issues arising in the exercise of our functions.

**Scan the QR code to find out more on our website**



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**Contact Us** | Email: [info@ombo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@ombo.nsw.gov.au) | Phone: (02) 9286 1000 | Web: [www.ombo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au)