



COMDTINST 1750.4D

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1750.4D

Subj: OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

- Ref:
- (a) Authority to Accept Certain Voluntary Services, 10 U.S.C. § 1588
 - (b) Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, Public- Law 105-19
 - (c) Family Advocacy Program, COMDTINST 1750.7 (series)
 - (d) Restrictions on Employment of Relatives, COMDTINST 12310.3 (series)
 - (e) Invitational Travel, COMDTINST 12570.3 (series)
 - (f) Coast Guard Special Needs Program 1754.7 (series)
 - (g) Coast Guard Equal Opportunity Manual, COMDTINST M5350.4 (series)
 - (h) Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR), Appendix E

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction provides policy and program guidance applicable to all Coast Guard units for the Ombudsman Program.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of integrated support commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Judge Advocate General and special staff elements at Headquarters shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Ombudsman Program, COMDTINST 1750.4C is cancelled
4. DISCUSSION.
 - a. The precursor to the Ombudsman program, the Coast Guard Command Family Representatives Program, was established in 1986. Like its precursor, the Ombudsman program serves as a link between Coast Guard units and families. Ombudsmen assist units and families by providing information about family services, sources of assistance, Coast Guard and unit policies, activities of interest to family members, family benefits, and other information to minimize disruption

DISTRIBUTION – SDL No. 144

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
A																										
B																										
C																										
D																										
E																										
F																										
G																										
H																										

NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:

related to relocation and deployments. The program is not intended to provide counselors to Coast Guard families, but rather to provide a liaison between the Commanding Officer (CO) and/or Officer-in-Charge (OINC) and families.

- b. An effective Ombudsman program supports the CO/OINC in gaining insight on the state of the unit, thus allowing a proactive response that can minimize or preclude the impact family concerns may have on unit mission readiness.
- c. Appointed Ombudsmen are volunteers who donate their services directly to the unit. These volunteers are covered as federal employees in accordance with reference (a) and are provided some protection against litigation in accordance with reference (b). In addition, they are mandatory reporters of family violence as described in reference (c) and shall follow all guidance within this Instruction as well as guidance provided by the CO/OINC.
- d. This Instruction does not apply to volunteers who support the Ombudsman program but are not officially appointed as an Ombudsman. The donation of their services to public, private, or commercial organizations or contractors for the Coast Guard, even when such services are in direct support of the Ombudsman program, are appreciated by the Coast Guard, but are not authorized coverage under this Instruction.
- e. This Instruction does not establish any rights or benefits to family services at specific units throughout the Coast Guard. The program foundation is a collaboration among Coast Guard auxiliary and reserve forces, all Coast Guard units, the Department of Defense (DoD), federal, state and local agencies, and public and private civilian agencies. Collaboration ensures the maximum use of resources to provide family support services to Coast Guard members and their families and minimizes the duplication of services.

5. DESIGNATIONS.

- a. The Commandant will appoint, in writing, an Ombudsman-at-Large to represent all unit Ombudsmen and report on active duty and reserve family concerns. The Ombudsman-at-Large will write reports of any field visit and provide them to the Commandant as requested, with a copy to the Director of Health and Safety (CG-11).
- b. Commanding Officers/Officers-In-Charge are responsible for determining the need for an Ombudsman program at their unit and are accountable to their superior for this decision. Officers-in-Charge also have the option of either appointing a unit Ombudsman or ensuring that family members have access to an appointed Ombudsman within their geographic area.
- c. Work-Life Supervisors at Integrated Support Commands (ISCs) and Headquarters Support Command (HSC) shall serve as the Ombudsman Program Coordinator. The Work-Life Supervisor may delegate this responsibility in writing to a volunteer or Work-Life Specialist as a collateral duty.

6.

GOALS.

- a. The primary goals of the Ombudsman Program are to:
 - (1) Support the unit mission by creating and maintaining lines of communication from the command to families as well as from families to the command. Communications are best conducted through the chain-of –command;
 - (2) Assist in identifying unit needs for support services and provide appropriate referral services before family concerns and problems reach crisis proportions;
 - (3) Reduce social isolation among family members by providing direct communication to families (i.e., newsletters or email news), thus enhancing a feeling of belonging, control, and self-esteem within Coast Guard families;
 - (4) Provide information about available resources by referring family members to appropriate service providers in an effort to promote self-reliance;
 - (5) Facilitate and promote a healthy sense of community among Coast Guard members and their family members within the unit;
 - (6) Serve as a principal source of assistance and support to Coast Guard families during times of local or national emergency, mobilization, deployment or evacuation;
 - (7) Support mission readiness by preventing or reducing family stressors and freeing Coast Guard personnel from family concerns so they are able to focus on the mission of the service; and
 - (8) Maintain the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality.

7. WHO MAY VOLUNTEER AS AN OMBUDSMAN.

- a. The appointed unit Ombudsmen normally should not be the spouse or family member of the Commanding Officer, Officer-In-Charge, Executive Officer, Executive Petty Officer or Command Master Chief, in accordance with reference (d). Voluntary service as an Ombudsman may be accepted from the spouse of a unit member, Coast Guard Reservists and/or their spouses, or a Coast Guard Auxiliarist;
- b. A Reserve or Auxiliary member may volunteer to serve as an Ombudsman if the CO/OINC so chooses. While Reservists cannot use drill time to complete Ombudsman duties exclusively, they may be assigned additional duties assisting the Ombudsman program or be appointed as the Ombudsman Coordinator at an ISC. COs/OINCs are encouraged to select other volunteers, such as active duty members, reservists, auxiliaries, and Work-Life staff members to assist with Ombudsman program management. In an area where units are collocated and there are several Ombudsmen, it can be beneficial to have one Ombudsman volunteer to assist the Ombudsman Program Coordinator.

- c. Voluntary services from host-nation or third country citizens may be accepted if the responsible CO/OINC determines that acceptance of such voluntary services will not subject the Coast Guard to potential liability for unacceptable expenses. This includes payment of employment benefits for a volunteer because of host-nation labor and voluntary service laws, United States/host nation treaties, or Status of Forces Agreement or other agreements. COs/OINCs should seek legal counsel for a review of the provision of voluntary services from host-nation and third-country citizens at overseas locations prior to appointment in the Ombudsman program. For example, the spouse of an active duty member holding host nation or third country citizenship.

8. EXCLUSIONS. In accordance with reference (a), Ombudsmen may not:

- a. Hold policy making positions, supervise paid employees or military personnel, or perform inherently governmental functions, such as determining entitlements to benefits, authorizing expenditures, or deciding rights and responsibilities of any party under Coast Guard requirements;
- b. Be used to displace paid employees or in lieu of filling authorized paid personnel positions;
- c. Be accepted in exchange for any personnel action affecting any paid federal employee or any military members; or,
- d. Perform case management or counseling services, even if professionally trained in these areas.

9. PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. Area and District Commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistic commands and Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy shall:

- (1) Implement policy and procedures described in this Instruction
- (2) Ensure appropriate support by providing funding and other resources necessary for the coordination and implementation of annual training throughout the district for appointed command Ombudsman and program management training for commanding officers
- (3) Ensure immediate reporting of all allegations and substantiated child/spouse abuse/neglect incidents to the servicing family advocacy specialist in accordance to Reference (c);
- (4) Ensure CO/ONIC coordinate program implementation and other support efforts with the program coordinator
- (5) Ensure invitational travel orders presented are provided with the approval of the Ombudsman Program Coordinator that the Ombudsman has been officially appointed to the program and that requirements for invitational travel orders (See reference (e)). Volunteers not officially appointed are not authorized the benefit of invitational travel or any other reimbursement benefit under the Ombudsman program. Ombudsmen shall not be placed on invitational travel without the presentation of an appointment letter.

- b. Commandant (CG-111). The Office of Work-Life is responsible for developing program policy, promoting program management efforts with the reserve and auxiliary force, and for funding the approved activities of the Ombudsman-at-Large. In addition, CG-111 is responsible for supporting the initiation of collaborative efforts between Coast Guard units with DoD and other federal, state, and local agencies, including both public and private, to ensure maximum use of resources for family support services to Coast Guard members and their families.
- c. Commandant (CG-1112). The Individual and Family Support Division serves as the Ombudsman Program Manager and is responsible for:
 - (1) Developing policy and guidance for program compliance;
 - (2) Actively seeking opportunities to exchange volunteer issues, trends, and programs among relevant offices within DoD and other federal, state, and local civilian volunteer components to maximize available support systems and avoid duplication;
 - (3) Coordinating, sharing, and collaborating services, training, and resources with reserve and auxiliary components supporting a total Coast Guard force; and
 - (4) Development of a standardized Ombudsman training curricula and promoting attendance at joint-service training programs by Coast Guard Ombudsmen.
- d. ISC/HSC Commanding Officers shall:
 - (1) Implement policy and procedures as described in this Instruction;
 - (2) Encourage support and implementation of volunteer services to assist in providing family members with an avenue to obtain information and referrals for services and benefits that will address their immediate concerns;
 - (3) Appoint the duties of Ombudsman Program Coordinator as described in this Instruction;
 - (4) Advocate for the support of the duties related to the Ombudsman program, to include monitoring compliance, promoting awareness, providing program guidance, and compiling document for reporting;
 - (5) Require immediate reporting of all allegations and substantiated child/spouse abuse/neglect incidents to the servicing ISC Work-Life Family Advocacy Specialist (FAS), and unit CO/OINC; if unable to contact the CO/OINC or the servicing ISC Work-Life FAS, contact the ISC Work-Life Supervisor in accordance with reference (c); and
 - (6) Report to appropriate authorities, ensuring privacy and confidentiality, any instances of any suicide, homicide, or possible intimate danger.

e. ISC and HSC Work-Life Supervisors shall:

- (1) Serve as the Program Coordinator for the Ombudsman program, unless delegated, throughout their area of responsibility (AOR), and assist unit COs/OINCs in learning about the benefits an Ombudsman volunteer could bring to their unit;
- (2) If delegated, assign the responsibilities of Program Coordinator in writing to a volunteer, such as a reservist, auxiliarist, or appropriate member of the Work-Life staff. If a volunteer is appointed as the Ombudsman Coordinator, they shall be allowed to be reimbursed for the same items an Ombudsman may claim according to section 17 (a) of this Instruction;
- (3) Coordinate basic Ombudsman training, provide program guidance, and assist units with the appointment of an Ombudsman within their AOR;
- (4) Establish a system to collect information on AOR Ombudsman services provided on an annual basis, to include: number of Ombudsmen appointed for each unit, number of deployments or other informational group briefings, total number of hours of volunteer service, total amount of reimbursement and program related expenses, total number of requests for Ombudsman Program support, number of training sessions conducted for COs/OINCs and their Ombudsmen, along with a list of family concerns reported by the COs/OINCs throughout their AOR. The report should be forwarded to Commandant (CG-1112) by Oct 30 annually, or when requested;
- (5) Monitor compliance with this Instruction, ensure collaboration, promote awareness, promote joint-service programs, establish a recognition and reward system, provide program procedural guidance; provide training; compile documentation and provide funding support;
- (6) Compile and maintain an Ombudsmen roster within their AOR, updated or as changes occur. Forward each update to the ISC Commanding Officer, District Commander, District Chaplain, and District Command Center;
- (7) Identify and analyze local trends and provide advice to Ombudsmen in their AOR regarding information that affects the program;
- (8) Assist local units in the development of financial plans for budgeting their Ombudsman program;
- (9) Establish program budget, including annual training for COs/OINCs and their command Ombudsmen, with documented marketing efforts from recruitment to training;
- (10) Coordinate with other ISC Program Coordinators for Ombudsmen unable to attend training in their AOR. Every effort should be made to schedule the Ombudsman for the next available training, if space is available and if it is feasible to send the Ombudsman to the training location. Ombudsmen not attending scheduled training sessions shall be reported to the sponsoring CO/OINC;

- (11) Support the appointment of auxiliary members, reserve members, and experienced Coast Guard Ombudsmen to the management of the Ombudsman program; and
- f. Chaplains shall serve as a vital resource for the Ombudsman as a referral resource for Coast Guard families and serve as a support provider for all Ombudsmen within their AOR.
- g. Unit Commanding Officers (CO) and Officers-In-Charge (OINC) shall:
- (1) Make a determination for the need of an Ombudsman program at the local unit. COs and OINCs shall appoint a sufficient number of Ombudsmen necessary to ensure an effective asset for their unit, or ensure family members have access to an Ombudsman within their geographic area;
 - (2) Make a determination whether or not to assign a unit advisor to become the primary point of contact for the Ombudsman. However, responsibility for supervisory oversight of the unit Ombudsman will always remain with the CO/OINC;
 - (3) Be responsible for establishing priorities and deciding what concerns will be handled through the Ombudsman program. The program should address direct unit-specific needs and strive to include, but not be limited to, direct information and referral for: prevention and enrichment programs and services; child care assistance (including exploring family child care in government quarters); youth recreation and development; family advocacy; special needs; employee assistance; the mobile military life style at different stages; career development and relocation assistance; dependent education; substance abuse prevention; family health and fitness; financial management; sponsorship or emergency services support; and other family support services;
 - (4) When appointing an Ombudsman, as described in this Instruction, notify the appointee(s) that the position is considered a volunteer position. COs/OINCs are reminded that personnel management rules and procedures applicable to exercising authority, direction, and control over military personnel and paid employees are not applicable to volunteers;
 - (5) COs/OINCs are authorized to terminate an appointed Ombudsman when the CO/OINC determines that the Ombudsman no longer meets the needs of the unit and its Coast Guard families;
 - (6) Coordinate with the servicing ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator to ensure the Ombudsman attends training, at least annually. An Ombudsman unable to attend annual training for their AOR will be referred to the servicing ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator to reschedule for the next available training;
 - (7) Provide the Ombudsman with a current list of unit personnel, family members' names, addresses and phone numbers. Ombudsmen are designated as routine users under Privacy Act guidelines;
 - (8) Ensure the Ombudsman will not perform duties that render them unusually susceptible to injury or to causing injury to others;

- (9) Ensure undue influence protections are provided to the Ombudsman;
- (10) Ensure the Ombudsman is counseled that they are not authorized to maintain written case notes, records, files or any related information in any format involving family violence or make decisions regarding family violence. For technical assistance regarding family violence, the Ombudsman shall consult with the CO/OINC or the servicing ISC Work-Life FAS; and, if unable to contact the CO/OINC or the servicing ISC FAS, to contact the servicing ISC Work-Life Supervisor.
- (11) Ensure the Ombudsman is counseled that they are not authorized to develop or maintain records on individual family members beyond information and referral to services and programs. Information and referral data collection must be forwarded to the CO/OINC on a monthly basis. Confidentiality is a key in the Ombudsman program and names of referrals will not be included in this report, only the number of referrals and services used;
- (12) Obtain Ombudsman program management training from the servicing ISC for updates and guidance of compliance with this Instruction;
- (13) Encourage and approve the establishment of an Ombudsman Advisory Committee, if needed (enclosure (2)); and develop a regular meeting schedule at the CO's/OINC's discretion (example monthly, bi-monthly, after deployments, etc.);
- (14) Consider asking the Ombudsman to serve on boards or committees that provide support for the unit members and their families such as Morale Welfare Board or Housing Board;
- (15) Add the Ombudsmen to the standard distribution list for unclassified information and other information relevant to Ombudsman activities;
- (16) Coordinate unit-related or Coast Guard fundraising activities under the unit legal advisor's guidance to ensure the relationship of these activities to the Ombudsman program is appropriate;
- (17) Ensure the Ombudsman is invited to all-hands meetings, when appropriate;
- (18) Not use the Ombudsmen as the social chairperson or have Ombudsmen conduct formal or informal social events for the unit; and
- (19) Ensure the Ombudsman maintains an administrative record that documents on a monthly basis their Ombudsman training, work hours and duties, and supervision notes. Copies shall be sent to the servicing ISC Ombudsman Program Coordinator. Such records shall be secured and maintained in the same manner as civilian federal workers; e.g., retained for 3 years following the termination of volunteer service. After 3 years, a summary of each Ombudsman's service may be electronically maintained at the unit for historical purposes or until no longer needed.

h. Unit Ombudsman shall:

- (1) Serve as liaison between the command and families and report directly to the CO/OINC;

- (2) Work within the scope of responsibilities, functions and duties of this Instruction and the appointing CO/OINC. Ombudsmen working outside the scope of their responsibilities are not covered by this Instruction and are considered a liability to the Coast Guard. The CO/OINC has the authority to address such a breach with the Ombudsman through counseling or even removal of the appointment letter;
- (3) Provide information and referrals to families of available services and benefits and explain that all services may not be available in the identified geographical location but may be made available through other civilian, federal or military agencies. Ombudsmen should use the local unit and servicing ISC Work-Life Specialists as the first priority in their referral process;
- (4) Compile demographic information, by unit, number of families served, number of deployment or other informational group briefings, total number of service hours contributed, total amount of reimbursement and program related expenses, total amount of childcare reimbursement for children under the age of thirteen, request for unit program support, dates and locations of field training provided, and the number of personnel trained;
- (5) Inform the servicing ISC Work-Life Family Resource Specialist (FRS) whenever a family with special needs is identified, and encourage enrollment in accordance to reference (f);
- (6) Compile information maintaining accurate and complete records on assistance agencies, military and civilian, to include telephone numbers, location and point-of-contact;
- (7) Maintain an up-to-date phone tree and email addresses to inform unit families of immediate unit information. All contact information is covered by Privacy Act guidelines and shall be used for official purposes only;
- (8) Develop, within unit guidelines, newsletters, websites, care lines, and other methods to inform families of upcoming unit events, referral information and other needed information for families;
- (9) Promote general awareness of family readiness planning to ensure family members are prepared to deal with unique roles and responsibilities of service members;
- (10) Compile information on family concerns reflective of the entire unit and report such concerns directly to the CO/OINC;
- (11) Immediately report all allegations, suspicions and substantiated incidents of family violence along with any pertinent information, to the CO/OINC and servicing ISC Work-Life Family Advocacy Specialist (FAS). If unable to contact the CO/OINC or servicing ISC Work-Life FAS, contact the servicing ISC Work-Life Supervisor in accordance with reference (c).
- (12) Immediately contact the proper authorities in cases of any potential homicides, violence, or life endangering situation, and immediately contact the CO/OINC;

- (13) Not serve as a professional counselor or provide professional advice or counseling services, even if the Ombudsman is professionally trained to provide these services;
- (14) Not develop or maintain records on individual family members beyond information and referral to services and programs. Forward information and referral data collected, on a monthly basis, to the CO/OINC. Names of referrals will not be included in this report, only the number of referral and services used;
- (15) Ensure confidentiality of information provided by family members is maintained and information is provided to unit personnel strictly on a need-to-know basis;
- (16) Attend annual training for updates to this Instruction and guidance on implementation of the Ombudsman program;
- (17) Keep expense logs and receipts for reimbursement;
- (18) At the discretion of the CO/OINC, represent the unit on boards or committees that provide support for the unit and families;
- (19) Serve on an Ombudsman advisory committee (see enclosure (2)) when such committee is designated by the CO/OINC; and
- (20) Promote interagency cooperation and information sharing.

i. Ombudsman-at-Large shall:

- (1) Communicate regularly with the Ombudsman Program Manager (CG-1112) concerning the Ombudsman Program;
- (2) Serve as an advocate between the ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator and the Unit Ombudsmen within their AOR;
- (3) Submit an annual travel schedule reflective of visits to Coast Guard units, unit Ombudsmen and family members to the Ombudsman Program Manager (CG-1112) for approval and funding;
- (4) Attend training and/or meetings relevant to their role as lead Ombudsman and ensure invitational orders are approved prior to travel in accordance with reference (e);
- (5) Provide an informational trip report after any unit visit when requested by the Commandant and/or by the Ombudsman Program Manager (CG-1112). Copies shall be provided to both officials.

10. APPOINTMENT PROCESS.

a. Commanding Officers and Officers-in-Charge shall:

- (1) Solicit volunteers for Ombudsman positions from among unit spouses of active duty members, Coast Guard Reservists and their spouses, and Coast Guard Auxiliarists;
 - (2) Request candidates submit an application form and references and initiate a Family Advocacy check by submitting the applicant's name and Social Security Number to the servicing ISC Work-Life Family Advocacy Specialist (see enclosure (1));
 - (3) Interview the unit Ombudsman candidates;
 - (4) Appoint each unit Ombudsman with a designation letter outlining responsibilities, appointment duration, administrative and financial support, and establish a regular command meeting schedule (if the Ombudsman is to serve more than one unit, each CO or OINC shall sign the appointment letter);
 - (5) Assure that the Ombudsman completes DD Form 2793, Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities (see enclosure (3)). A copy of the signed DD Form 2793 shall be given to the unit Ombudsman and the original shall be maintained in the unit administrative file; and
 - (6) Introduce the Ombudsman to the unit members and their families at a unit function or via newsletter or correspondence. The CO/OINC may take this opportunity to present the unit Ombudsman with a nametag.
11. TRAINING. The Ombudsman shall attend initial unit briefings before the performance of their duties and attend basic Ombudsman training within 12 months of the date of their appointment letter to obtain updates and guidance on the compliance of this Instruction. The Ombudsman shall receive one-on-one training in person or over the phone, with the ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator or an experienced Ombudsman, within three weeks of their appointment. The Ombudsman may also take advantage of other training as appropriate, in either general Ombudsman skills or specific areas. Ombudsmen not attending annual training within 18 months of their previous training shall be removed from the program until completion of all required training.
 12. APPRECIATION. Ombudsmen should be recognized at a unit luncheon, reception, all-hands meetings, annual Ombudsman training or other appropriate gatherings. This appreciation may be expressed in a letter of recognition, a certificate of performance, special mention in a unit newsletter or other appropriate acknowledgement of the services provided to unit families. The last Friday in March is traditionally designated as Coast Guard Ombudsman Appreciation Day, to publicly recognize the dedicated service of these volunteers, but units may set aside any day they find appropriate.
 13. OMBUDSMAN RESIGNATION. When an Ombudsman expresses their intention to cease performing in this voluntary service, it shall be documented on DD Form 2793. A copy of DD Form 2793 shall be provided to the Ombudsman and a copy shall be forwarded to the servicing ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator.
 14. NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY. In accepting Ombudsman volunteer services, COs/OINC's shall not discriminate based on race, creed, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, sexual orientation,

marital status, political affiliation, or disability. In addition, the Ombudsman shall not discriminate against members of the unit or families based on military paygrade, race, creed, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, or disability (see reference (g)).

15. CONFIDENTIALITY. Confidentiality, in this context, does not create a privilege against providing information to the CO/OINC. Ombudsmen are unit representatives and must always represent themselves in that manner. As a unit representative, all information given by families to the Ombudsman is required to be disclosed to the CO/OINC. Information obtained by the Ombudsman shall be disclosed only to those unit personnel who, in the performance of their official duties, have a need to know. Ombudsmen are not authorized to withhold family information from the CO/OINC. Family members who wish to maintain complete confidentiality should be referred to the District Chaplain, their servicing ISC Work-Life Employee Assistance Program Coordinator (EAPC) or Family Advocacy Specialist (FAS) for appropriate guidance or referral. Ombudsmen are not authorized to develop or maintain records on individual family members beyond information about referral services and programs. Data collection from the unit Ombudsman shall be forwarded to the CO/OINC on a monthly basis. The names of families referred will not be included in the report, only the number of referrals and services used to keep the CO/OINC informed of multiple situations throughout the unit. The CO/OINC will determine whether there is a need to retain files at the local command.

16. OMBUDSMAN SERVICE HOURS.

- a. Each Ombudsman shall maintain a monthly record of volunteer service hours worked. Service hours worked will be recorded for the appropriate day and month that the work was performed and submitted to the CO/OINC. The volunteer service hours shall be verified by the CO/OINC and placed in the unit administrative file, with a copy forwarded to the servicing ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator, as requested.
- b. Credit will be given for each hour of voluntary service performed; including hours spent in orientation, basic Ombudsman training, annual training, meetings, and other training or approved activities by the appointing CO/OINC. The Ombudsman will travel using invitational travel orders for temporary duty at training conferences or training workshops and will be credited with 24-hours of voluntary service worked per day (see reference (e)).
- c. Ombudsmen performing on-call duties shall be awarded two hours of credit for each 24-hours spent on-call, in addition to any voluntary service performed during the on-call period.
- d. Extra credits will be awarded in the amount of 15 hours per month and entered into the monthly total column of the daily time record for appointed Ombudsmen who serve in additional program management positions in the following capacities: Ombudsman trainer; lead Ombudsman coordinator. Before an Ombudsman may be appointed to the position of lead Ombudsman coordinator, they must have the approval of the servicing ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator.
- e. Credit will be given for each hour of referral research, internet research, resource file maintenance, and development of web or newsletter to enhance program and participation.

17. PROGRAM SUPPORT.

- a. Funding. Every unit with an appointed Ombudsman shall establish a funding line item to support their Ombudsman program. Reference (a) authorizes use of appropriated or non-appropriated funds for this purpose. This includes reimbursement of expenses incurred during performance of Ombudsman duties, when appropriate and approved in advance by the CO/OINC. It is important for the CO/OINC and their Ombudsman to discuss the budget annually and determine what support can be provided and what expenses will be reimbursed. The unit Ombudsman, based on the authorized budget, must document their expenses and submit a Standard Form 1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, to the appropriate unit representative for reimbursement (see enclosure (7)).
- b. Reimbursable Items. Ombudsman must be acting in an official capacity as directed by the CO/OINC to receive reimbursement for the following items:
 - (1) Child care: Reimbursement may not exceed the local rate of the Coast Guard Child Development Center (CDC). If there is no local CDC, contact the servicing ISC Work-Life Family Resource Specialist (FRS) to obtain information on the local rate. Child care reimbursement for children under the age of thirteen shall be reported to the CO/OINC monthly and recorded in the unit administrative file. Total reimbursement of child care costs shall be reported to the servicing ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator.
 - (2) Mileage, parking, and tolls: Reimbursement shall be paid at the current government privately owned vehicle rate. Mileage, parking and tolls must be documented by the Ombudsman and receipts are required.
 - (3) Travel Expenses: Reimbursement for expenses incurred during participation in training, conferences, and other approved events are authorized. The travel must be approved in advance and reimbursement must be in accordance with reference (h). Invitational travel orders will be used for travel (see reference (e)).
- c. Incidental Expenses. At the discretion of the CO/OINC, incidental expenses may be paid from appropriated funds. Expenses can only be incurred and paid directly by the command; these are not expenses reimbursable to the Ombudsman. The CO/OINC can use non-appropriated funds for individual Ombudsman appreciation dinners (if the Ombudsman is not on invitational travel orders), plaques and awards, or refreshments provided for meetings or training, etc. The non-appropriated fund limitation is \$50 per Ombudsman per year, not to exceed a total of \$500.00 annually for appropriated or non-appropriated funds per command. Disbursement of cash awards is not authorized for this program.
- d. Communications. Options include:
 - (1) Authorizing government telephone use in the unit office, which is preferable if travel from the Ombudsman's residence to a government phone is within a reasonable distance. A telephone log shall be maintained of official calls made including purpose, date and time. The call log shall be made readily available for review and verification upon the request of the unit CO/OINC.

- (2) Purchasing a telephone calling card for the Ombudsman's use during official duties is authorized. Telephone calling cards must be temporary in nature. Government FTS calling cards are not authorized for Ombudsman use. Calls shall be documented in the telephone log that includes the purpose, date and time. This log shall be made readily available for review and verification upon the request of the unit CO/OINC.
 - (3) Commands may reimburse toll calls on presentation of a home telephone company invoice. Ombudsmen shall keep a telephone log of all toll calls, including purpose, time, and date of such calls. A copy of this log shall be submitted in conjunction with the telephone company invoice for reimbursement. The original telephone log shall be made readily available for review and verification upon the request of the unit CO/OINC and/or their designee.
 - (4) When unit members are disbursed over a wide geographic area, causing numerous toll calls, the unit may obtain and fund a toll-free (800, 888, or other) number so families can contact the Ombudsman.
 - (5) The issuance of communication equipment, telephone service, or other electronic equipment in the home of an Ombudsman is at the discretion of the CO/OINC and should be discussed with a MLC/District legal officer before installation.
 - (6) Cell phones for Ombudsman duties may be loaned and must be documented by using a DD 1149 form. The loan must also be officially recorded on the unit's Oracle Fixed Asset Module property records as loaned property. Supplies such as briefcase(s), day timers and other materials may be issued for use by the Ombudsmen but must be documented by the unit property officer using a DD1149. All Coast Guard loaned materials shall be returned after the Ombudsman's tour of duty to the unit property officer for reuse or final disposition action.
- e. Newsletter Expenses. The unit will assume all costs for the production and delivery of an Ombudsman newsletter, if such a newsletter is produced. The Ombudsman must have the newspaper approved by the CO/OINC prior to distribution. If the newspaper is produced solely within the unit, the unit is responsible for providing technical/administrative support, paper, printer access, and delivery costs (stamps/bulk mail, etc.).
 - f. Invitational Orders. Invitational travel orders are authorized in accordance with reference (e) for conducting Ombudsmen duties and training for officially appointed Ombudsmen. Invitational travel must be authorized in advance for duties or training related to the program. Commands are not authorized to issue invitational travel orders in regards to the Ombudsman program for persons not officially appointed. Other volunteers providing gratuitous services to the Ombudsman program are not authorized reimbursement of expenses under this program.
 - g. Other Administrative Support. Support provided to the Ombudsmen for administrative equipment, paper, and office supplies as needed, including a typewriter, computer, copy machine, fax machine, and letterhead stationery to communicate with families and community resource agencies is authorized, as determined by the CO/OINC. Ombudsmen using computer-generated letterhead must have the design approved, in advance of use, by the CO/OINC. Procurement of work-related items such as briefcases, portfolios, and locking file cabinets are

considered Coast Guard property for the Ombudsman's use; property must be returned to the unit upon relinquishing duties. Cos/OINC's providing supervision to Ombudsmen must follow equipment and oversight of government procured items in the same manner as required for active duty and civilian employees. Supplies materials may be issued for use by the Ombudsmen but must be documented by the unit property officer using a Requisition and Invoice/shipping Document (DD1149).

18. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

- a. The ISC Work-Life Ombudsman Program Coordinator shall report the name of each unit Ombudsman within their servicing AOR by October 30th annually to the Ombudsman Program Manager (CG-1112).
- b. The report shall provide updated information regarding the Ombudsman Program and include demographic information by unit, number of families served, number of deployment or other informational group briefings, total number of service hours contributed, total amount of reimbursement and program related expenses; a separate break out of the total amount of reimbursement for childcare for children under the age of thirteen, requests for unit program support, dates and locations of field training; to include the number of personnel trained by the CO/OINC in an initial command briefing, the number of Cos/OINC's receiving training in program management of the Ombudsman program, the number of Ombudsmen receiving basic and other local unit training, and the number of command appointed Ombudsmen within the district.
- c. The Ombudsman Program Manager (CG-1112) shall verify that the information is current semi-annually.

19. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.

20. FORMS AVAILABILITY. USCG Electronic forms: Application to Volunteer as a Coast Guard

Ombudsman (CG-6078), Volunteer Agreement (DD2793), Ombudsman Service Hours (CG-6076), and Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures (SF 1164) are available on the Internet at <http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/cit/cim/forms1/welcome.htm> and the intranet at <http://cgweb2.comdt.uscg.mil/cgforms/>. All other forms and attachments can be locally reproduced.

PAUL J. HIGGINS
Director of Health and Safety

Encl: (1) Procedures for Appointing Ombudsmen
(2) Ombudsman Program Advisory Committee
(3) Forms
(4) Sample Application for Ombudsmen
(5) Sample Question for Interviewing Ombudsman Candidates
(6) Appointment Letter
(7) Termination Letter
(8) Release of Information
(9) Best Practices for the Unit Ombudsman Program