



2023 MANDELA DAY DONATION DRIVE: RECLAIMING OUR DIGNITY

In commemoration of Mandela Month, the Office of the Ombudsman identified Progress Comprehensive Academic School in Soweto as a beneficiary of this year's Mandela Day Donation Drive, under the theme "Reclaiming our Dignity". As one of the core pillars of the mandate of our office, we sought to highlight and promote the inherent worth of every individual using this month as a vehicle to encourage collaborative efforts from various stakeholders toward creating a society where everyone can live with dignity, freedom, and equality.

Our office reflected on the values Mandela championed and embodied through the spirit of compassion, empathy, and selflessness, he exemplified throughout his life. We, therefore, appealed to both local businesses and City of Johannesburg officials, departments, and entities to donate in-kind various non-perishable foods, clothing and dignity packs etc., towards this initiative.

A hundred learners identified from the school, came from disadvantaged backgrounds, with a few coming from child-headed households, often unable to afford necessities such as food and hygiene products. A staggering reality for many children in South Africa.

Yet, despite its many challenges, the school has always managed to consistently achieve an impeccable national academic track record, hence, we sought to answer the call to contribute towards the alleviation of some of the socio-economic pressures faced by these learners, daily.

We wish to acknowledge the following stakeholders who heeded the call and immediately came on board to ensure the success of this initiative by contributing towards making a positive impact on our communities:

- Region D Counsellors
- CRUM Region D

- Department of Environmental Health
- City Parks and Zoo
- Department of Social Development
- Metropolitan
- Green Development Foundation
- EVERGROW
- Mrs Soweto: Sheila Moagi
- Christ Embassy Church



Image: Joburg Ombudsman Ambassadors packing the goodies for learners from Progress Comprehensive Academic School

NAVIGATING THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS PROCESS



The Office of the Ombudsman requires that complaints are written, no case is accepted, nor registered if it is not written with supporting documents. The Office of the Ombudsman is an office of the last instance, so the required documents show that you have raised the issue with the City department/ Entity concerned and there has not been joy or a resolution reached.

Residents may obtain the formal complaint form through email, upon request, or at any Regional Offices. These forms may be submitted at the regional offices through a complaint box or mailed back through the central email address: complaints@joburgombudsman.org.za, or hand-delivered to the head office at 48 Ameshoff Street in Braamfontein.

Complaints raised with the Ombudsman need to be more 30 (thirty) days, since raised with the department/Entity, to allow the Department/Entity to resolve the issue amicably. Residents can approach the Ombudsman after a complaint 30 (thirty) days.

The following documents are to be included in your complaint:





- Copy of ID
- Power of Attorney if acting on behalf of another person
- Reference number(s)
- Proof of reference, i.e., emails or fax or any correspondence(s) with the department/Entity

These will be attached to the official complaint form completed.

It is important when engaging with the Department/Entity, if telephonic, note the name of the official you speaking to, as well as the dates. If it is possible follow up with an email to formalise your communication with the respective party.

When your complaint is received by the Ombudsman, it will be registered, and upon verifying the above documents and steps taken, a reference number will be given to you, and an investigation of the matter will then resume. The turnaround time is highly dependent on the complexity of the case, and responses obtained from the Department /Entity, residents are welcome to call the Office with their reference number to keep checking on progress.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SENIOR INVESTIGATOR



Image: Mr. Ntsika Shilane (Senior Investigator)

Why did you choose to become an investigator?

I chose to be an investigator because I love helping people and I am passionate about the law and how it affects the lives of the citizens it is meant to serve. I believe that the small milestones that we can achieve, in making a difference in one person's life contribute to the growth of our democracy and the country through its institutions.

On a typical day as an investigator, what tasks are you expected to perform and how do you prioritise them?

I am expected to conduct consultations on new complaints, raise complaints with the Entities of the city and core departments, follow up on existing complaints, and draft reports on finalised investigations.

New matters are prioritised as and when they are received, and existing complaints are diarised according to actions and respective timelines given for those actions to ensure that all matters are attended to timeously.

Tell us about your most challenging investigation.

The most challenging investigation I am currently faced with relates to an old matter that dates to 1995 wherein the City does not have records relating to the Complainant's contribution to the provident fund that did not pay his benefits when he was medically boarded in 1995. However, I am confident that our office will find an amicable solution through our conciliation process.

How do you handle the stress and pressure that comes with being an investigator?

Planning and managing one's workflow helps a great deal in decreasing the amount of stress. Creating collegial relationships with officials that are critical to the work that we do to ensure that we receive the necessary cooperation is also vital. Escalating matters where challenges are experienced also relieves the burden. Taking time out to spend time with family away from work is also vital to ensuring that I maintain a work-life balance.

For you, what is the most rewarding and motivating part of being an investigator?

I find it rewarding to see a happy customer who came to me with frustration and got back home with a resolution to their stress. What would be more rewarding is to see a public service that has a culture of understanding that the work we do affects the bread and butter of our citizens.

Tell us about a time when you had to make a tough ethical decision.

The one I can share is one where a Complainant would offer you a gift for assisting them and I would not necessarily consider it as tough because the code of conduct and other policies of the City give a clear guideline on what should happen in that regard.

Mr. Shilane is based at our head office on 48 Ameshoff Street, Braamfontein. Walk-ins are welcome between 8:00 am – 15:00pm on weekdays.

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