



Ombudsman, Adv. Sidduzo "S'du" Gumede

**Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter,**  
**UMBIKO** (Zulu noun: report / pronunciation: úmbí-go)

We are so excited to launch our monthly newsletter which we hope will bring our services closer to you, our valued stakeholder.

We are confident that the content we will compile in the coming months, will not only keep you abreast of the latest news and developments within the Office of the Ombudsman for the City of Johannesburg but also provide a better understanding of our services and processes; while ensuring that the rights of all residents are protected within the confines of both the Constitution and Ombudsman By-Law.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

The Office of the Ombudsman was established in terms of the Ombudsman for the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) By-Laws, 2014, to essentially "ensure that all complaints relating to alleged acts of maladministration where members of the public are alleged to have suffered an injustice as a result of such maladministration by the administration or any of its employees, and where such acts allegedly infringe upon the Constitutional rights of an individual, are investigated, and dealt with in a proper manner".

We are an independent office whose primary function is to be a neutral mediator that provides confidential and impartial assistance in the resolution of residents' grievances and disputes with

CoJ departments and entities. This includes, but is not limited to, complaints relating to incorrect water and electricity billing, payment delays to SMMEs for services rendered, undue delays in the provision of a clearance certificate after the property has been sold, illegal evictions and encroachment to being denied services by a public official, based on one's race, gender, social class or sexual orientation etc.



#### HOW TO LODGE A COMPLAINT

Before lodging a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman, please ensure that you have submitted a query with the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) either through its Call Centre **0860 JOBURG (562874)**, eServices website, or regional customer service centres.

Once you have lodged your complaint with CoJ, allow them a reasonable opportunity to resolve the complaint. If your complaint is not resolved (even to your satisfaction), only then may you **escalate** it to the Office of the Ombudsman.

Should you wish to escalate your complaint, ensure you have received a reference number from CoJ and keep it safe as it will be required by our office when opening your case.

When lodging a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman, please ensure that you have the following documents on hand:

- A fully completed copy of the prescribed complaint form;
- A copy of the complainant's ID. If acting on behalf of another person, then Power of Attorney will be required;
- A reference number from the City of Johannesburg;
- Proof of Residence (if available) and
- All prior correspondence, i.e. emails, SMS, etc., related to the complaint.

Remember to take the time to read through the form and gather the necessary information before you





complete it. Please outline the nature of the complaint, the order of events leading to the complaint, the grounds upon which there has been an act or omission, facts known to the complainant or relevant information, and the redress sought.

You may contact the Office of the Ombudsman through the following communication channels:

- **Helpdesk:** 010 288 2800
- **WhatsApp:** 081 365 0225
- **Email:** [complaints@joburgombudsman.org.za](mailto:complaints@joburgombudsman.org.za)
- **Walk-ins:** Sappi Building, 48 Ameshoff Street, Braamfontein.
- **Complaints Boxes:** Situated in regions A, B, C, D, E, and G, customer service centres.
- **Social Media:** @jhbombudsman (Twitter) and Joburg Ombudsman (Facebook).

#### **JOBURG OMBUDSMAN AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME REACHES 4 999 RESIDENTS**

In June 2021, we launched our flagship programme, the *Joburg Ombudsman Ambassador Programme*, under the Expanded Public Works Programme ("EPWP"), employing 25 unemployed youth and equipping them with vocational skills and experience by placing them in regions.



**Ombudsman Ambassadors conducting regional campaigns**

Since the inception of the programme, our vibrant team of #jhbombudsman ambassadors has executed over 200 outreach campaigns in various clinics, service centers, taxi ranks, and shopping centers across the city: reaching more than 4 999 residents from all walks of life, each with their own unique needs and set of challenges.

Through the #AtYourReach outreach campaign, the programme continues to play an instrumental role in bridging the gap between advocating for the rights of residents to efficient (and equitable) service delivery and driving collaborative efforts with the respective CoJ departments/entities to ensure that our services are more accessible, and that service

delivery is enhanced in all seven regions of the city.

#### **OWN INVESTIGATIONS: CoJ OLD AGE HOMES**

In August 2022, the Office of the Ombudsman initiated a partnership with the City of Johannesburg's Social Development Department, Pikitup and regional leadership which led to a site visit at the Annie Burger Old Age Home and Eeufees Oord Old Age Home respectively, to raise awareness of our services, educate the elderly on their right to recourse, and address some of the challenges relating to the poor quality of care received from municipal-owned old age homes.

Our visit to the old age homes highlighted society's disposition toward the protection of the inherent dignity of older persons in general.



**Annie Burger Old Age Home residents**

Through this senior citizen engagement, the office received a total of forty complaints ranging from security concerns and unmaintained facilities to allegations of the corrupt sale of units to young couples/families and drug trafficking. The collective complaints were then considered for an own instance investigation conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman Complaints and Investigations Unit and a systemic report with recommendations and implementation thereof will be issued for the attention of the relevant city departments and entities.

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For feedback and/or suggestions, please email the editorial team at [editor@joburgombudsman.org.za](mailto:editor@joburgombudsman.org.za)

