



### A New Digital Era for the Joburg Ombudsman: Online Complaints Platform Now Live

Our office has ushered in a new chapter in service excellence with the launch of an innovative online complaints' platform, now live on our website at [www.joburgombudsman.org.za](http://www.joburgombudsman.org.za). This milestone marks a progressive step towards improving how we serve Johannesburg's residents - by making it easier, faster and more convenient to access our services and seek redress.



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Launched in August 2025 (and just in time to commemorate Public Service Month) Johannesburg residents can now lodge complaints related to City services - including billing issues, poor service delivery, or unfair treatment - from the comfort of their homes. Accessible anytime and on any device, the system enables users to submit complaints and track their progress.

What makes this new platform truly transformational is its dynamic tracking feature, which allows residents to follow the status of their case, in real time. Available 24/7 and fully compatible with both smartphones and desktops, the system is designed to be simple, intuitive, and user-friendly — even for first-time users. And for those who prefer traditional methods, support remains available via email and telephone.

Lodging a complaint is easy and takes just **four simple steps**:

1. Register and complete your profile on our website.
2. Submit your complaint by filling in the details and uploading any documents.
3. Once done, you will receive a unique Ombudsman reference number confirming your submission.
4. Finally, you can track the status of your complaint, anytime you choose.

This digital milestone is more than a technical upgrade, it's a bold commitment to the people of Johannesburg that fairness, transparency and dignity in service delivery are not privileges, but rights. And now, claiming that right is easier than ever before.

**REGISTER NOW**

### A 9-Year Billing Battle Resolved: Ombudsman Steps in to Assist Diepsloot Resident

A nine-year dispute over incorrect water billing has finally been resolved for \*Ms. Rebecca Mofokeng, a resident of Diepsloot Ext. 11, through the intervention of the City of Johannesburg Office of the Ombudsman.

Ms. Mofokeng inherited her late father's property in April 2017, settled the required clearance amount and received a near-zero balance invoice. However, shortly after the transfer, she noticed unusually high charges on her municipal bill, largely based on estimated water readings. Despite paying R200 to clear an initial outstanding balance of R196, she was never issued proof of payment. Her bill continued to escalate eventually reaching over R22,000.

Over the years, she approached various City departments including Revenue Shared Services Centre (RSSC) and Joburg Water, collecting numerous reference numbers with no meaningful resolution. Her queries were often closed without notice and the original faulty meter was only replaced in 2019, two years after her complaint began.

In June 2025, she attended the RSSC Open Day at Rabie Ridge Community Hall, where she was introduced to the Ombudsman Outreach Team. There, she was guided on how to submit a formal complaint, including the documentation required. Determined to resolve the issue, she compiled all relevant evidence and lodged her complaint.

A preliminary investigation by our Intake and Registry Unit on 18 June 2025 confirmed that her water meter had been faulty since 2018 and that her account had continued to accrue charges based on incorrect estimates. This prompted a full investigation.

Our office engaged with Joburg Water, reviewed all supporting documents and found that billing had indeed been inaccurate. Joburg Water acknowledged the error and confirmed that a billing adjustment was warranted.



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Her case has highlighted a broader systemic issue around billing accountability. In response, Joburg Water and City Power have since begun restructuring their billing units to improve internal controls, accelerate evidence retrieval and enhance collaboration with the Ombudsman.

The Office of the Ombudsman remains committed to restoring public trust through fairness, transparency and service excellence; ensuring that no resident is left unheard.

**Driving Performance and Planning Ahead: Highlights from the 2nd Extended Executive Management Team Meeting**

We hosted our 2nd Extended Executive Management Team (EEMT) Meeting on 6 August 2025, bringing together senior leadership and departmental heads to reflect on the past year's performance and chart a strategic course for 2025/26.

Serving as a vital planning and performance checkpoint, the session focused on reviewing organisational progress for 2024/25, adopting key close-out reports on the Performance Management System (PMS) and Employment Equity (EE), and aligning priorities with the new Business Plan. The meeting opened with a clear outline of objectives, followed by presentations from core units. The Marketing and Communications Unit presented findings from the 2024/25 Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey, offering insight into public perception and engagement. The Management Support Unit reported on performance outcomes, noting both successes and areas for improvement, while the Employment Equity & Training Committee highlighted efforts to build a more inclusive and skilled workforce.

A key highlight of the meeting was the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) segment, where SOPs for Intake & Registry, Complaints & Investigations, and Marketing & Communications units were tabled (an important step towards enhancing operational consistency and service efficiency).

The full-day session concluded with a collaborative discussion on implementation readiness and organisational alignment to the 2025/26 Business Plan, reaffirming our commitment as an office to strategic, transparent and people-centred service delivery.

In a constantly evolving governance landscape, strategic planning is not merely a routine, it's essential. For an oversight institution like the Ombudsman, a strong, purpose-driven strategy ensures that every action taken advance accountability, strengthens public trust and delivers measurable impact. This year's EEMT meeting once again affirmed the importance of staying focused, agile and responsive in our pursuit of administrative justice and fairness for all residents.

\* Not her real name



**Get Ready, Joburg! Ombudsman Gears Up for 3rd Annual Ombuds Day Webinar**

The countdown has officially begun! We are proud to announce that preparations are underway for our 3rd Annual Ombuds Day Webinar, taking place, this October and this year promises to be the most impactful yet.

Ombuds Day, observed internationally every October, celebrates the vital role of Ombudsman institutions in promoting fairness, accountability and justice. For the City of Johannesburg, it's more than a commemoration, it's an opportunity to connect directly with residents, highlight the importance of administrative justice and demonstrate how effective complaint resolution can help restore trust between government and communities.

This year's webinar will focus on "People-Centered Governance in Action", exploring how the Office of the Ombudsman continues to serve as a lifeline for residents dealing with unresolved municipal issues - from billing and service delivery challenges to housing disputes and claims of unfair treatment.

Last year's panel featured Advocate Stephen Tiroyakgosi (Ombudsman of Botswana), Mr. Vusumuzi Dlamini (Gauteng Provincial Representative, Public Protector South Africa), and Mr. Vusumuzi Magwebu (Ombudsman for the City of Cape Town). Their compelling presentations unpacked the legal framework and mandate of Ombudsman institutions, emphasising principles such as independence, impartiality, accountability and transparency in tackling maladministration and human rights violations.

This year, attendees can expect thought-provoking discussions, real-life stories of resolved complaints, expert panelists, interactive Q&A sessions and an inside look at how our office is using digital innovation to make complaints easier to lodge and quicker to resolve.

Stay tuned to our social media platforms for updates, speaker announcements and registration links. Follow us on Facebook @Joburg Ombudsman and X (formerly Twitter) @jhbombudsman.

