

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 5-23

**OFFICE OF THE EMPLOYEE OMBUDSPERSON**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Philadelphia ("City") is committed to providing every City employee a work environment that is diverse, inclusive, safe, respectful and free from inappropriate work-related discrimination, harassment, intimidation or retaliation;

**WHEREAS**, acts of discrimination and harassment have a harmful impact on the individuals involved, their workplace culture, and the City as a whole;

**WHEREAS**, the City has implemented training and investigation processes to address reported workplace harassment, discrimination and misconduct;

**WHEREAS**, in its work to modernize city government and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of City services, the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer plays an important role in building a culture of trust, respect, and operational excellence in City government; and

**WHEREAS**, it is imperative that the City continue to develop policies, procedures and protocols to address and resolve workplace conflict in a manner that creates a more welcoming, inclusive, and safe work environment where everyone can do their best work and feel a sense of belonging;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, JAMES F. KENNEY, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, by the powers vested in me by the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, do hereby order as follows:

**SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF THE EMPLOYEE OMBUDSPERSON**

The Office of the Employee Ombudsperson ("Employee Ombuds Office") is hereby established within the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer to provide strategic approaches to addressing workplace concerns brought forth by City employees. The Employee Ombuds Office shall operate independently from the human resource staff of each City department to provide neutral and impartial assistance to City employees seeking to make, respond to, or resolve allegations of workplace harassment, discrimination, or work-related conflict outside of a formal complaint or grievance process.

The Employee Ombuds Office shall be headed by the Employee Ombudsperson, who shall report directly to the Chief Administrative Officer and serve as an advisor to the Mayor and City officials and employees on workplace issues of citywide or departmental concern.

## **SECTION 2. DUTIES OF THE EMPLOYEE OMBUDS OFFICE**

The Employee Ombuds Office shall:

(A) Assist individual City employees in understanding and assessing options and resources for addressing concerns about, or claims of, workplace conduct that may be inappropriate or a violation of the City's rules, policies, or ordinances that may constitute harassment, discrimination, misconduct, or retaliation ("matters of workplace conflict").

(B) Work to develop and implement a voluntary, informal alternative dispute resolution program for addressing matters of workplace conflict involving City employees that are suitable for such resolution.

(C) Evaluate any workplace complaints it receives and matters of workplace conflict of which it becomes aware and, in appropriate circumstances, refer such matters to other City entities.

(D) Impartially resolve matters of workplace conflict based on all relevant and available information, with full cooperation, and absent interference or undue influence, from City departments, agencies, authorities, boards and commissions.

(E) Independently identify strategies to reduce the prevalence and mitigate the impact of matters of workplace conflict, both citywide and with respect to specific City departments, agencies, authorities, boards and commissions.

(F) Maintain anonymized data on the number, types and outcomes of complaints and inquiries received by the office.

(G) Submit annual reports and anonymized data to the Mayor on: matters of workplace conflict referred to, handled by, and resolved by the office; patterns of workplace conduct identified by the office; and systemic changes needed to create a City work environment free from inappropriate conduct.

(H) Provide recommendations to the Mayor on improving personnel rules, employee complaint and investigation systems, workplace expectations and trainings, and other applicable City policies, processes and systems to promote a healthy workplace culture.

(I) Convene and coordinate department heads and other senior leadership as appropriate to implement workplace reforms and promote consistent and equitable processes for addressing workplace concerns.

(J) Operate free from undue influence by any employee, administrative officer, elected official, or reporting authorities.

(K) In coordination and cooperation with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, foster a citywide workplace culture that acknowledges and respects the diversity within the City's workforce and centers principles of accessibility, equity and inclusion.

- (L) Perform such other duties as directed by the Mayor.

**SECTION 3. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION.**

(A) Each City department, agency, authority, board and commission shall cooperate with the Employee Ombuds Office in effectively resolving workplace conflict and in support of the Employee Ombuds Office's performance of the duties and responsibilities set forth in this Executive Order. OHR, departmental human resources personnel and other City leaders shall provide the Employee Ombuds Office information to promote prompt resolution of employment matters in a manner that constitutes workplace support services.

(B) The Employee Ombuds Office shall work in coordination and cooperation with City departments, agencies, authorities, boards and commissions with responsibility for addressing matters of workplace conduct and inclusion, including, but not limited to, the Office of the Inspector General, the Department of Labor, the Office of Human Resources, the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, and may advise such entities of matters that meet their applicable thresholds for reporting or investigation.

**SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Order shall take effect immediately.

10/23/23  
**DATE**

  
**JAMES F. KENNEY, MAYOR**