



OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

2021

BUDGET & PLAN

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Introduction

As we continue to build on the very positive work that has taken place over the past nine years; we will continue to work to raise awareness on Role and Function of the Office of the Ombudsman remembering our mission of serving justice and fairness by working with Grenada Public Service Officials to create a more effective, accountable, transparent and ethical administration.

The Ombudsman deals with complaints about cases of maladministration and therefore empowers complainants by helping them to realize fairness and justice; as well as providing an independent and impartial service to them. In exercising the duties, the Ombudsman promotes good governance and a culture of public service by helping the Grenada Public Service Officials to work openly, effectively, and with integrity.

Because of the Corona Virus known as COVID-19, a worldwide pandemic, the Office of the Ombudsman had to comply with the protocol for all work places as stipulated by the Government. As a result, both the hours and the workload were amended accordingly.

Being the authority accountable for the Office of the Ombudsman Grenada, I present the 2021 Budget and Plan as required by Act # 24 of 2007.

This plan outlines five (5) main objectives and the key areas of activity. We will employ the powers under the law to hold public organizations accountable.

The Plan also sets the scope for how we anticipate and respond to change, manage risks, build and sustain strong relationships with key stakeholders and invest in key capabilities, which are central to delivering against the purpose and strategic objectives of the Office. Finally, I expect our service to continue to play a pivotal role in improving our complaint-handling services amongst complainants for the benefit of all – to really make a difference.

It should be noted that over the last couple of years the issue of budget approval has become a concern with approval of a partial amount in 2018, non-approval in 2019 and again a partial amount in 2020. Given that this office requires constant public awareness, the inadequate financial resources has negatively impacted these efforts.

Strategic Intent

Vision Statement: The furthering of good governance by protecting the individual from injustice and unfairness.

Mission Statement: To provide effective service through complaints-handling procedures that are timely, while ensuring that the highest levels of confidentiality and impartiality are always maintained.

Our Purpose and Core Values: To serve the Grenadian community through the independent and impartial resolution of complaints and investigation of maladministration taken by or on behalf of Government Ministries and Departments or Boards, Commissions, Committees or similar Body providing a public function.

The Office operates with six (6) core values of Independence, Confidentiality, Impartiality, Integrity, Accountability and Transparency underpinned by the following principles:

External Principles

We are:

- fair and impartial
- professional and thorough

We:

- listen with respect
- seek resolutions that are principled and practical

Internal Principles

We:

- are committed to high standards of practice in our work

- respect and support each other as a team
- strive continuously to improve our services
- value the expertise and knowledge of our staff

Current Achievements for 2020

- Preparation of the 2019 Annual Report;
- Preparation of supplemental budget for September - December 2020;
- Preparation of 2021 Annual Budget and Plan;
- Service delivery to fifty-nine (59) persons who contacted the Office.

Priority Actions

- Listen to and resolve complaints as effectively and quickly as possible to ensure public trust in the Public Sector delivery;
- Consult with Public Sector Officials to help build equitable and fair systems and services;
- Continue expanding our outreach to the public, Public Sector employees, Parliamentarians and their Constituents to inform them of our role and our services.

Focus Areas For 2021

1. Expand public awareness campaign on the role and function of the Office of the Ombudsman;
2. Maintain High Visibility by enhancing our ability to influence public and institutional awareness of the role and function of the Ombudsman;
3. Achieve Greater Impact on Public Service delivery through investigations of complaints and requisite recommendations;
4. Improve our overall efficiency by using our resources to achieve the best possible results;
5. Maintain prominence in society through surveys and/or intervention of any issue affecting the public.

Focus Areas	Objectives	Outcomes	Responsible Officer	Performance Indicators
1. Expand public awareness campaign on the role and function of the Office of the Ombudsman;	(a). To promote community outreach services; (b). Ensure relevance and achieve greater impact;	Newspapers articles/ column Press conferences and public presentations; Quarterly update of website; Participate in live radio/TV programs to highlight the work and image of the Office.	Ombudsman and Team	Public well informed and educated on the functions of the Office of the Ombudsman; Publication of information, advertisements/ newspapers articles
	(c). Community Outreach Services (d). Hosting and maintenance of website	Access by the public to services offered by the Office of the Ombudsman Website available & easily accessible Posting of information booklet and book mark	Ombudsman Complaints Officer Investigations Officer Executive Secretary	Services offered will be more accessible and cost effective to complaints. High visibility maintained. More satisfied complainants and closer collaboration with them. Easy access to information on adaptation to emerging trend.
2. Maintain High Visibility by enhancing our ability to influence public and institutional awareness of the role and function of the Ombudsman.	Dialogue with officers in other jurisdictions on existing and emerging trends.	More knowledgeable officers; Make efforts to access information on best practices and current trends.	Ombudsman Ombudsman/ Complaints Officer Investigations Officer	Knowledgeable on current affairs. Increase networking pool; Improved competency in handling complaints

Focus Areas	Objectives	Outcomes	Responsible Officer	Performance Indicators
<p>3. Achieve Greater Impact by seeking to make a difference to the quality of the work of the Grenada Public Service and its service delivery by acting as a driver for change in key areas;</p>	<p>Continue to build and maintain positive relationship with Ministries, Departments and other Government Agencies.</p>	<p>Networking pool Improved relations with senior managers and heads of Departments; facilitate faster complaints resolution;</p> <p>Adopt a coordinated approach across Ministries to handle cross cutting complaints.</p>	<p>Complaints Officer, Investigations Officer & Ombudsman</p>	<p>Enhanced relationship with Government Agencies;</p> <p>Improved service delivery.</p>
<p>4. Improve our overall efficiency by using our resources to achieve the best possible results;</p>	<p>Improve efficiency</p>	<p>Timely processing of payment vouchers,</p> <p>Accurate accounting for Revenues received and expenditure incurred;</p> <p>Improve complaints handling process.</p>	<p>Ombudsman & Executive Secretary</p>	
<p>5. Maintain prominence in society through surveys and/or intervention of any issue affecting the public.</p>	<p>(a) Maintain relevance, (b) evaluation of awareness campaign</p>	<p>Conduct surveys: (a) online on publication of annual report;</p> <p>(b) Public Authorities, complainants and general public.</p>	<p>Ombudsman, Complaints Officer & Investigations Officer</p>	

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1st JANUARY - 31st DECEMBER, 2021

OBJECTIVE:

To provide efficient accounting services for the Expenditure of Public funds appropriated to the Office of the Ombudsman.

ACTION PLAN:

ACTIVITIES	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	RESULT INDICATORS
Prepare cash flow projections	Monthly	Executive Secretary and Ombudsman	Timely processing of payment vouchers
Prepare and monitor the payment of vouchers	Weekly	Executive Secretary and Ombudsman	Accurate accounting for Revenues received and expenditure incurred
Maintain internal accounts (both capital and recurrent) by: Recording all financial transactions and tallying all entries in the ledger	Ongoing	Executive Secretary To be checked by Ombudsman & Accountant	Early identification of potential problems Timely and accurate financial allocations
Review budget performance, ledger entries, totals and balances	Monthly	Ombudsman/Accountant	Management and control of expenditure
Prepare the next year's budget and plan for the Office of the Ombudsman	July - August	Ombudsman and Team	Proposed Capital expenditure and projected recurrent expenditure

Estimate of expenditure for 2021 is as follows:

Expenditure for the operations of the Office for the period 1st January, 2021 to 31st December, 2021 is projected at three hundred and eighty-three thousand, five hundred and forty-three dollars and seventy-eight cents (**EC\$383,543.78**).

Balance in current/checking Account at the Grenada Cooperative Bank as at 31st July 2020 is fifty-thousand, two hundred and seventy-seven dollars and one cent (\$50, 277.01) which is expected to cover all expenses for the months of July and part of August 2020, given that monthly expenses are approximately thirty thousand (\$30,000.00).

Categories	2020 Budget As proposed	2020 Actual (Jan-Aug)	2021 Budget	Remarks
PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS				
Ombudsman	\$ 72,000.00	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 72,000.00	
Complaints Officer	\$ 53,196.00	\$ 35,646.00	\$ 53,196.00	
Investigations Officer	\$ 44,400.00	\$ 29,600.00	\$ 45,510.00	
Executive Secretary	\$ 34,800.00	\$ 23,200.00	\$ 35,670.00	
Office Assistant	\$ 22,800.00	\$ 15,200.00	\$ 23,370.00	
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 227,196.00	\$ 151,646.00	\$ 229,746.00	See Explanatory Note 1
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,000.00	See Explanatory Note 2
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,000.00	
ALLOWANCES				
Telephone - Three (3) Officers i.e. Ombudsman, Complaints & Investigations Officers	\$1,200.00 x 3 =\$3,600.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 3,600.00	
Transport- Three (3) Officers i.e. Ombudsman, Complaints & Investigations Officers	\$7,200.00 x 3 =\$21,600.00	\$ 15,300.00	\$ 21,600.00	
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 25,200.00	\$ 17,700.00	\$ 25,200.00	
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL				See Explanatory Note 3
Accommodation	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -	\$ 6,000.00	
Air Fare	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00	
Subsistence/Meals	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 0	\$ 13,000.00	
LOCAL TRAVEL				
Transport	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	See Explanatory Note 4
Subsistence	\$ 1,200.00	\$ -	\$ 900.00	
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 0	\$ 2,400.00	
TRAINING				
Local Training	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	
International Training	\$ 12,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	See Explanatory Note 5
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 0	\$ 1,000.00	
UTILITIES				
Electricity	\$ 8,400.00	\$ 3,773.14	\$ 8,400.00	
Telephone	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 3,139.04	\$ 4,800.00	
Internet	\$ 2,820.00	\$ 1,879.92	\$ 2,820.00	
Cable TV	\$ 960.00	\$ 640.00	\$ 960.00	
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 16,980.00	\$ 9,432.10	\$ 16,980.00	

MEMBERSHIP FEES				
Caribbean Ombudsman Association	\$ 849.78	\$ 853.78	\$ 849.78	See Explanatory Note 5
International Ombudsman Institute	\$ 544.00	\$ -	\$ 544.00	
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 1,393.78	\$ 853.78	\$ 1,393.78	
OTHER				
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,863.84	\$ 1,000.00	
Community Outreach Services	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 2,000.00	See Explanatory Note 6
Public Relations	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 865.00	\$ 2,000.00	See Explanatory Note 7
Rent	\$ 50,100.00	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 50,100.00	See Explanatory Note 8
Cleaning & Supplies	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 855.54	\$ 2,900.00	See Explanatory Note 9
Office Supplies	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 3,320.75	\$ 10,000.00	See Explanatory Note 10
Office Equipment	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	
Social Security Contributions	\$ 7,824.00	\$ 4,056.00	\$ 7,824.00	See Explanatory Note 11
Insurance	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 2,000.00	
Admin/Sundry Expenses	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 2,765.35	\$ 12,000.00	See Explanatory Note 12
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 113,824.00	\$ 46,976.48	\$ 90,824.00	
TOTALS	\$ 420,793.78	\$ 228,108.36	\$ 383,543.78	

In accordance with ACT # 24 of 2007, which was amended in 2013, Section 19 sub-section 2 outlines the procedure for the financing of the Office of the Ombudsman. It has been the practice however, that the approved budget is embedded in the Vote of Parliament for disbursement, which is contrary to the section quoted above. Although this anomaly has been raised on numerous occasions, the procedure continues unheeded and without any explanation causing unavoidable difficulties in the operations of the Office.

Explanatory Notes to 2021 Budget

Note 1: Salary Increases

Contracts renewal for three (3) Officers will be due and therefore budgetary allocation is required to facilitate the new salary arrangement.

Note 2: Professional Services

Provision made available for the purchase of professional accounting and legal services.

Note 3: International Travel

The Caribbean Ombudsman Association (CAROA) biennial meeting/conference scheduled for 2021.

Note 4: Local Travel

Includes travel to Carriacou and Petite Martinique to conduct outreach services. Return airfare and subsistence.

Note 5: Membership Fees:

Membership fees of three hundred United States dollars (US\$300.00).

Note 6: Community Outreach Services

This allocation is to facilitate rental of office space for offering the services of the Office of the Ombudsman in selected parishes including Carriacou and Petit Martinique.

Note 7: Public Relations

Provision made for continued public awareness i.e. advertisements, printing of bulletins/brochures, and monthly update of website.

Note 8: Rent

Provision made for the rental of Office space from Public Workers' Union (PWU).

Note 9: Cleaning & Supplies

Allocation for janitorial services and the purchase of cleaning supplies.

Note 10: Office Supplies

Purchase of toner for Xerox colour WorkCentre.

Note 11: Social Security

Allocation to facilitate the payment of social security by the employer of six (6%).

Note 12: Admin/Sundry Expenses

Printing of the Annual Report for the year 2019 by the Government Printery.

Note 13:

Expenses for January to August 2020 show a significant decrease when compared to the same period for 2019 which is due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the subsequent actions taken by Government in an effort to ensure the safety of citizens and country in general.