

RIGHTS OF THE ELDERLY



CAN THE
PARLIAMENTARY
OMBUDSMAN HELP?



PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMAN OF FINLAND



PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMAN

The Parliamentary Ombudsman oversees authorities to ensure that they comply with the law in their work, fulfil their obligations and do their work correctly. The Ombudsman also oversees private entities if they provide services on assignment from an authority.

Whose activities are overseen?

- The Ombudsman is entitled to oversee every authority and other entities that perform public duties.
- Authorities may be individual people or institutions.
- Authorities include state and municipal agencies, as well as social services offices and health centres.
- The private service providers that are overseen include elderly assisted living and institutional care units, which operate on assignment from an authority as an outsourced service or in exchange for service vouchers.
- The Ombudsman oversees personnel such as social workers, social advisors, doctors, nurses and practical nurses.



HOW DOES THE PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMAN WORK?

The Ombudsman investigates complaints submitted to him or her. The Ombudsman may also investigate shortcomings noticed by himself or herself. Shortcomings are things that are somehow unjust or wrong.

The Ombudsman conducts on-site investigations in public offices and agencies. He or she investigates also assisted living units for elderly people and particularly closed operating units such as assisted living units for people with dementia where residents may be confined against their will.

The Ombudsman has a particular duty to ensure that the fundamental and human rights of elderly people are upheld.

Your rights are upheld when:

- you are entitled to make decisions and your will is respected
- people listen to you and you are involved when decisions are made that affect you
- people ask you what you want, even if it is hard for you to express yourself
- you receive help and support when you need it
- you receive services and care as required by law

WHICH THINGS CAN I COMPLAIN TO THE OMBUDSMAN ABOUT?

You can complain to the Ombudsman in cases related to the actions of the authorities concerning elderly services and care, as well as in other cases,

such as if:

- you or a family member are treated inappropriately when receiving official or public services
- you have not received enough information or advice
- the services do not meet your needs
- your need for services was not assessed when it should have been done
- you have not received an appealable written decision concerning a service or benefit you applied for
- the quality of home care or care in assisted living, an old people's home or hospital is not good enough
- your privacy was not respected
- your opinion was overlooked on a matter that concerns you
- your mobility has been unduly restricted
- the price of services is unclear

SUBMITTING A COMPLAINT TO THE OMBUDSMAN

If you want to make a complaint, you can write a letter to the Ombudsman. In your letter, you can explain in your own words what has happened.

You can write your complaint in Finnish, Swedish or Sámi. You can also make a complaint in English.

You can also submit a complaint by filling in the complaint form. The form is in this brochure. The complaint form is also available on the Ombudsman's website at www.oikeusasiames.fi/en/

Remember to include the name of the person, agency or operating unit that your complaint concerns. Also, state which thing you consider to be unlawful. State why you think this thing is unlawful or wrong. You can also write about more general shortcomings.

Complaints must state the complainant's name and address. It is also helpful to include the complainant's phone number and email address. If there is no name on a complaint, the Ombudsman will not investigate it as a complaint. If you write on behalf of someone else, the complaint must be accompanied by a proxy from the other person.

However, you can also contact the Ombudsman anonymously, and the Ombudsman may begin investigating the matter on his or her own initiative if there appears to be grounds to do so.

Detach the complaint form here

Detach the complaint form here

HAVE YOU SUBMITTED A COMPLAINT ABOUT THIS MATTER
TO ANOTHER BODY? * YES NO

WHICH AUTHORITY HAVE YOU REPORTED THE MATTER TO? *

WHEN DID YOU REPORT IT?

HAVE YOU ALREADY RECEIVED A DECISION
ON THE MATTER? * YES NO

DATE *

SIGNATURE *

You can also send documents that will help with the complaint by post or email. The postal address is: Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, 00102 Eduskunta, Finland. The email address is: ombudsman@parliament.fi

Secure email should be used to send material containing confidential or otherwise sensitive information. Secure email: <https://turvaviestieduskunta.fi>. Recipient: oikeusasiames@eduskunta.fi.



EDUSKUNNAN OIKEUSASIAMIET

COMPLAINT TO THE PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMAN

Complete all the sections marked with an asterisk (*). You can send all of the documents and decisions that provide State why you want to make a complaint. State why further information on your case along with your complaint. you think that the authority has acted unlawfully or If you are submitting a complaint about an authority's wrongly. If there is not enough space, continue on a decision, send the decision or a copy of the decision with your separate sheet of paper. complaint. The Ombudsman will return your documents.

LAST NAME *

FIRST NAME *

ADDRESS *

POST CODE *

POST TOWN *

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER

FAX

EMAIL

WHOSE PRACTICES ARE YOU CRITICISING? ? * (FOR EXAMPLE A SOCIAL WORKER, DOCTOR OR NURSE)

WHICH AUTHORITY ARE YOU CRITICISING? * (FOR EXAMPLE SOCIAL INSURANCE INSTITUTION OR ADMINISTRATION, MUNICIPAL HEALTH CENTRE)

State why you think the authority's action or decision is unlawful.

WHAT HAPPENED?

TURN OVER

WHEN AND WHERE?

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY?

WHY DO YOU THINK THE ACTION OR DECISION IS UNLAWFUL? *

Appending documents to the complaint and submitting the complaint to the Ombudsman

When you make a complaint to the Ombudsman, include copies of decisions and documents that are relevant to the case.

You can submit your complaint to the Ombudsman by post, fax or email. You will be notified when the Ombudsman has received your complaint.

It costs nothing to make a complaint.

It may take a long time to investigate complaints. The Ombudsman strives to resolve all complaints within one year.

Do you need advice on making a complaint?

You can call the Parliament's switchboard and ask to be connected to the Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman. The phone number for the switchboard is +358 9 4321.





HOW DOES THE OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS?

When the Ombudsman investigates a complaint, he or she assesses whether the object of the complaint has complied with the law. The Ombudsman also evaluates whether fundamental and human rights have been upheld.

When the Ombudsman investigates a complaint, he or she may consult the authority that the complaint concerns. The Ombudsman may also ask other authorities and experts to provide reports and information on the case. The Ombudsman may instruct examiners to investigate the case. He or she may also ask the police to investigate the case.

The authority that the complaint concerns is entitled to give its opinions on the case. At the same time, the authority is allowed to know who has submitted a complaint about it.

Complaints are usually public information. This means that other people are allowed to know about the complaint if they wish to. However, some types of information are confidential, such as the complainant's health details or social services and benefits.

The Ombudsman may assign the investigation of the complaint to a different authority if this is necessary. In such a case he or she informs the complainant of the assignment.

WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF A COMPLAINT?

The Ombudsman issues a written decision to the person who submitted the complaint. The outcome of the complaint depends on what the Ombudsman finds out when investigating the case.

If the Ombudsman uncovers errors in areas such as a home care or assisted living unit, he or she may ask the unit to change how it operates.

The Ombudsman can issue a warning to an authority if the authority has broken the law or done its work badly. If a crime has been committed, the Ombudsman may prosecute the offender.

The Ombudsman may specify what good governance is or how the complainant's rights can be realised. He or she may also ask the authority to rectify an error or compensate the customer for it.

The Ombudsman cannot alter the decisions of authorities or order them to pay compensation for damages. The Ombudsman is also unable to intervene in matters that must be resolved in court.

CONTACT INFORMATION

POSTAL ADDRESS

Office of Parliamentary
Ombudsman
00102 Eduskunta, Finland

TELEPHONE

+358 9 4321
(Parliament switchboard)

EMAIL

ombudsman@parliament.fi

SECURE EMAIL

Secure email should be used to
send material containing
confidential or otherwise
sensitive information.

Secure email:
<https://turvaviestieduskunta.fi/>

Recipient:
oikeusasiames@eduskunta.fi

FAX

+358 9 432 2268

PHOTOGRAPHS

COVER Oktober Oy
PAGE 11 Photo archive of the Office of the
Parliamentary Ombudsman

VISITING ADDRESS

Office of the Parliamentary
Ombudsman
Arkadiankatu 3, Helsinki, Finland

(Parliament Annex
'Pikkuparlamentti')
Open Mon–Fri, 9 am–4 pm

WEBSITE

www.oikeusasiames.fi

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Do you need advice on making
a complaint?
The phone number is +358 9 4321
(Parliament switchboard) – ask
to be connected to the Office
of the Parliamentary
Ombudsman.



