**OMBUDSMAN OF THE YEAR**

**NOMINATION WORKSHEET**

**Ombudsman of the Year (OOY) Award Eligibility:**

* Serve as an appointed ombudsman at the current command for at least six months by 31 December 2024,
* Be registered and have command assignment in the Coast Guard Ombudsman Registry,
* Have successfully completed Coast Guard Ombudsman Training (CGOT) or approved alternative, and
* Be in good standing and in compliance with reports in accordance with COMDTINST 1750.4 (series). Ombudsmen working outside of the scope of their responsibilities are not covered by this Instruction and are considered a liability to the Coast Guard.

**Please Note:** Nominations not in compliance with policy will be disqualified. Regional Ombudsman Coordinators (ROCs) will assist commands with screening nominations for award eligibility and ombudsman program compliance.

All units within the geographic boundaries of a District must submit their nominations along with the completed Ombudsman Activities Questionnaire no later than 27 January 2025 to their respective Regional Ombudsman Coordinator. In addition, nomination packages shall include the District Commander’s endorsement, the nomination, biographical information and a draft citation.

**Prohibited Actions:** Per COMDTINST 1750.4 (series), ombudsmen must avoid conflicts of interest in their dealing with the command and family members. Ombudsmen must not:

* Provide childcare
* Loan money
* Transport people in their privately owned vehicles
* Provide temporary boarding in their home
* Plan or hold social functions
* Serve as a spouse club association officer
* Solicit for cash or non-cash donations from any non-federal source for the Coast Guard or any Coast Guard person
* Promote “for profit” business or entities (e.g., car repair, babysitters, hairdressers, etc.)
* Serve as a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) peer support person
* Perform case management or counseling services, even if professionally trained in these areas
* Serve as an administrator of an UNOFFICIAL FACEBOOK Page/Group (Spouse/Family/Friend FACEBOOK Group, etc.)

**NOTE**: *Command awareness of a FACEBOOK Group/Page does not constitute an official FACEBOOK Page/Group. The ombudsman may serve as an administrator of an OFFICIAL Unit FACEBOOK Page that meets the requirements set forth in the CG External Affairs Manual, COMDTINST M5700.13 (Series), Chapter 6.*

**Ombudsman of the Year (OOY) Selection Criteria Descriptions:**

1. **Enhanced Communications between commands and its families:** Ombudsmen are the communication link between the command and Coast Guard families and must be effective communicators.

* **Communicate information to unit families and other points of contact.**  Ombudsmen must ensure that information is passed in a timely and accurate manner by using various communication tools to include email, newsletters, phone tree and briefings.
* **Communicate with Command POC.** Ombudsmen should communicate regularly with and directly report to their designated POC.
* **Marketing the Ombudsman Program.** Marketing the Coast Guard’s Ombudsman Program can assist service members, families, and the command. The success of the program is dependent on the ability to adequately market the program and its benefits to the stakeholders it is designed to serve.
* **Adherence to Social Media Guidance.** The Coast Guard’s social media program presents ombudsmen with a unique opportunity to leverage their unit FACEBOOK Page to communicate command messages to, and solicit feedback from Coast Guard families.FACEBOOK is the only approved social media tool authorized for official online communication by the U.S. Coast Guard at the unit level. Units can maintain one official FACEBOOK Page. Ombudsmen may not create a standalone FACEBOOK Page to discuss Coast Guard families or issues. Ombudsmen should work with their command to establish and/or serve as the administrator of an official unit FACEBOOK Page to ensure information distributed to families.
* **Establish effective working relationships.** Ombudsmen should possess the ability to relate professionally and positively with every member of their command and with all persons encountered as an official representative of the command.

1. **Serve as a principle source of assistance, preparation and support to Coast Guard families during times of local or national emergency, mobilization, deployment, or evacuation and individual command crisis:** Ombudsmen promote disaster preparedness to unit families and serve as a source of emergency and crisis information. Crisis may involve just one person or a family or they may involve an entire command. The ombudsmen’s role in disaster or crisis response situations will differ depending on the nature of the crisis, the involvement of their command, and the ombudsman’s identified, assigned role in the command’s crisis response plan.

* **Disaster Preparedness.** Ombudsmen can help command families prepare for a disaster by: publishing articles and periodically listing web sites that provide guidance for disaster readiness. They can also communicate with families using email or the phone tree to provide notice of impending crises and unit/command guidance.
* **Reporting.** Ombudsmen will inform the appropriate Work-Life Specialist and or 911 and the CO/OIC of the following: suspected child abuse and neglect, alleged domestic maltreatment, suspected and/or potential suicidal risks, suspected and/or potential homicides, violence or life endangering situations and other issues identified by the CO/OIC as reportable.

1. **Assists in identifying unit needs for support and provide appropriate referral services to address family concerns and issues**: Resource and referral is the backbone of the Ombudsman Program. Customer service, knowledge of resources, and the ability to problem solve are necessary skills. The ombudsman’s role is to provide information, resources, and referrals to families.

* **Resource files must be updated on a continuous basis**. To ensure resource and referral files are updated, ombudsmen should compile information, and maintain accurate, updated and complete records on individual and family service agencies, military and civilian entities.
* **Determine Customer Needs**. Providing resources and making referrals involves determining the needs of the customer, identifying appropriate resources, and making effective referrals.
* **Knowledge of Work-Life programs and other available resources.** Ombudsmen should use the local unit and servicing HSWL RP Work-Life staff as the first option in the referral process and become knowledgeable about all programs offered from the servicing HSWL RP, chaplains, local DoD agencies and other support agencies.

1. **Be a positive role model and promote a healthy sense of community for command, families, and ombudsmen by performing noteworthy special projects and accomplishments that enhance the ombudsman’s overall effectiveness and efficiency**: An ombudsman represents the command internally and externally at events or by participating as a consultant on boards, committees, or groups that may affect the wellbeing of Coast Guard families.
   * **Noteworthy Ombudsman Accomplishments.** Commitment to Coast Guard missions and supporting our families is the cornerstone of the Ombudsman Program. Noteworthy accomplishments are other ways ombudsmen have distinguished themselves.

* **Special Projects**. Ombudsmen may be called on to be in a“work group” dealing with ombudsman guidance etc. They may be asked to attend committees or boards at the request of the command.
* **Community of Practice Chair.** The CoP “Chair is a current ombudsman within the District designated by the District Command.
* **Coast Guard Ombudsman Trainers (CGOT).** Exhibit an in-depth knowledge of the Ombudsman Program, necessary to provide Coast Guard [Ombudsman Training](http://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/family_readiness/fleet_and_family_support_program/ombudsman_program/ombudsman_coordinators.html).
  + **Command Liaison.** Ombudsmen serve as the primary liaison between the command and unit families.
* **Representing the unit(s)** on official boards/committees.
* N**OTE:**Accomplishments must be in compliance with “OFFICIAL” Ombudsman duties and Ombudsman Program Policy. Refer to Prohibited Actions as a guide.

1. **Demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality:** Ethics and confidentiality are essential elements of the Coast Guard Ombudsman Program. Ombudsmen must remain committed to strict adherence to the Code of Conduct to protect the privacy of individuals and maintain creditability of the Ombudsman Program in accordance with program policy and the Privacy Act.

* **Maintain Confidentiality.** Issues discussed with the ombudsman will remain confidential unless it meets the reporting instances set by law, policy, or the command.
* **Standards of Professionalism.** Ombudsmen will not speak or act against the policies set by the command or act independently outside the scope of their appointed responsibilities, CG policy, or their command.
* **Conflict of interest.** Ombudsmen must not use their public position for personal gain and must not solicit individuals that they come into contact with as a result of their volunteer work.
* **District Ombudsman Community of Practice Meeting.** Ombudsmen are required to attend District Ombudsman Community of Practice meetings to represent their unit and the interests of those that they serve and to obtain advanced training on a variety of topics that are pertinent to their role.