

Applicant Information
Pack
Chief Operating Officer
Ombudsman WA
September 2026



A message to prospective applicants

Thank you for your interest in the position of Chief Operating Officer with Ombudsman Western Australia.

This newly created role reflects the growing scale, complexity and importance of our work. As our responsibilities continue to expand, including preparation for the implementation of the Child Safe Standards, we are strengthening the organisational capability required to support our future success.

The Chief Operating Officer will play a central role in this journey, providing enterprise leadership across our corporate functions and helping shape the systems, capability and culture that will enable the Office to deliver meaningful outcomes for the Western Australian community for years to come.

If you are driven by the opportunity to contribute to meaningful public service, this is a role where your leadership, judgement and commitment to excellence can help strengthen accountability, improve public administration and build an organisation equipped to meet future challenges. We are seeking a leader who is motivated by public purpose, curious about improvement and committed to making a lasting impact for the community we serve.

Bevan Warner
Ombudsman Western Australia

About Ombudsman Western Australia

Purpose driven leadership. Enterprise-wide impact. Better outcomes for Western Australians.

The Office of the Ombudsman WA has a vital role in protecting rights, preventing harm, improving public services and promoting good government. Established under the *Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971*, and with an expected workforce of 140 people, the Office exercises the powers, privileges and responsibilities of a standing Royal Commission.

It receives complaints and investigates State and local government authorities to strengthen public administration for the benefit of all Western Australians. In recent years, a range of additional functions have been added to the Office of the Ombudsman's remit. They include:

- Reviewing allegations of child abuse under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Reviewing all child deaths and family and domestic violence linked fatalities in WA.
- Providing an industry backed dispute resolution service for energy and water consumers, with determinative powers to order monetary settlements.
- Resolving disputes about Charitable Trusts involving the distribution funds arising from Native Title settlements.
- Monitoring the WA Police Force's lawful use of telephone intercept, unlawful consorting and entertainment precinct exclusion powers.

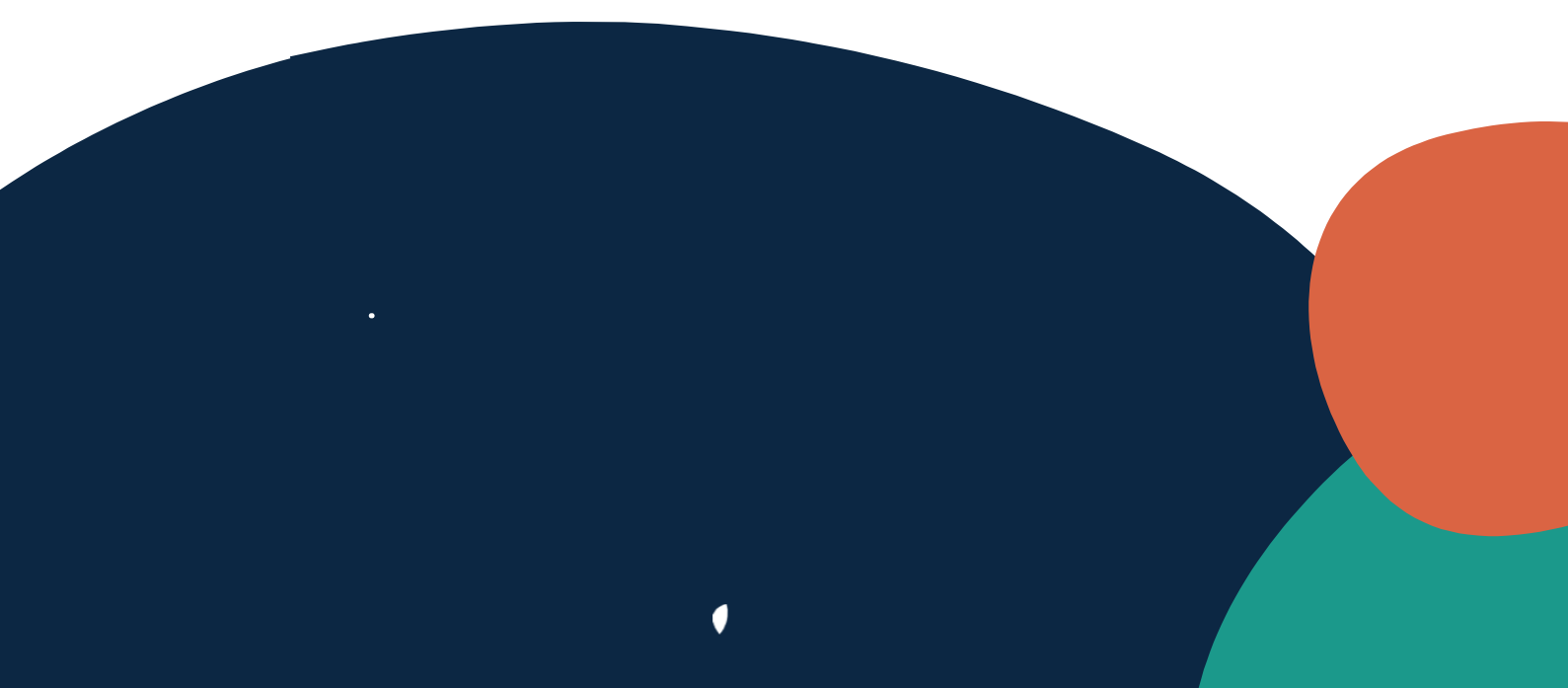
Taken together, these additional functions add operational complexity and pressure to complaints handling capacity, systems and enabling infrastructure

Why this work matters

In late 2025, subject to Parliament, the WA Government announced the Ombudsman Western Australia would become responsible for implementing and overseeing the new Child Safe Standards. From January 2028, the framework will apply to more than 27,000 public, private and volunteer child-related entities across Western Australia, requiring the Office to establish significant new regulatory capability while continuing to deliver its existing functions with credibility, independence and discipline.

By joining the Office at this pivotal time, you will help strengthen public administration, improve service delivery and support better outcomes for individuals and communities across Western Australia. Your work will contribute to greater fairness, accountability and transparency, help identify systemic issues and opportunities for reform, address power imbalances between citizens and public authorities, and drive improvements that may prevent harm, build public trust and deliver lasting public value.

At its core, Ombudsman Western Australia exists to improve the way public authorities interact with the community. Whether through oversight, investigation, dispute resolution or regulation, the Office seeks to achieve practical and measurable improvements that strengthen public confidence and improve the lives of Western Australians



A Defining Period of Growth and Renewal

After a sustained period of underinvestment in people, processes and systems, the Office is now undertaking organisational renewal. Following the previous Ombudsman's resignation in October 2024 and the appointment of a new Ombudsman in

Mid-2025, the organisation has begun a deliberate refresh to restore trust, strengthen culture and align performance with a renewed strategic direction grounded in its core values.

- Integrity: Integrity defines who we are when it matters most. We act independently, stand by our decisions and hold ourselves and each other to account.
- Service: We are here to serve the community, balancing individual needs with our broader public responsibility
- Excellence: We hold ourselves to a high standard, so our work is rigorous, thoughtful and worthy of public trust.
- Progress: We challenge outdated practices, share better ways of working and adapt our systems, so we can deliver better services over time.

Five key goals and 12 focus areas must now be enlivened, see [here](#) to meet the moment.



The Opportunity

This role presents a rare opportunity to lead navigate an exciting convergence of strategic, operational and cultural demands in a small, responsive and high-impact organisation. Feedback will be instantaneous and the impact of your leadership will be visible to staff and stakeholders in real time.

In practical terms, the challenge is to strengthen people, financial processes, information systems, data analytics and enabling technologies so the Office can protect its core oversight role, build capability for a significantly expanded regulatory mandate, and secure the government funding and resources needed to acquit its functions well.

The successful candidate will exercise influence across organisational boundaries to establish clear standards, drive accountability and improve organisational performance.

The successful candidate will partner the Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman to:

- Sustain the Office's core oversight responsibilities to a high standard during a period of intensified scrutiny and change.
- Build the organisational capability, operating model and discipline required for an expanded regulatory role.
- Rebuild trust, accountability and a high-performing culture following a significant period of organisational disruption.

The leadership and governance environment

The Office of the Ombudsman operates a dual track leadership structure that is both collegiate and accountable in nature.

Corporate Executive, comprising the Ombudsman, the Deputy Ombudsman and the Chief Operating Officer, is responsible for ensuring the enabling environment is fit-for-purpose and compliant with legislative requirement and public sector standards.

The Executive Leadership Team, comprising the Corporate Executive plus the leaders of the three discrete Ombudsman functions (Energy and Water consumers; Child safeguarding; General Complaints handling) is responsible for ensuring strategy attainment that builds trust, is values aligned, and is highly engaged and communicative with stakeholders.



What success looks like

This is a pivotal enterprise-wide leadership role, requiring collegiate leadership, sound judgement and personal accountability. Success will be reflected in the Office's ability to sustain high performance, enable transformation and maintain public trust through strong people, processes, systems and governance.

While the Office's three externally focused functions are responsible for fair, safe, accountable and continuously improving public administration, the Chief Operating Officer is responsible for ensuring the organisation's people, processes and systems are sufficiently strong to sustain performance, enable transformation and support public trust.

The Chief Operating Officer will be expected to deliver impact across the following areas:

Strategic Leadership and Enterprise Transformation

- Drive enterprise transformation by aligning leaders around change priorities, strengthening data-informed decision-making and translating strategy into practical, organisation-wide execution.
- Act as a key integrator across the organisation, ensuring collaboration produces coherent and practical corporate solutions.
- Embed a culture of continuous improvement, accountability and service excellence that endures beyond immediate reform activity.

Operational Excellence and Organisational Performance

- Lead the Office's operational environment so that its systems, processes and governance are efficient, resilient and fit for purpose.
- Provide strategic leadership across Finance and Procurement, Human Resources and Work Health and Safety, and Information and Records Management, while enabling portfolio leaders to deliver strong operational outcomes.
- Champion the practical use of data analytics and AI in daily work to improve insight, productivity, service quality and organisational learning, while maintaining appropriate governance and safeguards.

Financial Sustainability and Government Engagement

- Lead engagement with Treasury, Ministers and central agencies to secure sustainable government funding and resources, supported by credible analysis, disciplined financial management, persuasive submissions and clear performance reporting.

Governance, Risk and Accountability

- Strengthen enterprise risk management so that strategic risks are visible, actively managed and aligned to the organisation's risk appetite.
- Model the standards of judgement, accountability and integrity expected in a trust-sensitive statutory environment.

Reporting Relationships

The role reports to the Ombudsman and has the following direct reports:

- Chief Financial Officer (Level 8)
- Chief People Officer (Level 8)
- Chief Information Officer (Level 9)

What you will bring

- A strong record leading operations, enterprise improvement, and organisational transformation in complex environments.
- The ability to influence credibly at senior levels and mobilise others behind change without relying on hierarchy or bureaucracy.
- Demonstrated success by building high-performing teams, lifting accountability, and strengthening culture through periods of ambiguity and reform.
- Well-developed financial and commercial judgement, including demonstrated success in budget strategy, resource planning, government funding processes, performance reporting, prioritisation and investment decisions.
- Strong information management and data analytics capability, including the ability to strengthen information governance, records management, digital systems and evidence-based decision-making.
- A practical understanding of enterprise transformation and the responsible use of AI to streamline daily tasks, improve knowledge management and support better organisational performance.
- Sound experience in enterprise risk management and work health and safety, with a disciplined approach to governance.
- Personal resilience, judgement, and steadiness, with the tenacity to lead through complexity while maintaining clarity and momentum.

Qualifications

Relevant tertiary qualification
Demonstrated commitment to diversity principles

Additional Requirements

National police clearance
Understanding of child safe

Key reasons to consider joining Ombudsman Western Australia

- A rare opportunity to help shape the future capability of an independent Office of Parliament.
- Enterprise-wide leadership with visible organisational impact.
- The opportunity to lead meaningful transformation in a growing organisation.
- A role that directly supports better outcomes for Western Australians.
- The chance to build systems, capability and culture that will endure beyond your tenure.