

<b>Policies of the University of North Texas</b>	Chapter 04
<b>04.004 University Ombuds</b>	<b>Administration</b>

**Policy Statement.**

The University is committed to providing its employees an outlet for informally raising and addressing work-related concerns in a confidential, independent, and neutral environment. The Office of the University Ombuds is established for this purpose. Interactions with the University Ombuds supplement, but do not replace, formal processes relating to employment with the University.

**Application of Policy.** All employees.

**Definitions.**

1. **Aggregate Data.** “Aggregate data” means data that is compiled from many separate data points and presented collectively, without individually identifying information.
2. **Confidential.** “Confidential” means not disclosed to others within or outside of the University, except when there is an imminent risk of harm to a person or property, or in aggregate data, or as required by law.
3. **Formal Process.** “Formal process” means a process established by University policy regarding its employees. Such processes include, but are not limited to: alternative dispute resolution; compliance; complaint and grievance; discipline; equal opportunity, including complaints of harassment or discrimination; and reporting of fraud, waste, and abuse.
4. **Independent.** “Independent” means separate and apart from other academic and administrative units, and outside any formal process.
5. **Informally.** “Informally” means outside any formal process.
6. **Neutral.** “Neutral” means impartial and unbiased, and not aligned with any University administrator, employee, or group or with any position taken by them.

**Procedures and Responsibilities.**

1. Employees may seek assistance from the University Ombuds with work-related concerns on a voluntary basis.

**Responsible Party:** All employees

2. The University Ombuds shall listen to and assist employees to address work-related concerns. The University Ombuds has discretion to determine whether and how to act in response to a concern, whether raised by an employee or on the University Ombuds' own initiative. The University Ombuds may, but is not required to, use one or more the following methods in assisting employees: listening, providing and receiving information, referring to other offices, identifying and reframing issues, developing a range of responsible options, and – with permission of all parties – engaging in third-party intervention.
3. The University Ombuds does not make binding decisions, mandate policies, or formally investigate or adjudicate issues for the University.
4. The University Ombuds neither acts as an agent for, nor accepts notice on behalf of the University. The University Ombuds may refer individuals to the appropriate resource where formal notice can be made.
5. The University Ombuds shall collect aggregate data and identify trends regarding the types of concerns raised by employees and report these data and trends to the President for use in policymaking.
6. The University Ombuds shall recommend additions or modifications to University policy or practice and communicate these recommendations to the President.

Responsible Party: University Ombuds

7. The University Ombuds shall report directly to the President, and the President shall evaluate the University Ombuds.

Responsible Party: President

**References and Cross-references.**

Regents Rule 3.1002

UNT Policy 05.042, Grievance

UNT Policy 05.044, Voluntary Alternative Dispute Resolution System

Approved: 5/3/2010

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Revised: