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TO: Detroit City Council

FROM: David D. Whitaker, Director
Legislative Policy Division Staff 

DATE: June 4, 2025

RE: Ombudsperson Application Process¹

On October 5, 2025, the Ombudsperson's, Bruce Simpson, appointment will expire. It is an opportune time to begin the appointment process to fill the soon to be vacated position. If circumstances permit, it would be advisable that this process be concluded prior to City Council's August recess period to allow a seamless transition from one individual to another. As requested, the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) has attached for your consideration a resolution providing the process for appointment and a job posting.

Pursuant to Section 7.5-402 of the 2012 Detroit City Code, the Ombudsperson appointment is for a 10-year term. The person may be removed only for cause by a majority of City Council members serving. The Charter does not provide for specific qualifications for such appointment; however, the posting for the Ombudsperson position does articulate numerous attributes which will help to reduce the large pool of candidates that we anticipate may apply. The salary of the individual selected will be the same as that of the Auditor General²

¹ This report has been prepared at the request of City Council President Mary Sheffield

² Section 7.5-404, 2014 Detroit City Code

RESOLUTION BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT SHEFFIELD:

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A PROCESS TO APPOINT THE OMBUDSPERSON

WHEREAS, The Ombudsperson is appointed by City Council to a ten-year term (2019 Detroit City Chart Section 7.5-402). The term of the current Ombudsperson will expire on Monday, October 5, 2025; and

WHEREAS, City Council intends to post the position to consider qualified applicants for the appointment to a new ten-year term, through adoption of a process of appointment in a fair, just and reasonably expeditious manner; and

WHEREAS, City Council has developed a process that will allow all interested and qualified members of the community to apply for the opening. **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Council shall utilize the following process to fill the position of Ombudsperson for a term of ten years beginning with the appointment of the successful applicant:

1. The position will be posted electronically on government employment websites, general employment websites, and through the City's internal communication network. The Legislative Policy Division (LPD) will accept applications responsive to the postings, submitted to a dedicated email address, through Monday, June 30, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.
2. All persons seeking appointment shall submit a cover letter and resume by the due date. An applicant may submit supporting documents; however, none are required. All information **must be submitted electronically** during the stated application period. Applications made through LPD will be the only ones considered. **APPLICATIONS, RESUMES OR OTHER MATERIALS RECEIVED THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS OR AFTER THE APPLICATION PERIOD WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**; and
3. LPD shall canvas all applicants to determine that each has met the minimum qualifications for the position. LPD shall forward all qualified candidates' resumes/applications to City Council along with a list of candidates who failed to meet the qualifications with the corresponding reasons; and
4. Each Council Member may submit up to two (2) names from the qualified applicants' pool for further consideration in the interview phase of the process. The interview choices should be submitted to LPD by July 7, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. LPD shall provide a report indicating results of the submissions and a list of those who will be interviewed; and

5. All interviews shall be conducted in open session within the Committee of the Whole to be scheduled as soon thereafter as practicable; and
6. Once the interviews have concluded, City Council shall, during a meeting, implement a run-off voting system to select a candidate; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, The Detroit City Council directs this application process to be posted on the City's website and the appropriate electronic employment sites.

June 4, 2025

**THE DETROIT CITY COUNCIL
IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF
OMBUDSMAN FOR THE CITY OF DETROIT**

The Ombudsman is a ten-year appointed position with the power to receive complaints and initiate investigations of any agency within City government, with the exception of elective officers. At the time of appointment, the successful applicant must be at least 18 years of age and a citizen of the United States. The Ombudsman may not hold any office of trust or profit or engage in any occupation for profit outside the duties of the office. Current salary: \$195,000

In addition to the Charter mandated requirements listed above, the candidate should also have:

- Extensive experience in municipal or state government
- Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in Public Administration, Political Science, Urban Planning, Urban Studies, Human Services, or related field
- Computer literacy
- Mediation and negotiation experience
- Demonstrated investigative and analytical skills
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Ability and willingness to work with both legislative and executive branches of government
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to work with various ethnic, social and age groups
- Strong professional, civic or community service background
- Positive working relationships with the private sector, community or other governmental agencies
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple tasks, investigations, or activities in a professional and timely manner
- Ability and willingness to work long hours, attend evening and weekend meetings or travel if required
- Highly motivated, creative and adaptable individual in seeking long term solutions or policy changes

Successful applicants will be expected to operate within the position in accordance with United States Ombudsman Association Governmental Ombudsman Standards.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Each applicant must submit a resume and cover letter. Additional supporting documents may be submitted but are not required. Applications will be accepted by electronic mail ONLY at OmbudspersonApp@detroitmi.gov no later than **5:00 P.M. on June 30, 2025**. Applications made through this email will be the ONLY ones considered. Phone calls, letters of interest, or other contacts will **NOT BE CONSIDERED** as a formal application.

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