

# EARLY RESOLUTION PROCESS

## INVESTIGATIONS

### What is an Early Resolution investigation?

A short-term investigation aimed at quickly resolving a complaint.

An Early Resolution investigation is started when a complaint may be resolved without a full Ombudsperson investigation.

### Complaints where an Early Resolution investigation may help...

- delay in receiving a response or service
- lack of communication or a miscommunication
- challenges accessing a service or process
- lack of reasons for a decision
- unclear eligibility requirements or document requests
- lack of information about availability of an appeal or review process

### We resolve Early Resolution investigations by...

- gathering information from the public body to better understand the situation
- facilitating contact between the person with a concern and public body staff
- asking for a specific action to be taken such as:
  - confirming an application was received
  - addressing a delay in service
  - calling a person to explain a decision or discuss their concerns

### How long will it take?

Our office aims to resolve early resolution complaints within 10 business days. More complex matters may take longer. If a matter cannot be resolved through Early Resolution, it may be referred to our investigative team for further assessment. We will notify the public body and the person making the complaint if we start a full investigation.

### Can it be used for urgent matters?

Yes, if we determine the matter is likely be resolved within 10 business days. Our office prioritizes complaints based on our assessment of their urgency. We consider urgent matters to include an immediate risk to shelter, food security, health or physical safety.

### Ombudsperson powers

**Power to obtain information:** Section 15 of the *Ombudsperson Act* empowers Ombudsperson staff with authority to speak to any person who may have information relevant to an investigation and to request and receive any information and records required to complete the investigation.

**Investigations are confidential:** Section 9 of the *Ombudsperson Act* requires that Ombudsperson investigations be conducted in private. Ombudsperson staff can only share information that is required to further the investigation. If the information provided to our office is particularly sensitive or private, please inform us.

**FREE. INDEPENDENT. CONFIDENTIAL. FAIR.**

Contact us at [consult@bcombudsperson.ca](mailto:consult@bcombudsperson.ca) | 1-800-567-3247

[bcombudsperson.ca](http://bcombudsperson.ca) |    