

How Are Complaints Investigated?

The OCO will notify you by regular mail or email if your complaint will be investigated. An OCO investigator will:

- Review the child's case file (agency documents, court documents, medical records, etc.)
- Interview caseworkers, supervisors, and others who may have information about the case.
- Determine if the agency's actions and decisions are consistent with laws, rules and policies.

If the OCO can't investigate your complaint, you will be given information to help with your situation.



How Can I Contact the OCO?

There are several ways to contact the OCO.

Call:

1-800-642-4326

Web:

www.michigan.gov/oco

Email:

childombud@michigan.gov

Mail:

**P.O. Box 30026
Lansing, MI 48909**

Please provide the following information:

- Your name and phone number
- Child(ren's) name(s) and birthdate(s)
- Your county DHHS office or private agency (such as the foster care or adoption agency)
- Describe your problem
- What would you like the OCO to do?

Once we receive your complaint, we will contact you.



**Dedicated to
serving
Michigan's children**

**P.O. Box 30026
Lansing, MI 48909**

**Phone: 517-373-3077 or
1-800-642-4326
TTY: 1-800-649-3777**

Website: www.michigan.gov/oco

What is the Office of Children's Ombudsman?

The Office of Children's Ombudsman (OCO) is an independent state agency created by Public Act 204 of 1994 (the Children's Ombudsman Act).

The Children's Ombudsman is appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Michigan Senate.

The OCO

- looks at complaints about children involved with protective services, foster care, adoption services, and juvenile justice,
- decides if the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the foster care and adoption agencies followed laws, rules and policies,
- takes all necessary actions, including legal action (such as requesting a subpoena for records), to protect the rights and welfare of Michigan's children,
- looks at cases about children who might have died because of child abuse or neglect,
- informs the Governor, the legislature and the DHHS Director on ways to improve the child welfare system,
- and educates the public about child welfare laws and policies.

What Should I Do Before I Call the OCO?

First, call your local agency for help with your problem. They may be able to help you better understand the rules or fix the problem.

When you call your local office, remember to:

■ Have your information ready.

It helps to write down the problem and your questions before you call.

■ Talk to the right people.

If your caseworker can't help you, ask to speak to the caseworker's supervisor. If that doesn't help, you can call the program manager and then the agency director. Be sure to clearly tell them what you need them to do.

■ Keep careful notes and records.

Make sure you write down who you talked to, the date and time you talked to them, and the information they gave you.

■ Carefully read all information that is sent to you.

There are often rules and deadlines that must be followed.

Issues the OCO Does Not Investigate

The OCO can't help with complaints for:

- Child custody, parenting time, child support
- Guardianship in probate court
- School problems
- Law enforcement
- Court orders

The OCO can give you information on who could help you with those questions.

The OCO is Not an Emergency Intervention Service

If you have a concern that needs immediate attention, call your county Department of Health & Human Services office or local law enforcement agency

**All Contact With the OCO
is Strictly
CONFIDENTIAL**