



What Services are Provided?

The Ombudsman may:

- Investigate complaints
- Answer questions regarding your issue or complaint and make referrals if possible
- Provide information about department procedures or policies
- Attempt to resolve complaints not resolved at the local office level
- Advocate for improvements within the child welfare system that will aid individual children and/or families

What is an Ombudsman? Ombudsman is a representative who investigates complaints impartially, and advocates for improvements in policies and procedures.

What is the Child Welfare Ombudsman Division? The Child Welfare Ombudsman division is an independent and impartial agency that is housed within the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence. The Child Welfare Ombudsman Division was created to work independently from other child welfare agencies in the state of Arkansas. The Ombudsman reviews issues and concerns related to the court case or the investigation involving a child when assistance is requested by the child, the parent of the child, the foster parent of the child, or a relative or fictive kin of the child. The Ombudsman also has the duty to review and recommend necessary changes to improve the policies and procedures within the child welfare system of Arkansas, and to make sure every child being served by the child welfare system is aware of their legal rights under the law.

Who Can File a Complaint? Anyone who believes that a child welfare agency or party has failed to follow laws, rules, or policies in regard to a child welfare case may file a complaint. This could be a child, a parent, a relative, a foster parent, or anyone that is advocating for a child involved in a dependency-neglect case in Arkansas.

What Should I Do Before I File a Complaint? Before contacting the Child Welfare Ombudsman try to resolve the issue through the supervisors of the agency with whom you are having issues. Many times an agency official can explain a policy, answer your questions, or correct the problem.

How Can I File a Complaint? You can file a complaint by completing the complaint form found on the Child Welfare Ombudsman website and mail it, fax it, or scan and email it to the Child Welfare Ombudsman Division. You may also contact the Division and speak to the Ombudsman. **All contact information is listed on the back panel of the brochure.**

What Happens After I File a Complaint? After a complaint is filed, the ombudsman will contact you for additional information and conduct a preliminary assessment of the case. A determination is then made to refer to the agency, to attempt a resolution, or to launch an official investigation into the complaint. An official investigation involves a review of all necessary case documents and interviews with parties involved in the case. When the investigation is complete, a report will be submitted to the complainant and the respective agency with the findings and recommendations for improvements if needed.



OUR MISSION

To review an issue or complaint in any child welfare case or investigation in which a child or their family needs assistance from the Ombudsman; to bring resolution when possible; and to advocate for policies and procedures that will improve the child welfare system in Arkansas.

OUR GOALS

- To advocate for the best interests of the child by encouraging best practices from all parties serving our children and families in Arkansas
- To objectively evaluate and work to resolve issues and concerns within the child welfare system of Arkansas
- To provide independent oversight to the child welfare system in Arkansas



Contacting the Child Welfare Ombudsman Office:

Office Hours
8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Telephone Number
501-661-7974
501-661-7975

Email
childwelfareombudsman@uams.edu

Website
accardv.uams.edu

Mailing Address
4301 W. Markham St. #606
Little Rock, Arkansas 72205-7199

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ARKANSAS CHILD WELFARE OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

A division of the Arkansas Commission on
Child Abuse, Rape, and Domestic Violence



*An independent resource
for reviewing issues
concerning child welfare
cases in Arkansas and
advocating for our
children and families.*

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