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**Personnel Department
Job Evaluation Exercise for the Judicial & Legal Service**

Job Description: State Counsel I, Office of the Ombudsman

JOB TITLE: State Counsel I
MINISTRY/ DEPARTMENT: Office of the Ombudsman
REPORTS TO (JOB TITLE): Head, Legal Division
SUPERVISES: N/A
APPROVED BY: *Yvette Hall*
ISSUE DATE: May , 2008

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

POSITION PURPOSE:

Under direct supervision of the Head Legal, the incumbent is required to perform entry level legal professional work and advise the Ombudsman and Investigators on legal matters pertaining to the functioning of their offices or the exercise of their powers as provided for in Acts NO.4 of 1976 and No. 23 of 1977

The Ombudsman's jurisdiction extends principally to the investigation of faults in administration of Government departments and authorities. Many of the complaints require a legal input in order that the Ombudsman may determine whether there is a fault in administration or that the complaint requires the Ombudsman's recommendation to rectify the fault. Legal assistance to the Ombudsman is therefore necessary in this context.



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MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

ADVISORY (Internal):

1. Assists in providing legal advice to the Ombudsman: (77%)
 - o Examining written complaints received by the Ombudsman and determining his/her jurisdiction on the various matters
 - o Conducting legal research into the laws of Trinidad and Tobago for the purpose of tracing legal decisions, preparing opinions and advice on points of law relevant to complaints received by the Ombudsman
 - o Assisting in the investigation of legal problems submitted to the office of the Ombudsman
 - o Discussing with supervisor the legal aspects of matters investigated and making recommendations arising therefrom.
 - o Advising visiting complainants on general issues regarding their constitutional and legal rights.
 - o Consulting with Freedom of Information officers in government Ministries/Departments to ensure compliance with the legislative requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.
 - o Assisting in the review of any suggested changes in legislation including statutory restraints and departmental practices and policies.

ADVISORY (External):

2. Assists in the examination and interpretation of the laws, ordinances, regulations and other legal instruments under which the Government Ministries/Departments and other Statutory Bodies operate and gives legal opinions on questions of correctness of administrative action by such agencies as they relate to the complaints
20%

LEGISLATIVE: (3%)

3. Assists in the determination from evidence collected by the Ombudsman, apparent infringements of the constitutional or other legal rights of individuals or any criminal or other offence under the Ombudsman Act No 23. Of 1977
3%

Performs related duties as may be required

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SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:

N/A

ACCOUNTABILITY:

Is ultimately accountable to the Ombudsman

General Accountability – The incumbent is required to gain approval of supervisor before proceeding with the actions deemed necessary or advisable.

KEY CONTACTS:

INTERNAL

The Ombudsman - Advisory

Executive Officer- to retrieve information

Head Legal

Internal Investigators- to provide and retrieve information

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KEY CONTACTS: (Continued)

EXTERNAL

Government Officers- Advisory

Legal Officers in Government Ministries- Consultative

Private Legal Practitioners- To retrieve Information

Permanent Secretaries- To provide and retrieve information

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)- Advisory

Members of the Public- advisory

International Ombudsman Institutions and Offices- Consultative

Community Police Department- To retrieve information

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS:

Minimum qualifications: LLB and an LEC- Legal Education Certificate

Admission to practice Law in Trinidad & Tobago

Minimum experience: None required. Officers may be hired as entry level graduates

Knowledge of the Laws of Trinidad & Tobago

Knowledge of the law and enactments relating to the powers and functions of the Ombudsman

Knowledge of the laws, ordinances and regulations relating to Government Administration

Knowledge of Government procedures and practices

Knowledge of the principles, methods, materials, practices and references utilized in legal research

Knowledge of court procedure and rules of evidence

Knowledge of legal principles, practices and proceedings

Ability to develop good advocacy skills

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REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS: (Continued)

Good interpersonal skills

Good communication skills both written and oral

Good analytical and reasoning skills

Good negotiation skills

Good human relations skills

Good computer literacy skills

WORKING CONDITIONS & ENVIRONMENT:

Standard working hours

Standard volume of work

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