

The Office of the Common Interest Community Ombudsman

Compliance and Investigations Division
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§55-530. Powers of the Board; Common Interest Community Ombudsman; Complaints

The Office of the CIC Ombudsman Shall:

1. Assist members in understanding their rights and the processes available to them according to their declaration and bylaws of the association;
 - Declarations and bylaws require receipt and review
 - May create a declaration/bylaw library for future reference



The Office of the CIC Ombudsman Shall:

2. Answer inquiries from members and other citizens by telephone, mail, electronic mail, and in person;

- Daily – primarily phone and email
- Senators, Delegates, etc.
- Respond to general questions immediately, if at all possible. Specific inquiries require additional time for review of appropriate documents



The Office of the CIC Ombudsman shall:

3. Provide to members and other citizens information concerning common interest communities upon request;

- General inquiries
- Questions regarding compliance with laws, timeframes for compliance, applicability
- Working toward updated educational brochures as well as educational programs to be presented throughout the Commonwealth



The Office of the CIC Ombudsman shall:

4. Make available, either separately or through an existing Internet website utilized by the Director, information as set forth in subdivision 3 and such additional information as may be deemed appropriate;

- Review of current website and links completed
- Drafting revisions to provide for new law and requirements
- Ongoing search for websites referencing CIC Liaison and requesting information be updated to reflect new office
- Continued outreach for new, suitable links
- Future Inquiry Form and Complaint Form will be accessible
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in process



The Office of the CIC Ombudsman shall:

5. Receive the notices of complaint filed;

- Need Board regulations so that final adverse decision complaint form and complaint process can be determined
- General complaints now accepted if member submits DPOR complaint form available on Agency website
- An Inquiry Form will be created and accessible to provide for general inquiries now and in the future
- System for receiving funds is being designed and Finance will provide information necessary to be included on Complaint Form



The Office of the CIC Ombudsman shall:

6. ...maintain data on inquiries received, the types of assistance requested, notices of complaint received, any actions taken, and the disposition of each matter;
 - Tracking incoming queries
 - Will use ETS (currently in place and used daily by Complaint Analysis and Resolution (CAR))
 - Work in progress at present as we determine the degree to which ETS can provide the needed information
 - Fallback position may be a spreadsheet specifically designed to meet the Code requirements and our needs



The Office of the CIC Ombudsman shall:

7. ...assist members in using the procedures and processes available to them...nonbinding explanations...referrals...review of the declaration and other records...;

- Requesting that all complainants complete a DPOR Complaint Form and submit appropriate paperwork before we will review
- Responses in the form of email or letters outlining members' rights and responsibilities or lack thereof as they relate to submitted complaint

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- The Office of the CIC Ombudsman shall:

8. Ensure that members have access to the services provided through the Office of the CIC Ombudsman and that members receive timely responses...;

- Currently responding as time allows
- Our intent is to monitor the time it takes to respond and define an “ideal” timeframe for the future
- CICOmbudsmanOffice@dpor.virginia.gov is available to members and citizens and will be published on the web
- Former CIC Liaison phone number now being used as OCICO phone line - (804) 367-2941



The Office of the CIC Ombudsman shall:

9. Upon request to the Director...provide to the Director for dissemination...assessments of proposed and existing common interest community laws...;
10. Monitor changes in federal and state laws relating to common interest communities;
11. Provide information to the Director that will permit Director to report annually...;
12. Carry out activities as the Board determines to be appropriate.

The Complaint Process

- Two levels of member/citizen/association inquiry at present:
 - General questions related to CIC law, regulations, or similar
 - Specific concerns related to some form of mismanagement of association by its board or manager

The Complaint Process

- Future member/citizen/association inquiries:
 - General informational inquiries – for which an inquiry form accessible on the Agency website will be used
 - Complaints to a member's association – complaint form or written procedure for complaint to be created per §55-530(E) (regulations pending)
 - Complaints filed with the Board ((§55-530(F)) pursuant to any final adverse decision by a member's association (regulations pending)