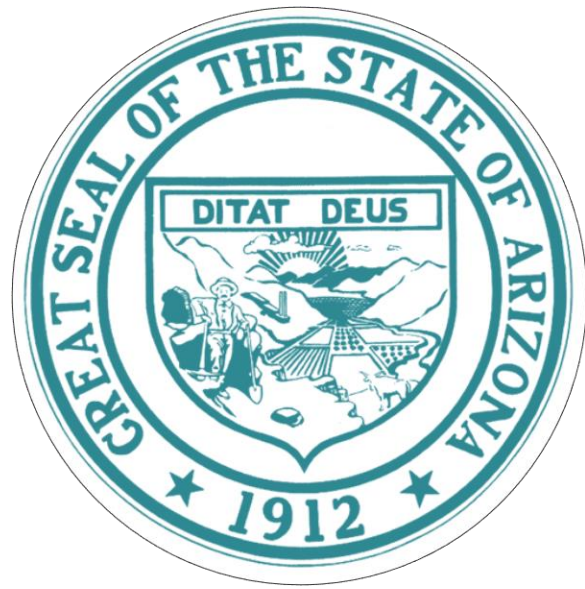


Arizona Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide
3737 North 7th Street, Suite 209, Phoenix, Arizona 85014
Tel 602.277.7292 | 800.872.2879
Fax 602.277.7312
www.azoca.gov



ANNUAL REPORT

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Submitted by Arizona Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide, Dennis Wells
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OPTIMIZING OUR STATE GOVERNMENT

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Arizona Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide is to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness of state government by receiving public complaints, investigating the administrative acts of state agencies, and recommending a fair and appropriate remedy.

OUR ROLE

The Arizona Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide is an independent agency of the Arizona Legislature that was established to make government more responsive to Arizona citizens – “To give voice to the little guy.” It is the office that Arizona citizens can turn to when they feel they have been treated unfairly by a state administrator, agency, department, board or commission. The services of the Ombudsman are free and confidential.

The office is given its authority by Arizona Revised Statutes §§41-1371 through 41-1383 and operates under Arizona Administrative Code Title 2 Chapter 16.

Aiding Citizens

HOW WE HELP

The Arizona Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide office provides a unique service because we offer objectivity to citizens who complain when they think their state government has treated them unfairly. The first thing our experienced investigators do is listen to the person's complaint. For some people this is the first time they feel that anyone in government actually heard them. Then we determine the nature of the dispute and respond in the most appropriate way to resolve the issue.

We group responses into three categories:

COACHING

Many residents are able to resolve their own concerns when they are aware of the services available. We help these residents by educating them on the options available to them based on their specific complaint. Coaching includes defining issues and rights, identifying options, referring people to the appropriate employee or department, redirecting citizens to services outside our jurisdiction (non-profits, federal agencies, etc.), explaining agency policies, researching information, offering conflict management strategies, and developing reasonable expectations.

ASSISTANCE

Sometimes coaching is not enough and residents need our office to communicate with government agencies directly. Most complaints are the result of a miscommunication or a simple mistake. In these circumstances, we contact the appropriate agency on the citizen's behalf, facilitate communication between the parties, or coordinate an action between agencies.

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Our investigators are working on a continual basis to foster relationships with agency personnel in every state agency to enable efficient resolution of complaints prior to escalation.

INVESTIGATION

Some complaints are more serious and do not lend themselves to informal techniques. When the nature of the complaint warrants, we conduct an investigation. We work with the impacted individuals and agency personnel to ensure that the agency is complying with the law and offering optimal public service. Although we have no authority to compel an agency to follow our recommendations, most administrators are eager to resolve constituent problems and agency mistakes once we bring it to their attention. If the allegations are unsubstantiated and the agency performed correctly, we stand up for them and explain our findings to complainants. If necessary, we write investigative reports of our findings and recommendations. When final, we send the report to the agency investigated, the legislature, the governor, and the complainant(s).

OUTREACH

The Legislature asked the Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide (OCA) to note some of our outreach to the community we serve. Below are some of our activities.

- We have made the Ombudsman web site (<http://www.azoca.gov/>) – made more robust in the past few years. We have expanded our public resource list, posted copies of our public record and open meeting compendium of information in electronic booklets, deployed a “How to file a complaint” tutorial, expanded our FAQs, created an electronic complaint form, and taken other measures to expand our services to the public.
- Distribute our brochures at our office, at meetings and speeches, and with various groups who distribute our brochure for us to their clients (i.e., Maricopa County Bar Association).
- We have developed comprehensive guide booklets regarding public record and open meeting law. We distribute public access materials to elected officials and the public throughout the State.
- Media interactions - Interviews throughout the State (examples: Arizona Republic, Channel 12 News, Camp Verde Journal, and various other local newspapers, TV stations and radio). We requested and were granted a listing as a resource on the *Arizona Republic's* public records website.

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- Quarterly public access newsletter – public access attorney Danee Garone writes a quarterly newsletter that we post to our web site and electronically distribute to interested parties. Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records also distributes it on our behalf to its extensive listserv.
- Public access trainings for public officials and the public throughout the State. Our public access attorney, Danee Garone, conducts training sessions and participates in forum discussions regarding lawful practices relating public record and open meetings (example: Public Defender Conference).
- We work with DCS to identify and resolve acute and systemic problems in the child safety agency. DCS is required to note OCA on their web site, in its Notice of Duty to Inform, in its Temporary Custody Notice and notes OCA in its parent handbook.
- OCA staff as speaker or participant
 - Forums with legislative assistants – orientation meetings, one-on-one
 - Forums with legislators – orientation meetings, one-on-one
 - Various speaking engagements –State Archives trainings, civic groups, various state agencies.
 - DES and DCS leadership individual and team meetings
 - DCS Citizen Review Panel – Deputy Joanne MacDonnell serves as member
 - Better Business Bureau – Deputy Joanne MacDonnell serves as an ethics judge for the annual BBB Torch Award Ethics program.
 - Court panels - Arizona Court Improvement Panel, Parent Representation Standards committee – Deputy Joanne MacDonnell serves on these committees.
 - Host training program for DES and DCS ombudsmen.
 - Outreach, speeches, open house events via Grand Canyon University, ASU (Main, Downtown & West campuses) work with professors and interns.
- United States Ombudsman Association – extensive involvement.
 - Network – take referrals from other jurisdictions in USA. Send representation to conference.

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- Participate in training – new ombudsman training, continuing education, and our staff often teach seminars.
- Chair the Family and Children Chapter (produce annual seminar, periodic news postings, survey national members and post results)
- Our office hosted the 2015 national conference here in Arizona.
- We co-host the Arizona Ombudsman Group with the SRP Ombudsman Office. It is a group of government, education and private ombudsmen in AZ. We participate in meetings, host seminars and network with ombudsmen offices that have different constituencies. We refer citizens to one another as jurisdictions dictate.
- We work with the AG's office as it refers many matters to our office when it cannot take a case. Example: Consumer Division, open meeting and public access guidance, general complaint assistance.
- The Self-Help Desk at the Maricopa County Courts – We provide it w/information about our office.
- We post our public access training on YouTube.
- Information about our office is on the DCS website (on which we pushed for a position that is more prominent) as resource for the public to turn to.
- Information about our office is on many state websites where agencies perform investigations - pursuant to A.R.S. §§ 41-1001.01 and 41-1009.
- We work with the Arizona Library and Archives at SOS regarding public record and archives. We collaborate with Library and Archives to present discussion on public records retention discussion at conferences.
- We distribute our Point of Contact google doc to various government agencies. This resource is useful to the agencies.

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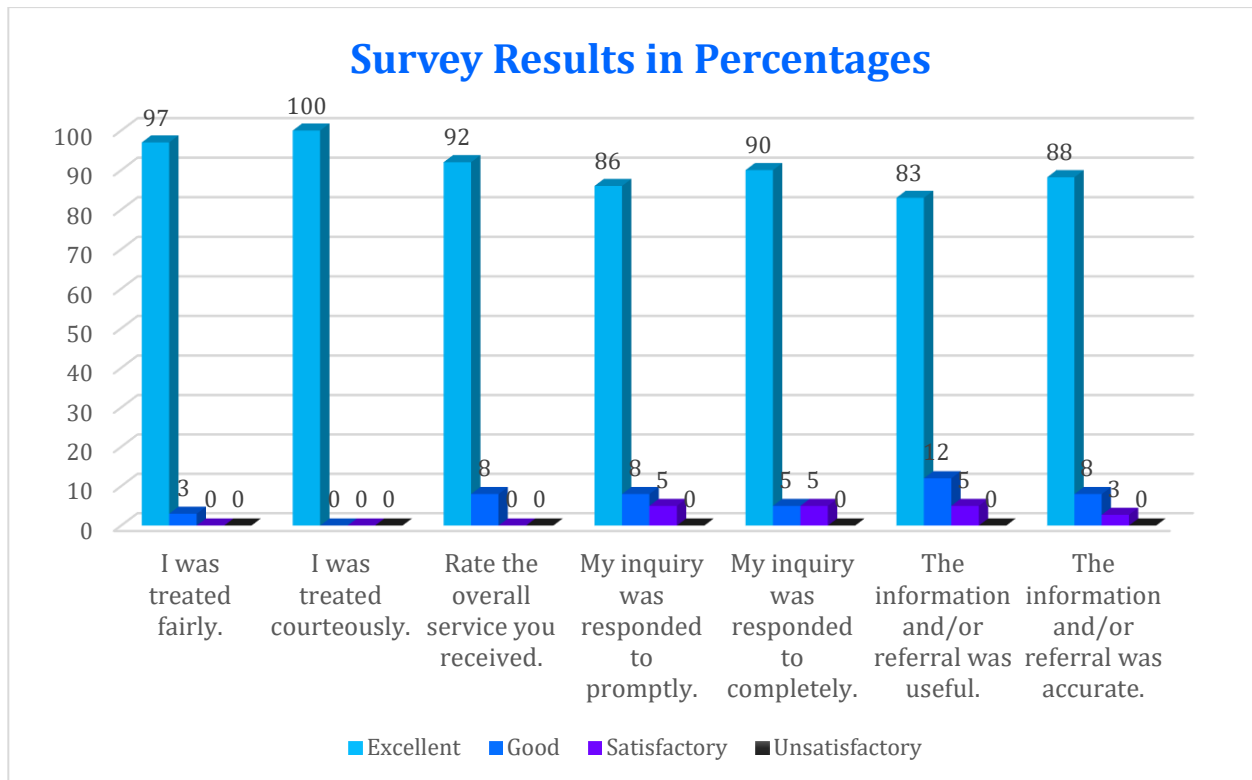
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

It is important for us to receive feedback from the citizens we help so that we can evaluate our performance, correct shortcomings and improve our service. One way we get feedback is through our customer satisfaction survey we distribute at the close of cases. The survey measures how well we are accomplishing six standards that we developed in our strategic plan.

These standards are:

- Treat everyone **fairly**.
- Treat everyone **with courtesy and respect**.
- Respond **promptly** to citizen inquiries.
- Provide as **complete** a response as possible.
- Provide **useful** solutions to citizens.
- Provide **accurate** responses to citizen complaints.

The following chart and comments summarize the results of the survey for 2016.



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WE WELCOME FEEDBACK

The following comments are from citizens who used our services between January 1 and December 31, 2016:

"I am very impressed with the speed, and apparent serious consideration that was given to my inquiry. I really appreciate the existence of such an office with such a commitment to transparency and accountability."

"I can ALWAYS count on the Ombudsman's Office for all of my needs!"

"The response was thoroughly and clearly explained."

"I get the greatest help from the office. They are a terrific resource for citizens."

"Danee was very professional and polite. He gave exceptional service and has an outstanding personality."

"My only complaint is that the office does not have the ability to compel agencies to reverse their denials of public records requests. It is frustrating to have an attorney tell you that an agency is in the wrong, but have no way to fix that without suing the agency. But that is a statutory problem and I have only good things to say about the folks I interacted with in your office."

"The guy Frank was the best - he made it happen - |vs| - took off wk - stressed out - disrespected by DES - Frank made it all better with no drama - he is a class act - thank you!"
"Very helpful, and approachable."

100% of our survey respondents said we treated them courteously.

"Very Satisfied. Our issue was with DDD. Very satisfied."

"If not for Keith, I would still be waiting for my refund check!"

"Danee was a great advocate on behalf of my client. He was very professional, responsive, and helpful."

"It's unusual that I am satisfied with government services. Now if we can just get Federal employees to recognize who their true employers are..."

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“At each turn, the Office of the Ombudsman was superb. It makes me believe that this is the solution to many citizens' issues. The problem would be when everyone decides that his/her issue should take precedence over others, but you can jump through that hoop when the moment is at hand. My experience was superb from start to finish.”

“More leverage/influence over government agencies would be helpful. FEAR FACTOR”

“You made me feel like I mattered.”

“I think as an organization you need to have the ability to enforce. Since we have county attorneys and others that do not do it. You have been the only ones that are willing to help. Thank you!!!”

“This is my second use of Ombudsman. The organization has always been helpful.”

“Philip was excellent and responded to all my questions. His service was prompt and provided excellent results.”

“Keith was direct, prompt and effective. An impressive employee. Deserves a commendation perhaps a raise and a promotion.”

“Thank you for making this program available.”

“Frank provided the kind of courteous service we frequently say was only available in the ‘good old days.’ He responded to every message I left him within 24 hours, did what he promised to do and got DES and AHCCCS to respond to accountability under the law and administrative rules. I did not expect anyone would or could hold these agencies accountable. I was wrong. I am extremely grateful that people like Frank still exist. He needs to run for office, he's got my vote.”

“I could not believe how fast my request was answered! I think that was great!

“Very professional. Took note of my request and addressed it. Very satisfied.”

“This is the second time I have asked Mr. Danee Garone for information on public records. Both times, he has been fantastic to get information back in a more than timely manner. In addition, it is very clear that he has put hard work into getting correct information in a professional manner.

“Ombudsman is a WONDERFUL provision in place to make sure things are handled fairly and accurately. “

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“The citizens of State of Arizona are fortunate to have workers such as Frank!”

“AJ was extremely courteous and put my mind at ease. I really appreciate his concern!”

“I had done tons of leg work with many tears and sleepless nights for an entire years to have an issue resolved, but they instantly got the "BIG BOYS" attention in less than 5 days. Their intervention encourages administrations to take a closer look at things that would have otherwise been ignored or disregarded all together. Matters were resolved quickly and improper decisions were overturned by the medical director without any further explanations from me. In addition, I also received special services from case managers of the insurance company. These managers were very empathetic, apologetic and kind. They helped me with all of my appointments, referrals and transportation needs in order to get me on the road to quality health care. They were exceptional in going beyond the call of duty, thanks to Ombudsman!!”

“I would recommend this service to any one I know that may be in need of help like I was. I would like to personally thank Jennifer. She was very professional and timely with my requests and she responded to me without delay! Her colleagues were very helpful as well in helping me. Thanks again for all of your help!”

“Just wanted to say thank u very much u were very helpful - Thanks again.”

“My call was taken by employee Frank. After listening to my complaint, He handled it with urgency and was very professional throughout. After my futile attempts (over 5 times) by email to get my application to the proper parties and with continual failures I reached out to the Ombudsman’s office. With the assistance of Frank, issue was resolved within 24 hours. I now can go to the ER without worry of my coverage being in effect.”

“Elizabeth was the most friendly, caring person who has communicated with me about the problem that has affected me greatly. Elizabeth jumped in. Today she was really top of the line in performing her helpful service by answering my questions and thinking through the issue with me. I really appreciate her style and will not forget it.”

“I appreciate your intervention with Phoenix Health Plan. They were making no effort to help until you get involved.”

“I was very impressed by the prompt and thorough response. Thank you!”

“I was treated with courtesy, kindness, and compassion. I was very impressed with your employee's knowledge of the issues I raised. What a great reflection on your office! I am sincerely appreciative.”

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Compelling Cases

The following case summaries are examples taken from the 5,255 cases we handled in 2016.

GENERAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT STATE AGENCIES

Examples where we resolved a case involving more than one agency or more than one level of government:

1603626. Arizona Department of Health Services

NOTE:

This is an example of our office assisting an individual who was trying to resolve his problem with the wrong agency. Our office assisted by re-directing him and connecting him with the appropriate agency. This is also a very good example of exceptional customer service provided by a State Agency.

A father was trying to get a birth certificate for his adopted daughter who was born in Arizona. The father's situation was unique, as his daughter had a name change during the adoption process. Because of the new name, he was encountering numerous problems trying to provide healthcare for his daughter and enrolling her in various programs. The father had been unsuccessful working through the Department of Child Safety's (DCS) Foster Care program, as no one seemed to be able to help him.

Our office noticed the father was trying to resolve his problem through DCS, when his unique situation seemed to be more appropriate for the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Vital Records office. Our office contacted the father and provided the contact information for ADHS' Vital Records office. We also advised the man that we would reach out to ADHS and request that someone from their office contact him directly to address his unique situation. Our office then contacted ADHS Vital Records, and requested that they contact the father and address his problem in getting his daughter's birth certificate.

A few hours later, the father contacted our office to let us know that someone from ADHS had already called him, and was working with him in solving his problem. The father was very

Our Three Focus Areas

Our office has three focus areas, and we cite examples from each:

1. General complaints about state agencies;
2. Child Protective Services (CPS) cases and
3. Public access cases.

Under the general case summaries, we also highlight ways in which the resolutions reached **added value** to our state government.

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grateful for our office's help in finally getting him in contact with the right people. Shortly thereafter, ADHS also contacted our office to let us know they had contacted the father and were assisting him. We thanked ADHS for their exceptional service.

1602775. Arizona Agency (THIS WAS A CONFIDENTIAL CASE)

A citizen contacted our office claiming a particular state agency was in violation of federal laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), and the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as the agency employees' medically related information was accessible to all the agency's staff on the agency's computer network. The citizen also said that agency management mishandled FMLA requests. In addition, the citizen claimed the agency did not have a dedicated Human Resources (HR) representative for its employees to confide in, or to address and manage HR related issues and concerns. The citizen requested not to be identified outside of our office.

Upon gathering all specifics relating to the claims, our office contacted the HR Department of the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA). ADOA agreed to investigate and report findings to our office.

The ADOA began their investigation within days of our contact, sending ADOA HR personnel unannounced onsite to the agency. Upon investigating, the ADOA determined two of the three allegations made by the citizen were true. The ADOA determined that HIPAA and FMLA records were indeed not secure, and took immediate measures by moving the data to a secure computer drive. The ADOA also advised that the agency would immediately be hiring a full-time, dedicated HR representative. ADOA did not substantiate the allegations of FMLA mismanagement by the agency.

Our office informed the citizen about the results of ADOA's investigation and thanked the citizen for the protecting agency worker's sensitive information, and prompting change.

Examples where we resolved a case that no one else was able to resolve internally:

1603247. Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System

A man was having a problem with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). The man claimed to have been covered by AHCCCS since 2009. The man said that AHCCCS recently informed him that his benefits would be ending, and he would need to reapply. The man claimed he had already reapplied multiple times, but AHCCCS continued to instruct him to resubmit the same documents over again. On his last call, the man claimed that AHCCCS informed him they had no record of him reapplying. The man was very frustrated with the process and was worried his coverage would end. The man claimed he had diabetes, and said that he depended on medication provided through his AHCCCS coverage.

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Our office contacted AHCCCS. It informed us that the man was currently covered, but his coverage would be ending soon because he failed to include some documents when he reapplied. Our office noted the documents that AHCCCS claimed were still missing.

Our office contacted the man informing him of what AHCCCS had said. The man responded that he could send our office the same documents. He said that he had sent AHCCCS these documents multiple times, along with proof that he had sent them. Our office agreed, and the man sent over approximately six attachments, which our office promptly forwarded to our contacts at AHCCCS.

The man called our office a few days later to say that he had received a letter from AHCCCS informing him that they had received all required information, and his benefits would continue. The man was convinced it was because our office had gotten involved. He was very grateful.

1602834. Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System

An auto mechanic was having a problem with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). The man claimed that his birth date was listed incorrectly in the AHCCCS system. As a result, AHCCCS was denying his refill prescriptions. The man explained that he relied on the medicine in order to function, and he had already been without his medication for longer than his doctor had recommended. The man claimed to have tried calling both AHCCCS and the Arizona Department of Economic Security, but he was repeatedly directed elsewhere or left on hold.

Our office took the man's information and immediately sent a high-priority email to our contacts at AHCCCS, and requested that they assist the man by either correcting his information, or directing him to the appropriate department. AHCCCS returned our email quickly to say they had been in contact with the man, and his information was being corrected in their system. AHCCCS also advised that the man's prescriptions would be available in about three hours. Our office then contacted the man informing him of what AHCCCS had advised. Our office also requested that the man call us if his problem remained unresolved after three hours. The man confirmed that someone from AHCCCS had just called him and was working with him. The man was relieved and credited our office's involvement in helping him.

1604448. Arizona Department of Transportation

A motorist mailed our office a packet of documentation pertaining to a previous case that we had with him. The motorist was concerned as he claimed that he had completed his court ordered two-year-period with an interlock device after being convicted of a DUI, but he was being held responsible for an installer's error. The motorist explained that a licensed interlock installer checked his documentation and then the installer removed the motorist's interlock device. This turned out to be one day prior to the end of the motorist's interlock period. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) subsequently informed the motorist that because the device had been removed one day early, he would need to complete an additional

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two year period. Over a period of several months, ADOT had not taken up the case to find a resolution. Instead, the agency had continually referred the motorist back and forth between the ADOT Executive Hearing Board and the agency itself with no progress made. We contacted ADOT regarding this issue.

After hearing back from ADOT, we found that in addition to a prescribed interlock period, there is also a 3-month administrative restricted period and a mandatory yearlong license revocation. Pursuant to a recent statute, the motorist was able to install the interlock device early and maintain it through all of the aforementioned periods instead of being unable to drive altogether. The motorist was unaware of this even though he had opted for it.

After lengthy discussion with ADOT, we were able to have the agency credit the motorist for the time completed and have him only complete the months that were uncompleted without further penalty as he had acted in good faith. We informed the resident of our findings as well as made suggestions regarding ADOT and the interlock installer. The motorist thanked us for the assistance.

Examples where we provided an alternative avenue to a more expensive dispute resolution mechanism:

1604493. Arizona Commerce Authority

A local businessperson contacted our office through the Ombudsman website. The businessperson was the president and co-founder of a local tech company. The businessperson claimed that his company was recently awarded a \$250,000 grant by the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA), for being one of the winners of the Arizona Innovation Challenge, a local competition conducted by the ACA. However, the businessperson claimed that his company's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) resigned shortly after the award, which led the ACA to withdraw the grant. The businessperson claimed to have immediately hired an equally talented replacement CEO, but the ACA refused to reinstate the grant. The businessperson thought this was unfair, and asked our office for assistance.

Before contacting the ACA, our office contacted the businessperson to request that he send us the documentation he received from the ACA, including an award letter, terms and conditions, or even a contract. Our office was looking for some type of legally binding agreement, but instead the businessman sent copies of emails exchanged between his company and the ACA.

Our office first reviewed the Arizona Innovation Challenge to find that it was a program under the umbrella of the ACA's Arizona Competes Fund, which is described in Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) Title 41, Chapter 10, Article 5, et seq. The Arizona Competes Fund is administered by ACAA and provides funding for local start-up and emerging companies. Since the Arizona Innovation Challenge was part of the Arizona Competes Fund, we examined A.R.S. §

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41-1504(7), which stated the ACA shall, “Develop and implement written policies and procedures relating to the administration of grants from the Arizona competes fund...”

Our office contacted our contacts at the ACA and requested that they provide our office with a copy of these “written policies and procedures.” Our office also requested that the ACA:

1. Please confirm that the Arizona Innovation Challenge program falls under the umbrella of the Arizona Competes Fund, as specified in A.R.S. Title 41, Chapter 10, Article 5, et seq.;
2. Please provide our office with the ACA’s “written policies and procedures relating to the administration of grants from the Arizona competes fund” as specified in A.R.S. § 41-1504(7);
3. If the Arizona Innovation Challenge program DOES NOT fall under the umbrella of the Arizona Competes Fund, please provide the authority under which the program operates, and the written policies and procedures relating to the administration of grants for the applicable program; and
4. A written response as to why the ACA chose not to provide the businessperson’s company the awarded grant, and any applicable authority that allows the ACA to rescind the award.

The ACA responded within a few days and provided the answers to our questions, and provided our office with the Arizona Innovation Challenge Standard Operating Procedures. The ACA claimed that the awarding of the grant to the businessperson’s company was largely based on the previous CEO in place at the time of award.

Although our office received and reviewed numerous documents submitted by both the ACA and the businessperson, neither party submitted a legally binding contract agreement signed by both parties. In the absence of a formal legal agreement, we had to instead rely on the rules and policies of the Arizona Innovation Challenge.

The Arizona Innovation Challenge Standard Operating Procedures, Section 1.0 INNOVATION CHALLENGE OVERVIEW stated:

“The ACA has the right to make final rulings related to individual company submissions or to make changes to the AIC Program at its discretion – under the umbrella of having the intention to improve the given Challenge or improve the overall Program by doing so. These may include, but are not limited to, any final rulings on the eligibility of a participating company; the final judges screening and/or scoring of any submission; the selection decisions for semi-finalists, finalists and recommended winners; and the criteria and milestones for awarding grant funds to the winning companies.”

This statement gave the ACA broad authority to implement the Arizona Innovation Challenge program at their discretion. In our office’s opinion, a “...final ruling on the eligibility of a participating company...” may include the withdrawal of a previously awarded grant.

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Therefore, in the absence of laws and the lack of a legally binding contract between the two parties stating otherwise, our office concluded that the ACA acted within their authority when rescinding their grant to the business.

Our office contacted the businessperson and informed him of our office's conclusion.

Examples where our intervention revealed a field practice that was not in accordance with the agency's stated policy/procedure, statutes or case law:

1602829. AHCCCS

A doctor contacted us regarding one of his patients. The patient had a surgery that left him with a feeding tube. Complicating matters further, the patient had lost his housing while he was hospitalized. The doctor explained the patient was an Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) benefits recipient. The doctor said the patient had been denied access to a medically needed nursing home subsequent to his surgery. The doctor claimed that Phoenix Health Plan (a subsidiary of AHCCCS) had not only denied access to a nursing home, but also suggested that the patient be placed in a homeless shelter. The doctor informed us that this was not advisable due to the necessary considerations regarding the feeding tube. The patient had been discharged for 30 days, but could not leave the hospital until an adequate care facility had been secured for further treatment.

We contacted AHCCCS to review the case and their obligations to the patient. The agency told us they would re-examine the situation. They then communicated to us that there was a resolution in motion. We contacted the doctor and checked in as to the status per his understanding. The doctor said that he had been in contact with AHCCCS and there was now a resolution in the works. We asked the doctor to keep us up to date with the status and if no resolution had been finalized by the end of the week to contact us once again for further steps. The doctor later contacted us to let us know that our involvement had caused AHCCCS to accept his and the patient's request for access to nursing home care.

1604032. Office of Secretary of State

A state senator's assistant contacted our office on behalf of a constituent. The representative said the constituent was having trouble with the Secretary of State's office (SOS) regarding her notary commission.

The constituent had attempted to renew her commission with the SOS. The SOS then informed her that her commission had already been revoked; therefore, she could not renew her commission. The SOS told the constituent that it had mailed her letters regarding the disciplinary actions it took against her, but she had not responded. The constituent said she did not receive anything from the SOS. The constituent was aware of a complaint filed against her about two years prior. She said she had provided evidence to contest the allegations made

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against her to the Attorney General's office (AG), which was investigating the allegations, but she never heard back. Because she never heard anything more, the constituent assumed the matter had been resolved in her favor.

We contacted the SOS and spoke to an employee who was in charge of notary issues (SOS employee). She explained that, following the AG's investigation into the allegations made against the constituent, the SOS had found cause to suspend the constituent's commission. The SOS employee said the SOS sent the constituent two letters via certified mail notifying her of her suspension and explaining what she could do in order to contest the matter and how she could comply with the suspension so that she could regain her commission. The SOS employee explained that the letters were undeliverable to the constituent at the address she had on file with the SOS. The SOS employee said that because the constituent never ended up complying with the terms of the suspension, the SOS revoked her commission. She said the SOS sent the constituent a certified letter explaining that her commission was revoked. The SOS employee explained that the letter was undeliverable to the constituent at the address she had on file with the SOS.

The SOS employee explained that notaries have a statutory obligation to inform the SOS of changes in address. She seemed sure that the constituent must have changed addresses without informing the SOS.

We asked the SOS employee to send us the letters she said the SOS sent the constituent and the post office paperwork that indicated that the letters were undeliverable. She sent it all to us.

We reviewed the letters and post office paperwork. The post office paperwork indicated that the SOS did indeed send the letters, and the letters were undeliverable. We looked up the address the SOS had on file for the constituent. The address the SOS had on file for the constituent did not accurately match the address the SOS had sent the letters to. The SOS had listed the wrong city on the letters.

Again, we contacted the SOS employee. We explained our findings. The SOS employee acknowledged that all of the letters had been incorrectly addressed, which would account for why the constituent had not received them and had not known of the suspension or revocation. She said the SOS would consult with the AG about what it should do in light of this mistake. She said the situation would revert to the point at which the constituent had first been suspended.

We contacted the constituent and then the representative and explained to each what we had found and what the SOS employee had told us. The representative was very thankful and said it would now be up to the constituent to contest the SOS's findings against her and the suspension.

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The constituent was glad we located the error; however, she was unhappy that the SOS had made the errors. Additionally, she did not agree that the SOS had grounds to suspend her. We told the constituent that we sympathized with her, but she would have the opportunity to contest and appeal the suspension. She thanked us.

The constituent follow up with us the next day. She said the AG had conducted "another review of [her] file" and decided not to suspend her and to "remove everything from [her] record." She was very thankful. The representative also thanked us for our assistance.

1600591. ADOT - Motor Vehicle Division

A motorist contacted our office because he could not obtain a driver's license in another state due to a hold by the Arizona Department of Transportation/Motor Vehicle Division (ADOT/MVD). The motorist said that he once received a citation, but he said he took care of it.

We contacted the MVD and had them review the record. They found the citation that the man received. The MVD said the citation was dismissed, but the MVD failed to remove it from the record. The representative at the MVD contacted the motorist and assured the man that they would correct the problem. The representative informed the motorist to give the MVD 48 hours for the system to update, since they have corrected the issue. We contacted the man and confirmed that MVD had resolved the issue by correcting their records.

Example where our intervention result in financial savings for a small business:

1603259 ADOT - Motor Vehicle Division

The chief executive officer (CEO) of a private company contacted our office after the Arizona Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) had shut down his company's operations. The MVD felt that the company's operations were contrary to law. The company cited Arizona Administrative Code R9-20-103 (A) as their justification to legally operate in the manner that they had been operating, prior to being shut down. The company felt that the MVD was using an outdated version of the law in their reasoning to cease operations. The representative agreed to provide documentation for the case.

After reviewing the documentation and relevant laws, we found that the electronic services provided by the company were in fact legal and licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS). We subsequently contacted the MVD regarding this issue and questioned their reasoning for shutting down the company's operation even though they have been operating in accordance with A.A.C R9-20-103 (A), R9-20-108, and R9-20-109. MVD considered our information and concluded that they did not have jurisdiction over this matter after all. They agreed to rescind their directive. We then contacted the representative who not only confirmed that the issue had been resolved, but also thanked us for our help.

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Examples where our intervention corrected a financial problem for a citizen:

1603887. Department of Revenue

The Arizona (AZ) Attorney General's office forwarded to us a complaint in which a New York resident, who had never been to Arizona, received a tax bill from AZ Department of Revenue (DOR). We subsequently contacted DOR to inquire why it sent a collection demand letter to the New York resident.

After speaking with the resident and DOR further, we found that the resident had been the victim of identity theft. This essentially resolved the case as the collection was no longer an issue.

1604800. DES - Department of Economic Security

A mother contacted our office after DES denied her benefits. The mother explained that she had been denied because she was allegedly receiving "guardianship payments" for her children from DCS. The mother said this was not true; she was not receiving such payments.

We first contacted DCS and asked them to look into their records to ascertain whether it was sending the mother payments. DCS explained that it had never provided assistance of any kind to the mother. DCS then attempted to contact DES and resolve the matter, but it was unsuccessful.

We then went to DES, explained the situation, and provided evidence to support the mother's claim. We asked the agency to correct its records and contact the mother after it processed her claim. The agency did so.

OMBUDSMAN INTERVENTION IN DCS CASES

The Ombudsman Office looks into complaints people have against the Department of Child Safety (DCS). Parents, grandparents, and other relatives of children involved with DCS seek help from our office when they believe DCS has treated them unfairly.

Other sources of complaints include foster parents, adoptive parents, community service providers and members of the state legislature.

The majority of the coaching and assistance inquiries we receive involve clarification of DCS-recommended services, explanation of the DCS and dependency processes, facilitation of communication by the caseworker and legal counsel, and explanations about visitation or placement issues.

Our Department of Child Safety cases were over 47.25% of our total caseload.

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We contact DCS to gather agency administrators' perspectives on assistance and investigation complaints. Typically, a phone call or e-mail message to DCS staff can resolve frequently received complaints such as caseworker assignment problems, obtaining copies of case plans, failure to receive notification of staff meetings, requests for Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) meetings, or court hearing dates. Case managers, supervisors or upper DCS management offer clarity to events, laws or policies and procedures. We facilitate clear communication between families, our office and the various points of contact within the Department of Child Safety.

Additionally, some of the complaints we receive require an in-depth review of the case and direct contact with the caseworker or agency representative. These are often complaints in which residents feel that the agency violated their rights or failed to provide adequate services. For these complaints, our office may initiate full-file reviews, request documents and other supporting data or meet with DCS staff. We review case correspondence, therapeutic reports and the DCS CHILDS database as sources of information to help resolve the disputes. Many of the complaints that we address are fairly isolated or case specific. However, for some issues, we identify patterns among multiple complaints that indicate systemic issues or deficiencies regarding DCS actions. In these situations, resolving one particular complaint is not enough. Instead, we identify the recurring issues and bring them to the attention of DCS management for system-wide resolution.

The following chart shows who and where some of our DCS calls come from as well as what some of the complainants concerns were.

DCS Complainant Information Chart – January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2016	
DCS Complaint Source Relationship	
Parent	975
Kin	215
Service Provider	8
Child	6
Foster	59
Attorney	9
Agency Worker	7
Other	12
DCYF Region	
Central	80
Southwestern	50
Southeastern	2
Northern	10
Pima	7

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Type of Complaint	
Removal Issues	194
Service Issues	126
Visitation Issues	169
Communication Issues	370
Record Issues	92
Placement Problems	207
Investigation Issues	242
Inadequate efforts towards case plan goal	45
False Allegations	34
DCS Process Questions	204
Other	57

DCS CASE EXAMPLES

Example where our intervention identified a problem in the agency interpretation of a statute, rule, or policy as demonstrated by:

1604831. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A complainant contacted our office for assistance. The complainant was in the midst of a dispute with the Department of Child Safety (DCS).

The complainant noted news reports that the Arizona Ombudsman Office published an investigation about DCS violating statutes if they interviewed children in neglect cases. In that investigation, the Arizona Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide Office, with the support and foundation of legal guidance in the form of a comprehensive memo from the Arizona Legislative Council, found that in cases of neglect, DCS was in violation of Arizona Revised Statutes §8-802(B) and 8-471(E)(3) if they interviewed children without parental consent. DCS had no such restrictions if the case was about abuse or abandonment. The complainant was convinced that her family's case was the same scenario, and therefore, DCS would again be violating statute if they interviewed her child relatives without permission. She wanted our office to act on her behalf to essentially stop DCS from proceeding. Unfortunately, the complainant was not aware DCS had disagreed with the office of the Arizona Ombudsman, and had requested that the Arizona Attorney General provide a written legal opinion on the matter. The legal opinion provided by the Attorney General disagreed with the opinion of the Arizona Ombudsman, and instead sided with DCS. Thus, until a court of law, broke the tie of dueling opinions, DCS could arguably

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continue conducting interviews of children without parental consent in neglect cases. Our office stands by our report and believes a court would agree with us because the plain language of the statutes is clear and the rules of statutory construction support our opinion.

Our office advised the complainant of the situation, provided her with links to both the original report from the Arizona Ombudsman, and gave her the final Attorney General's opinion. Our office also advised the complainant of our office's authority, and because the Attorney General had provided an opinion on the matter, the office of the Arizona Ombudsman would not be revisiting the claim. Our office advised the complainant that if she wished to continue her claim, she would need to consult with an attorney and fight the DCS practice in the courts.

The complainant emailed our office later that day to thank us. We did not hear from the complainant again, and the outcome of her case is not known.

Examples where we discovered a cover-up of the truth or other ethical lapse as demonstrated by:

1604159. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A complainant contacted our office about a Department of Child Safety (DCS) matter involving a child relative. The complainant said that the child displayed a bruised head that he claimed came from maltreatment by a boyfriend of the child's mother. The complainant made a report to the Department of Child Safety (DCS) Hotline that resulted in DCS initiating an investigation.

A few days later, a DCS investigator arrived at the apartment to interview the child. The complainant claimed that she later learned that the DCS investigator knew the mother's boyfriend from a previous relationship. The complainant felt this was a conflict of interest. The complainant claimed the DCS investigator did not properly investigate and compromised the investigation. The complainant relayed various, specific concerns about how the investigator failed to act prudently in investigating the case. The complainant asked our office to assist and open an investigation. We did so.

Our office contacted DCS about the matter and explained the specific concerns raised by the complainant. We requested that DCS managers please look into the claims, and we asked them to confirm that there was no conflict of interest on behalf of the DCS investigator.

While investigating the matter, we received another call from the complainant. She claimed that the mother's boyfriend bruised the child again. Our office instructed the complainant to immediately call the DCS Hotline and make a report, which she did. Our office also immediately contacted DCS management again to advise them of this latest claim of abuse.

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DCS agreed to investigate both incidents. DCS, without admitting any misconduct on behalf of the DCS investigator, informed our office that they had reassigned the original DCS investigator to other cases, and that a new DCS investigator would be handling this case moving forward.

Our office informed the complainant, who was extremely grateful. She thanked our office for assisting.

Example where our intervention result in better service to citizens

1600531. DCS-Department of Child Safety

A woman complained about the way a Department of Child Safety (DCS) worker communicated with her. The woman said that she does not speak English and cannot read English. She claimed she was given paperwork for her DCS case in English and was not supplied with a translation even though she made her communication difficulty clear. The woman said she needed to understand what DCS was claiming and what they wanted her to do.

We contacted DCS and informed them of the concern. DCS had the caseworker go back to the woman's home along with an interpreter. They translated and explained the case concerns to the woman and provided her with documentation in Spanish. We confirmed the complainant was satisfied and closed the case.

1600760. DCS - Department of Child Safety

An attorney provided our office with a court order that states the State is ordered to pay for a mother's attorney fees. The attorney stated she is not sure who is going to be paying, the DCS or the AG's office. The attorney expressed that she felt it was taking the State too long to determine who should be responsible.

We contacted the AG and DCS and we were informed that DCS would be paying her the fee.

The attorney informed us she received her fee and she thanked us for our time.

Example where our intervention revealed a field practice that was not in accordance with a judicial order:

1601488. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A woman contacted our office and alleged that the Department of Child Safety (DCS) was not complying with a court order. The woman relayed that at the last court hearing, the judge ordered a father to sign up for parenting classes and said that if he did so, then his daughter

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could be placed in his care. The woman explained that the father had enrolled into the parenting classes and had started them, but DCS had not placed the child with him as required by the order.

We spoke with the DCS about the court hearing record. The court order stated that if father was to enroll into parenting classes, then his daughter could be "placed" into his care. Our office pointed out that DCS's conduct did not seem to be in line with the judge's order. DCS managers reviewed the situation and agreed DCS's conduct was not in line with the judge's order. DCS then told the dad that he could pick up his daughter for placement.

The father thanked us for helping him on his case. We informed the father he could contact us back with further questions or concerns.

1601939. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A mother stated the DCS canceled her visit because her child had an activity. The mother stated she does not think it fair because it is Mother's Day weekend. The mother explained that the DCS caseworker (CM) told her that her child needs a break and they will not be making up the visit.

We spoke with the DCS about the issue. DCS eventually agreed that it had no policy on the issue and stated it would be making up the visit.

We contacted the mother and informed her that the agency would make up the visits for her.

1601950. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A former foster mother stated that she had two children in her care of several years and these children were later placed with kin who are in a different state. The former foster mother stated that when the kids were moved, she had given the DCS caseworker several boxes of items that belonged to the kids so the items could be shipped over to the children. The former foster mother followed up with the kin and was informed that several items never showed up. The former foster mother stated that she sent new clothing, diapers, and other personal items for the children that were amongst the missing items.

We spoke with DCS and asked the agency to gather the items not sent to the kin and return them to the former foster mother. Initially, DCS said it would partially follow our recommendation because it could only locate some of the items at issue. We then recommended that DCS conduct additional checks for the items. DCS agreed to do so and found the remaining items. DCS contacted the former foster parent and had her come retrieve

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the remaining items. We also recommended that DCS adhere to its inventory policies so that similar situations did not arise going forward. DCS agreed.

We followed up with the former foster mother. She said she was happy to get some of the belongings back from the DCS. We advised the foster to contact us if she had further questions or concerns.

1602560. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A mother alleged that the Department Child Safety (DCS) removed her newborn baby from her care on the grounds that the child was substance exposed; however, she alleged that she and the baby had tested negative for drugs and there was no other evidence to support DCS's allegations.

We asked the DCS Ombudsman Office to review the matter, and the office agreed to do so. DCS maintained that it did not remove for the reasons noted by the mother. DCS alleged separate grounds for which we recommended the DCS Ombudsman's office review as well.

In response, DCS managers assigned a new case manager take over the case. DCS and the mother then held a team decision meeting and the team decided the baby should be returned to the mother's care as there was no safety concern.

1602605. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A mother stated she was having several issues with her Department Child Safety (DCS) case. The mother alleged the caseworker was not communicative, DCS did not provide her son with proper behavioral services, her service referrals were running out, and a number of other issues. The mother said the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) shared her concerns. The mother provided us with the FCRB summary to support her assertions. The mother asked us to investigate her case. We agreed to do so.

After reviewing the matter, we found that DCS had not complied with A.R.S. §8-815.03, which requires DCS to respond to the FCRB within ten business days. We recommended that DCS respond to the FCRB. DCS accepted our recommendation and responded to the FCRB.

1602621. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A mother contacted our office and alleged that the Department of Child Safety's (DCS) rationale for removing her two sons from her care was legally inadequate. The mother explained that one son is special needs and requires around-the-clock-care, which she and her family provide. The mother further explained that her special needs son was admitted to the hospital for a cold

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and was required to stay at the hospital for a couple of days. The mother further explained that the hospital needed to discharge her son, but the mother was unable to get him because she had to move into a new home and have his medical equipment installed. She was not sure what she could do in the short-term. The mother expressed her short-term concern to the hospital and asked the hospital social worker if there was a care facility that her son could stay at until she could arrange the move.

The mother stated that the hospital attempted to find a home for her son, but her insurance would not cover the in-home care that her son requires. The mother explained to us that the hospital then called DCS to see if the agency could find a temporary home for her son. The mother said a DCS caseworker (CM) called her. The mother said the CM made her feel like a bad parent. The mother explained that the CM removed both of her children from her care and informed her that, "If you can't take care of one kid then you can't take care of the other kid." The mother expressed that she is a good mother, but was temporarily overwhelmed and just needed a little help in the short term.

We contacted the DCS and asked DCS to review the case. The DCS agreed. A DCS area program manager (APM) reviewed the case and determined that she did not agree with the removal and would take the necessary steps to address the matter.

We further recommended that DCS return the child if, upon review, it could not support its initial basis for removal. DCS accepted our recommendation and soon returned the child.

The mother thanked us.

Examples where our intervention revealed a field practice that was not in accordance with statutes, rules or case law:

1603936. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A mother contacted our office because the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) had removed her daughter. She said the Notice of Duty to Inform that DCS provided to her was defective because it only stated "neglect" as the reason for removal with no elaboration. A.R.S. § 8-803(A)(2) requires that DCS give the parent a notice listing, "The specific complaint or allegation made against that person." Additionally, she claimed that DCS never provided a temporary custody notice (TCN) as required by A.R.S § 8-823 (B).

We contacted DCS and reviewed the case. We found that the documents were not specific enough to meet the requirements of the statutes for explaining the reasons for removal. Additionally, we found several other deficiencies with the documents. We recommended that DCS reissue the two documents with more specific reasons for the removal, and we

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recommended that DCS resolve the additional deficiencies so that the documents complied with the statutes. DCS agreed.

Because we frequently see similar statutory deficiencies with Notices of Duty to Inform and TCNs in other cases, we made several specific recommendations as to how DCS could refine its TCN. DCS agreed to do so.

1602210. DCS - Department of Child Safety

A mother contacted our office about a Department of Child Safety (DCS) matter involving her children. She asserted that the judge dismissed the dependency involving her children. She said that despite the judicial order, DCS had not closed the case yet.

We investigated the matter and found that DCS had not yet closed the mother's case or provided her with a closing letter in the period required by law. We recommended that DCS close the case and provide the mother with a closing letter. DCS agreed and provided a closing letter to the mother two weeks later.

1605249. Department of Child Safety

A mother contacted our office about a Department of Child Safety (DCS) matter involving her family. She asserted that DCS had improperly provided a record regarding her family's case to her husband's ex-wife. She said a DCS worker later shared a record containing DCS's Team Decision-making Meeting (TDM) notes with the ex-wife. She asserted that this was improper because the initial report against her and her husband and the TDM has nothing to do with the husband and ex-wife's children.

We researched the law on the matter. According to A.R.S. § 8-807(F)(3), DCS has discretion to provide "[a]ccess to DCS information to the parent, guardian or custodian of a child if the DCS information is reasonably necessary to promote the safety, permanency and well-being of the child." We cautioned the mother that DCS might have provided the information to the ex-wife so that she could know whether her children would be safe in a home, in which they spent about half of their time. We told her that we would contact the DCS Ombudsman about the matter.

We contacted the DCS Ombudsman's office and recommended that it review the matter. The DCS Ombudsman's office agreed. In light of the DCS Ombudsman's reviews, we found that the agency likely should not have shared the TDM notes with the ex-wife because the TDM had nothing to do with the ex-wife's kids.

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We then recommended that the DCS Ombudsman's educate its staff. The DCS Ombudsman's office said a Program Manager subsequently spoke to the employee who provided the records about the issue and spoke to the rest of her staff so that similar issues would not arise.

We explained what we had learned from the DCS Ombudsman's office to the mother. We apologized for what had occurred, but we explained that nothing could undo the underlying issue. We told her that DCS appeared to have taken action to prevent any similar issues from arising.

She thanked us.

OMBUDSMAN INTERVENTION IN PUBLIC ACCESS CASES

Outreach and Education

Educational Materials

We released updated Ombudsman Booklets on Public Records Law and Open Meeting Law on our website and in hard copy. To date, we have provided several hundred public access booklets to elected officials, non-elected public officials, public employees, advocacy groups, and members of the public. In addition, we share and help develop training materials for public bodies. We continue to update our website with publications, training opportunities, and new developments in the open meeting and public records law, such as new case law, legislation, and Attorney General Opinions.

Trainings

There is a significant demand for training throughout the State. During the past year, we provided more than ten training sessions to a variety of State and local government officials and public bodies from Flagstaff to Florence to Carefree. Additionally, we also conducted trainings at multiple conferences for statewide associations of public bodies.

In addition to general trainings in which we discuss public access requirements, we developed and presented customized trainings to address specific needs of public officials upon request.

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Newsletters

We continued to publish a public access newsletter on a quarterly basis. Our newsletter *The Public Record* touches on interesting and timely open meeting and public records law issues that are relevant to the duties and responsibilities of public bodies and officials throughout the State. For example, we provided summaries and updates for public access-related bills considered by the Legislature during the 52nd Legislative session. We also provided a summation and analysis of an appeals court decision concerning public records law. We also delved into the public records responsibilities of the courts.

Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records sends our newsletter to a listserv of public officials and employees throughout the State. Additionally, we also send our newsletter to our own list of public officials and employees who have contacted our office directly to receive our newsletter.

Inquiries and Investigations

In the past year, our office handled 490 cases regarding matters related to public access. Of those calls, 330 were public record inquires and 158 were open meeting inquiries. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the number of inquiries received from the public, the media, and government agencies. Table 2 provides the number of inquiries received about state agencies, county agencies, city or town agencies, school districts, and other local jurisdictions.

Table 1			
	Public Inquiries	Media Inquiries	Government Agency Inquiries
Number of inquires	324	18	148

Table 2					
	State Agencies	County Agencies	City or town agencies	School Districts	Other Local Jurisdictions
Number of inquires	192	66	108	60	96

Public Access Case Examples

1602161. Sonoita Elementary School District

A resident contacted our office about issues she said she was having with a request for public records she made to the Sonoita Elgin School District.

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She said she "was first informed that it is a 24 hour turn around and was asked if [she] would like to pay for hard copies or sent scanned by email"; however, she "had to send a second email request and was then informed that 'per our legal counsel's advice', they are unable to send the records by email."

She wished to know whether she could get the records by email as she had first been told.

We contacted the Superintendent for the District. He explained that the records were ready, but she would have to come into the District's office to inspect them or pick up copies. He said the District maintained the records in paper form and not electronically. He said the District had informed the resident she could come in to inspect them or pick up copies, but she had not come.

The Superintendent led us to believe that the District usually required requesters to put requests in writing before the requesters would be given records. We advised the District that public records law does not allow it to require requesters to put their requests in writing. The Superintendent accepted this.

We contacted the resident and explained that nothing in public records law required the District to scan paper records and email them to her in order to fulfill her request. We also explained to her that we had told the District it could not require her to put requests in writing.

1603571. Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind

An employee of the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind (School) contacted our office and requested that we train the School's new Superintendent in open meeting law.

The employee explained that the Superintendent is deaf and has vision problems, so she is unable to participate effectively in large group discussions/trainings. As a result, the employee asked if we could conduct a one-on-one training for the Superintendent. Although we usually do not conduct trainings for individuals, we told the employee that we would accommodate the Superintendent and provide her with training when she was available.

We scheduled the training.

1604442. Odyssey Preparatory Academy

A parent contacted our office about a public records law matter concerning the Odyssey Preparatory Academy (school).

She said she made a request to the school for emails regarding her and/or her client. She said she used to work for the school. She said the school's attorney confirmed receipt of the request; however, she heard nothing more over the next month and a half despite sending the

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school a follow up email. She sent us a copy of her follow up email. She also sent us a copy of her original request.

For several days, we attempted to make contact with the school's administration, but we were unsuccessful. At the parent's suggestion, we contacted the school's attorney. The attorney said she was unfamiliar with any unfulfilled requests from the parent. We sent her a copy of the request and she said she would check on it.

A week later, we followed up with the attorney. She said that the school had "everything ready to go" and that an assistant of hers was working on the request. She said everything should be ready for the parent (and for us to see) by the end of the day. She admitted that the request had been inadvertently overlooked.

Later that day, the attorney's assistant sent the parent and our office various records that appeared to be responsive to the parent's request. The next day, the parent acknowledged receipt.

The parent seemed mostly satisfied; however, she sent the attorney and our office an additional question. She asked why the school said it had no emails responsive to her request for emails from her old email account from when she worked for the school. She seemed to think her account could be reactivated to retrieve the emails. The attorney responded that the parent's old email address had been deactivated, and the school has no way of retrieving emails from deactivated accounts. The attorney further asserted that there were no emails from the account that were required to have been retained until the present. There was no evidence to the contrary.

1604532. Department of Transportation

A resident contacted our office about a request for public records he had made to the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

He said that about a month after his request, he followed up with ADOT. He said ADOT told him that the records he requested had been gathered, and he would be receiving them soon. He said that from that point on, it was "delay after delay," and ADOT told him it was because the records required extensive redacting.

He said that at about two months after he had made his request, he received a small, heavily redacted portion of the records he requested. He said he believed ADOT was "improperly delaying production of all of the records." He did not believe the extensive redactions the agency made to the records he requested should have been made at all. He said he asked ADOT on what legal basis they were making the redactions. He said ADOT eventually told him it had made a request for legal advice to the Attorney General's office (AG).

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We contacted and left a message for ADOT's risk management office (RM). We asked what the status of the resident's request was and why the redactions were being made. An employee at RM contacted us and explained that the resident's request involved records concerning a civil rights report made against the resident. She said that, as a result, the AG directed ADOT to redact witness information in order to protect the witnesses. It seems that the agency decided that a privacy interest (that of the witnesses against the resident) outweighed the public's right to portions of the records. The RM employee claimed that it was very time-consuming to carefully review and redact the records. The RM employee said the resident then filed a notice of claim, which "opens up a different purpose." Apparently, because of the resident filing a notice of claim against the agency, the agency felt that it could now provide him the records he requested unredacted. The RM employee never made it clear why whether the resident filed a notice of claim had any bearing on its legal obligations under public records law.

From this point on, the agency began providing the resident with unredacted copies of all of the records. Whenever a problem arose in which the resident alleged that a record he requested had been overlooked or incompletely provided, an agency employee worked closely and quickly with the resident to correct the issue and provide him with the record. The agency eventually provided the resident with every record he requested.

At no point did the agency provide us with a sufficient explanation for its multiple-month delay in providing the complainant with the records he requested. As a result, we must conclude that the agency acted contrary to law by failing to promptly furnish the resident with the public records he requested.

The agency did, however, adjust its actions and promptly provide the requested records once we became involved in the matter.

1604567. Northern Apache County Special Health Care District

An employee (employee) of the Northern Apache County Special Healthcare District (District) contacted our office about trouble he said he was having in getting a public record from the District.

The employee sought copies of recordings of District governing board meetings. He said the District refused to provide him with copies and insisted that if he wished to listen to the recording, he would have to come in to a specific District office to listen to the original recording.

We contacted the District about the matter. Another District employee said the recordings were available for inspection. We explained to her that public records law gives the employee a right to be furnished with copies of public records or have access to records so he could make copies himself.

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The District's attorney then contacted us. She refused to concede that the records at issue constituted public records. She said the District created the recordings so the District could use the recordings as references for creating written minutes. She said the recordings were destroyed once the written minutes were created. The attorney seemed to think that public records law only requires a public body to make items such as the recordings available for inspection OR copying, but not both. She did not provide the legal basis for this conclusion.

We then spoke to an employee at the Arizona Library, Archives, and Public records. He provided us with a retention schedule for recordings of meetings used to create written minutes. He explained, "The approved retention is 3 months after date of meeting and after minutes transcribed or summarized and approved. So if the board meets these requirements they are okay to dispose of the recordings because the transcribed minutes become the official record."

We sent the Board's attorney the legal basis for why we thought the recordings at issue were public records and the District must provide copies to the employee or make the recordings available for the employee to make copies. The attorney countered that the recordings are not public records and are merely "other matters." She maintained that the right to copies of records applied only to public records and not to "other matters."

Because we strenuously disagreed with her legal opinion, we asked the attorney for the contact information for the District's governing board members so that we could provide the District with formal notice of investigation. The attorney said that the District wanted to do what was necessary to avoid a formal investigation. She said that although the District had destroyed the recordings at issue in accordance with the relevant retention schedule, it would provide the employee with copies of whatever recordings he wanted that the District still retained. Additionally, she said the District would no longer make recordings of meetings and would create only written minutes as required by open meeting law. We agreed to refrain from a formal investigation if the District followed through with its proposal because doing so would comply with open meeting and public records law.

We explained the outcome to the employee.

1604677. Phoenix Union High School District

A Goodyear resident contacted our office about a public records request he said he had made to the Phoenix Union High School District (District). He said it had been six months since he had requested a limited number of emails from the District, but the District had not provided the records.

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He said his wife submitted the requests on forms in person, but they did not retain copies. He said the District notified him by phone that it had received his request. He said that he had not received the records he requested.

We contacted the District. A District employee initially implied that the District had not received the request, but she said she would look into it.

The complainant provided us with what appeared to be a portion of his phone records, which he said showed that he had received a call from the District.

A week after we consulted the District employee, we followed up with her. She said a District paralegal had received and had been working on the resident's request. She said the District made the records available to the complainant soon after we had originally spoken with her. The employee did not dispute the period of time that the complainant alleged had passed since he made his request, nor did she provide an explanation for why it took as long as it did.

The resident confirmed that he received the records. He said he thought he only received the records because of our involvement and was very thankful.

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Our Cases - Numeric Results

Table 3 - Total Requests for Help January 1 – December 31, 2016			
Coaching	Assistance	Investigation	TOTAL CASES
3,243	1,725	287	5,255

INVESTIGATIONS

Table 4 - Investigations January 1 – December 31, 2016	
Discontinued	27
Declined*	30
Complaint withdrawn or resolved during investigation	14
Investigation completed	199
Ongoing	14
TOTAL REQUESTS FOR INVESTIGATION	284

* A.R.S. § 41-1377(C) gives the Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide the statutory authority to decline to investigate a complaint.

Table 5 - Investigative Findings – January 1 - December 31, 2016		
SUPPORTED/PARTIALLY SUPPORTED		73
Requires further consideration by agency	31	
Other action by agency required	41	
Referred to the legislature for further action	0	
Action was arbitrary or capricious	0	
Action was abuse of discretion	0	
Administrative act requires modification/cancellation	3	
Action was not according to law	20	
Reasons for administrative act required	3	
Statute or Rule requires amendment	0	
Insufficient or no grounds for administrative act	2	
INDETERMINATE		16
NOT SUPPORTED		110
TOTAL COMPLETED INVESTIGATIONS		199

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CONTACTS BY AGENCY

Between January 1 and December 31, 2016 our office handled cases involving 245 agencies. The following table shows the distribution of our contacts by agency. Cases involving the Department of Child Safety comprised 47.25% of our total for 2016.

Agency	Coaching	Assistance	Investigation	Total
Acupuncture, Board of Examiners of	0	1	0	1
Administrative Hearings, Office of	2	1	0	3
ADOA - Administration, Department of	12	6	4	22
Agriculture - Wt. and Measures	12	0	0	12
Agriculture, Department of	1	1	0	2
AHCCCS	46	79	5	130
Apache County	7	5	5	17
Apache County Attorney's Office	0	1	0	1
Apache County Board of Supervisors	2	0	2	4
Apache County Planning and Zoning Board	2	0	2	4
Arizona Power Authority	1	3	2	6
Arizona State Hospital	2	1	0	3
ASU - Police Department	0	2	0	2
ASU -Arizona State University	1	0	0	1
Attorney General, Office of	23	4	1	28
Auditor General	2	0	0	2
Avondale	0	1	0	1
Barbers, Arizona Board of	0	1	0	1
Behavioral Health Examiners, State Board of	5	3	2	10
Benson	1	0	2	3
Bisbee	0	1	0	1
Buckeye Police Department	0	2	0	2
Casa Grande	1	0	0	1
Casa Grande Union HS	0	0	2	2
Central Arizona Project	2	1	0	3
Chandler	1	0	0	1
Charter Schools, Arizona State Board of	3	0	0	3
Chino Valley	3	2	0	5
Chloride Water Improvement District	3	0	0	3
Choice Academies, Inc. Governing Board	1	0	0	1
Christopher-Kohls Fire District	0	1	0	1
Clarkdale	1	0	0	1
Cochise County	0	1	1	2

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Cochise County Attorney	0	1	0	1
Coconino County	0	1	0	1
Coconino County Sheriff's Office	0	1	0	1
Commerce Authority of Arizona	2	0	1	3
Commission of Judicial Conduct	3	0	0	3
Coolidge Unified School District	1	0	0	1
Corporation Commission	19	3	1	23
Corrections, Department of	37	6	2	45
Cosmetology, Board of	4	1	0	5
Cottonwood	0	1	0	1
Council of Developmental Disabilities	1	0	0	1
DCS - Community Advisory Committee	8	0	3	11
DCS - Department of Child Safety	1395	930	131	2456
DCS - Office of Licensing Regulation	5	4	2	11
DCS - Other	2	3	0	5
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Commission	3	1	1	5
Deaf and Blind, Arizona School for the	2	2	0	4
Dental Examiners, Board of	2	5	1	8
DES - Aging & Community Services	204	12	1	217
DES - Benefits and Medical Eligibility	55	167	5	227
DES - Child Support Service	20	69	5	94
DES - Developmental Disabilities	7	18	0	25
DES - Employment and Rehabilitation	22	37	2	61
DES - Other	36	16	2	54
DES- Adult Protective Services	9	6	1	16
Desert Marigold School	2	0	0	2
Developmental Disabilities Council	1	1	0	2
Dewey-Humboldt	1	1	0	2
DPS - Department of Public Safety	4	7	1	12
Education, Department of	5	2	1	8
Emergency & Military Affairs, Department of	0	1	0	1
Environmental Quality, Department of	3	3	1	7
Financial Institutions Department	6	2	1	9
Financial Institutions, Appraisal Division	2	1	1	4
Fingerprinting, Board of	2	0	0	2
Flagstaff	1	2	0	3
Flagstaff City Attorney's Office	2	0	0	2
Flagstaff Police Department	0	1	0	1
Florence	1	2	0	3
Forestry & Fire Mgmt.(formerly Dept. FBLS)	4	0	0	4

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Fountain Hills	0	1	0	1
Funeral Directors & Embalmers, State Board	18	7	1	26
Game and Fish, Department of	1	0	2	3
Gaming Dept., Boxing Dept.	1	0	0	1
Gaming, Dept.	1	0	0	1
Gila County Sheriff's Office	0	1	0	1
Gilbert Public Schools	1	2	2	5
Glendale	1	1	0	2
Glendale Police Department	0	2	0	2
Governor, Office of	2	1	0	3
Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family	0	2	0	2
Governor's Council of Aging	3	0	0	3
Graham County	0	1	0	1
Green Valley Water District	1	1	0	2
Health Services, Department of	32	6	3	41
Health Services, Vital Records Office	3	5	0	8
Historical Society, Arizona	1	1	0	2
Homeland Security, Department of	2	0	0	2
Housing, Department of	15	0	0	15
Huachuca City Council	1	0	0	1
Industrial Commission	33	6	2	41
Insurance, Department of	17	6	0	23
Judicial Conduct, Commission on	2	0	0	2
Kingman	0	1	0	1
Kyrene Unified School District	0	1	0	1
La Paz	1	0	0	1
Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization	2	0	0	2
Lake Havasu Unified School District EBT	0	0	1	1
Land, Department of	1	1	1	3
Legislature	16	2	1	19
Liquor Licenses and Control, Department of	2	3	0	5
Littlefield Unified School District	2	0	0	2
Lottery	4	1	0	5
Mammoth	0	0	1	1
Mammoth Water District	0	1	0	1
Marana	1	0	0	1
Marana Drainage and Water Improvement District	9	2	0	11
Maricopa	2	2	1	5
Maricopa County Assessor	1	0	0	1

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Maricopa County Attorney	1	0	0	1
Maricopa County Community Colleges	1	1	0	2
Maricopa County Department of Public Health	1	0	0	1
Maricopa County Environmental Services Department	1	0	0	1
Maricopa County Sheriff	1	0	0	1
Maricopa County Superior Court	1	0	0	1
Massage Therapy, State Board of	1	1	0	2
Mayer Fire District	1	0	0	1
Mayer Water District	0	1	1	2
Medical Board, Arizona	17	10	4	31
Mesa	1	0	0	1
Mescal J-6 Fire District	5	1	3	9
Murphy School District	1	1	0	2
Navajo	0	0	1	1
Northern Apache County Special Health Care District	1	0	1	2
Nursing, State Board of	9	9	2	20
Nutrioso Fire District	15	6	2	23
Occupational Therapy Examiners, Board of	0	1	0	1
Odyssey Preparatory Academy	0	0	1	1
Ombudsman	80	20	2	102
Optometry, State Board of	1	0	0	1
Oro Valley	0	1	0	1
Osborn School District	0	1	0	1
Osteopathic Examiners in Medicine and Surgery, Board of	2	0	0	2
Other - Arizona in general	33	3	0	36
Other - Federal	52	2	1	55
Other - Government	264	7	8	279
Other - Private	314	13	5	332
Palominas Elementary School District	1	0	0	1
Paradise Valley School District	4	0	0	4
Parks, Department of	0	1	1	2
Pendergast Elementary School District	0	1	0	1
Peoria	2	2	0	4
Pharmacy, Board	3	0	1	4
Phoenix	6	3	1	10
Phoenix Fire Department	1	1	0	2
Phoenix Police Department	5	3	0	8

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Phoenix Union	1	1	0	2
Physical Therapy Examiners, Board of	1	0	0	1
Pima	0	1	1	2
Pima Association of Governments	1	0	0	1
Pima Community College	2	1	0	3
Pima County Attorney's Office	0	0	1	1
Pima County Sheriff's office	2	0	0	2
Pinal	2	1	0	3
Pinedale Water District	0	1	0	1
Pinetop-Lakeside	0	1	0	1
Pioneers Home	1	0	1	2
Pomerene Elem. School Dist.	0	1	0	1
Prescott	2	1	1	4
Prescott City Council	1	0	0	1
Prescott Valley	3	0	0	3
PRIVATE Post-Secondary Education Board	3	5	0	8
Psychologist Examiners, State Board of	1	0	1	2
Public Safety Personnel Retirement System	2	0	0	2
Quartzsite	2	1	0	3
Quartzsite Police Department	1	0	0	1
Real Estate Dept. - HOAs	0	0	1	1
Real Estate, Department of	8	6	3	17
Red Rock Road Enhancement District	3	1	0	4
Registrar of Contractors	14	14	5	33
Respiratory Care Examiners, Board of	0	0	1	1
Retirement System, Arizona State	4	11	0	15
Revenue, Department of	18	21	3	42
Rio Rico Fire District	0	1	0	1
Safford	1	1	0	2
Safford City-Graham County Library Advisory Board	1	0	0	1
Safford Police Department	0	0	1	1
Sahuarita Unified School District	1	0	0	1
San Luis	0	1	1	2
Santa Cruz	0	1	0	1
Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office	0	1	0	1
School Facilities Board	1	0	0	1
Scottsdale	1	0	0	1
Scottsdale Police Department	2	0	0	2
Scottsdale Unified School District	0	0	1	1
Sec. of State -Library, Archive & Records Dept.	3	5	0	8

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Secretary of State, Office of	4	3	2	9
Sedona	0	0	1	1
Sedona - Oak Creek Airport Authority	2	2	0	4
Show Low Police Department	1	0	0	1
Sierra Vista	0	1	0	1
Sierra Vista City Council	1	0	0	1
Sonoita Elementary School District	1	1	2	4
Springerville	1	0	0	1
SRP -Salt River Project	1	0	0	1
Sun Lakes Fire District	0	1	0	1
Sunburst Farms Irrigation District	2	0	0	2
Superior Court	9	2	1	12
Surprise	1	0	0	1
Surprise Police Department	1	0	0	1
Tanque Verde School District	1	0	1	2
Technical Registration, Board of	5	0	3	8
Tempe	0	1	0	1
Tempe Municipal Court	0	1	0	1
Tempe Police Department	1	0	0	1
Three Points Fire District	0	1	0	1
Timber Mesa Fire and Medical District	0	1	0	1
Tombstone	0	1	0	1
Transportation, Department of	15	5	4	24
Transportation-Motor Vehicle Division	14	36	4	54
Tubac Fire District	1	0	0	1
Tucson Police Department	0	1	0	1
Tucson Unified School District	1	0	0	1
U of A - University of Arizona	1	1	1	3
unknown	4	0	0	4
unknown charter school	6	0	0	6
unknown city	4	1	0	5
Unknown Community College	1	0	0	1
unknown fire district	4	1	0	5
Unknown Hospital District	1	0	0	1
unknown local jurisdiction	2	0	0	2
unknown school district	8	3	0	11
Unknown state agency	46	2	0	48
Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education	0	1	0	1
Vernon Fire District	1	0	0	1
Veterans' Services, Department of	5	2	0	7

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Veterinary Medical Examining Board	0	1	0	1
Washington Elementary School District	1	0	0	1
Water Resources, Department of	1	1	0	2
Wenden Domestic Water Improvement District	1	0	0	1
Western Meadows Irrigation District	0	1	0	1
Whetstone Water Improvement District	0	0	1	1
White Mountain Lake Fire District	0	1	0	1
Williams Hospital District	1	0	0	1
Winslow Unified School District	2	0	1	3
Yavapai County	1	1	0	2
Yavapai County Sheriff's Office	0	0	1	1
Yucca Fire District	0	1	0	1
Yuma City	0	3	2	5
Yuma County	2	0	0	2
Yuma Industrial Development Authority	1	1	0	2
TOTAL NUMBER OF CONTACTS	3243	1725	287	5255

Reflecting cases received January 1 through December 31, 2016

About the Ombudsman and Staff

Dennis Wells - Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide.

Dennis became the Ombudsman Citizens Aide on July 2, 2012 following confirmation by the Legislature and Governor in 2012 and was re-appointed for a second five-year term during the legislative session of 2017. Dennis holds a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Northern Arizona University and a Bachelor of Science in Geology. His educational background also includes a fellowship at Harvard regarding studies in State and Local Government. He has ombudsman training prescribed by the U.S. Ombudsman Association (USOA) and is an investigator certified by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement & Regulation (CLEAR). In the public sector, Dennis was an elected supervisor and chair of the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, State Land Commissioner for Arizona, a member of the Arizona State Parks Board and served as City Manager for Williams, Arizona. Dennis' public service also includes serving on the Board of Directors, Foundation for Flagstaff Medical Center and as a board member of the Arizona City and County Managers Association. In the private sector, Dennis began his career working in the family business, The Williams Grand Canyon News, which was continuously published by the Wells' family for 100 years. Following graduation from NAU, Dennis worked for firms in oil exploration and drilling in Texas, Louisiana and overseas (Africa and Middle East). Dennis has experience in public management, intergovernmental relations, public planning and dispute resolution.

Joanne MacDonnell - Deputy Ombudsman.

Joanne joined the office as Deputy Ombudsman in 2005 after serving nearly eight years as the Arizona Corporation Commission, Director of Corporations. Prior to working in government, Joanne worked in the private sector at FCC Investors, Inc. serving on the Board of Directors and as an accountant. She also worked in real estate as a licensed Realtor associate and real estate appraiser. Joanne has Bachelor of Science degrees in Business Administration and Real Estate from the University of Arizona, is an investigator certified by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement & Regulation (CLEAR) and completed mediation training through South Mountain Community College. She has additional training including the Executive Course, Project & Investment Justification Training, the Leadership Module through Rio Salado College and Arizona Government University; and ombudsman training prescribed by the U.S. Ombudsman Association (USOA). She is active in the U.S. Ombudsman Association, having served multiple years as a Board Director/Officer and as a Conference Committee and Outreach Committee Member. She is Chairman of the USOA Children and Family Chapter. She was a member of the Association for Conflict Resolution, qualified in the "Practitioner" category. She is a member of the DCS Citizen Review Panel Committee, the Arizona Court Improvement Committee and the Court Parent Representation Committee. She has served as a judge for the Central Arizona BBB Business Ethics Award for the past six years.

Danee Garone – Staff Attorney.

Danee is a staff attorney for the Ombudsman's office and specializes in open meeting and public records law matters. He joined the Ombudsman's office in 2014. Prior to joining the Ombudsman's office, Danee completed a legal internship with the Arizona House of Representatives. Additionally, he completed a legal externship with the United States District Court for the District of Arizona and interned for the United States Small Business Administration.

Danee has a Juris Doctor degree from the Sandra Day O'Connor School of Law at Arizona State University and is a licensed attorney. Additionally, he graduated from Arizona State University summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism and a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science.

Philip Gough-Stone – Intern and Assistant Ombudsman

Philip Gough-Stone joined the office as an intern in June of 2016. He is studying Business Management, and Pre-Law at Grand Canyon University; he plans to attend law school after receiving his bachelor's degree. Philip is a certified mediator and an active student. Aside from his studies, Philip has extensive experience in the customer service and nonprofit industries. He currently works with the Arizona Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide office as an Assistant Ombudsman.

Aimee (Hamilton) Kearns – Assistant Ombudsman.

Aimee joined the Ombudsman office in 2014. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 2000 from Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. Before joining the Ombudsman office, Aimee worked for in Vancouver, Washington as a case manager for homeless individuals and families in transitional housing. Prior to that, she worked for the Jobs Program with MAXIMUS in the Phoenix area assisting families who received state cash assistance. She also has extensive experience in customer service in the non-profit, financial and mortgage industries. She has completed New Ombudsman training prescribed by the United States Ombudsman Association (USOA) and is an investigator certified by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement & Regulation (CLEAR). She has clearance for investigatory purposes into the Department of Child Safety Children's Information Library & Data Source (CHILDS) Program after completing training with the Child Welfare Training Institution and Department of Economic Security.

Liz Hill – Former Interim Staff Attorney.

Liz returned to the Ombudsman Office in 2016 as an interim staff attorney for five months. Liz served as Arizona's first Assistant Ombudsman for Public Access for the Office of the Arizona Ombudsman – Citizens' Aide from 2007 to 2011. In 2011, she left the Office of the Arizona Ombudsman – Citizens' Aide to serve as an organizational ombudsman for Apollo Education Group. Liz returned to academic ombudsman work in May of 2016. Liz graduated

from Gonzaga University School of Law in 2001 and is an Arizona licensed Attorney. Before becoming an ombudsman, she served as Tax Counsel for the Arizona Department of Revenue and as an Arizona Assistant Attorney General litigating tax cases. She completed ombudsman training through both the United States Ombudsman Association and the International Ombudsman Association. She has over one hundred hours of formal mediation training and obtained investigator certification from Council of Licensure, Enforcement & Regulation (CLEAR).

Keith Meyer – Senior Investigator/Writer Ombudsman.

Keith joined the Office of the Ombudsman in 2014. He has 20 years of public experience in Arizona State and County governments. He served in the Arizona Department of Corrections Director's Office, the Arizona Department of Agriculture, the Arizona Land Department, and Arizona State University. In Maricopa county government, he worked at the County Attorney's Office coordinating restitution issues with citizen victims of crime. Other service includes volunteering on several homeowner association boards. He has ombudsman training prescribed by the U.S. Ombudsman Association (USOA) and is an investigator certified by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement & Regulation (CLEAR). Keith earned a Master's degree in Public Administration and a Bachelor of Science degree in Agribusiness, with a minor in Sociology, from Arizona State University.

Jennifer Olonan - Assistant Ombudsman.

Jennifer began working for the Ombudsman office in 2014. She has completed ombudsman training prescribed by the United States Ombudsman Association (USOA). She previously worked in the medical field as a team lead and manager, where she obtained extensive clinical experience. She has received a Bachelor's of Science degree in Health Science (Healthcare Policy) from Arizona State University. She has a Master's of Public Administration with an Emphasis in Government and Policy, from Grand Canyon University. She has completed training with the Child Welfare Training Institution and Department of Economic Security to obtain clearance for the Children's Information Library & Data Source (CHILDS). Jennifer is proficient in American Sign Language.

A.J. Oviedo - Former Legislative Intern.

A.J. joined the Ombudsman team in January 2016 as an intern in January. He worked with us through July 2016. A.J. attends ASU. He is majoring in business with a concentration in law. He worked in the Volunteer Youth Services for the Maricopa County Library District and was a teacher assistant at ASU Preparatory Academy. He hopes to attend law school in the future.

Frank Rutledge – Investigator/Writer Ombudsman.

Frank joined the Ombudsman team in June 2016 after working almost nine years with the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). During his time at DES, Frank worked in the Rehabilitation Services Administration, the DES Office of Procurement, and most recently with the Division of Developmental Disabilities. Frank brings a wealth of knowledge including contracting, procurement, and DES services to the team. Frank has completed the New Ombudsman Training prescribed by the United States Ombudsman Association (USOA), and is certified in Arizona State Public Procurement. Frank has resided in Arizona for almost 35 years, and is a graduate of Northern Arizona University's School of Communication, with an emphasis in Journalism.

Carmen Salas - Assistant Ombudsman.

Carmen joined the Ombudsman's office in 2005. She previously worked at the Arizona Corporation Commission for nine years as a management analyst and supervisor. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from the University of Phoenix. She has completed additional training including ethics and various risk management courses through Arizona Government University. She has completed the Leadership Module through AZGU, is an investigator certified by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement & Regulation (CLEAR), has ombudsman training prescribed by the U.S. Ombudsman Association (USOA) and has completed mediation training. She has also completed training with the Child Welfare Training Institution and Department of Economic Security to obtain clearance for the Children's Information Library & Data Source (CHILDS). Carmen is fluent in Spanish.