

Comparison Chart for Office of Child Advocate/Ombudsmen

	Washington	Connecticut	Colorado	Maine	Proposed Vermont Office
Jurisdiction/ Location within Government	The Ombudsman is established within the Office of the Governor, reports directly to the Governor and acts independently from the Department of Social and Health Services.	The Child Advocate shall act independently of any state department. The Office of the Child Advocate is located within the Office of Governmental Accountability.	In the State Department, administered by contract with a public agency or private nonprofit. Must act independently of Divisions responsible for child welfare, youth corrections, or child care, and independently of the county departments.	The Ombudsman is established as an independent program within in the Executive Branch, and contracted to a non-profit organization for operation to oversee the Office of Child and Family Services.	Office of Child Protection Advocate is created in the Agency of Administration
Appointment	The Ombudsman is appointed by the Governor, with confirmation by the Senate, for a term of three years.	The Child Advocate is appointed by the Governor with Approval by the General Assembly to serve a four-year term and may be reappointed.	Contract awarded by State Department's Executive Director. The current contract is with the National Association of Counsel for Children.	Contract to a nonprofit by the Governor. Current contract is with a nonprofit set up to specifically do this work,.. The Ombudsman may not be actively involved in state politics (campaigning and contributions).	The Advocate is appointed by the Governor, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, and for a term of four years
Duties & Powers	The Ombudsman educates the public; receives and investigates complaints; monitors child welfare procedures; reports annually; Has access to confidential information; maintains confidentiality; makes child fatality review recommendations.	The Child Advocate receives and investigates complaints; periodically reviews institutions; recommends policy changes; provides training to attorneys and guardians ad litem; has access to confidential information; issues subpoenas; maintains confidentiality; maintains a child fatality review panel; represents a child in court; produces annual and public reports.	The Child Protection Ombudsman receives and investigates complaints; maintains confidentiality; has access to confidential information; does not have the ability to subpoena; makes recommendations; reports annually; educates the public.	The Ombudsman receives and investigates complaints; provides public outreach; has access to persons, files, and records, does not have the power to subpoena; maintains confidentiality; provides annual and public reports, reports to Legislature annually with recommendations.	The advocate shall investigate and resolve complaints, analyze and monitor laws and make recommendations, provide information to the public, promote citizen organizations in the office's work, train others to advocate, develop reporting system, and submit to Legislature and Governor a report. The advocate may: hire staff, review records, pursue remedies, delegate his/her authority, adopt rules, policies, procedures to carry out purpose, and take any other action to fulfill purpose.
Number of Complaints	Families and citizens contacted OFCO 1,349 times in 2014: over 47 percent were inquiries made by people seeking information, nearly 53 percent were formal complaints seeking an investigation by an Ombuds	In 2014, Office received hundreds of calls but reviewed 400 child cases, a little less than 20% resulted in open cases. At any given moment, there are 100 active open cases across all services.	Received 405 contacts from July 1 2013 – June 30, 2014. The Ombudsman Office, in FY13-14, resolved an average 35 contacts per month:53% were classified as an inquiry, 47% were classified as reviews, and less than 0.5% were classified as investigations.	in FY 2014 519 inquiries made, 109 cases were opened for review, 323 cases were given information or referred, and 87 cases were unassigned.	N/A
Staff	7 FTE	6 FTE	As of September 1, 2014 they have 4 FTE	1 staff, 2 consultants	bill establishes the one advocate and allows him/her to hire or contract with persons to fulfill the purposes of the chapter
Budget	(unable to locate)	\$602,294 2013/2014FY (mostly salary) control over own budget	FY 13-14 \$370,00, received increase of \$136,00 for FY 14-15	\$127,000 FY14-15	estimated to be between \$250,00 and \$500,000

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Prepared by Beth Nolan, Policy Associate, Voices for Vermont's Children
sbnolan@voicesforvtkids.org 802.229.6377

Sources:

Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate website: <http://www.ct.gov/oca/site/default.asp>

Interview with Mickey Kramer, Associate Child Advocate for Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate (Feb 6, 2015).

Interview with Christine E. Alberi, Child Welfare Ombudsmen for Maine (Feb 6, 2015).

National Conference of State Legislatures website: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/childrens-ombudsman-offices.aspx>

Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsmen's 2013-2014 Annual Report: <http://www.protectcoloradochildren.org/sites/default/files/2013-2014-FY-Ombudsman-Annual-Report.pdf>

Vermont Senate bill 9 As Introduced: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2016/S.9>

Washington Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds 2014 Annual Report:

<http://ofco.wa.gov/documents/OFCO-2014-Annual-Report.pdf>