

## **NAVY FAMILY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program is designed to provide better and faster communication between Navy families and Navy officials.

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## **Ombudsman Program**

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program promotes healthy, self-reliant families. Why the word "Ombudsman"? The word "Ombudsman" originated in Scandinavian countries and referred to safeguarding the rights of citizens. Today the concept of the Ombudsman is widely utilized in the fields of government, business, and healthcare.

Navy commands and all deploying units, including reserves have an Ombudsman. Ombudsmen are a liaison that act as an information link between Commanding Officers and families. Ombudsmen reach out to individual families with information, problem solving and a helping hand. An Ombudsman is not a mediator and does not get involved in chain-of-command matters. Your Command Ombudsman has received extensive training and can direct you in your course of action during an emergency, crisis or disaster.

## **Ombudsman Roles**

The Ombudsman is a volunteer, appointed by the Commanding Officer, to serve as an information link between command leadership and Navy families. Ombudsmen are trained to disseminate information both up and down the chain of command, including official Department of the Navy and command information, command climate issues, local quality of life (QOL) improvement opportunities and "good deals" around the community.

Ombudsmen also provide resource referrals when needed, which can be instrumental in resolving family issues before those issues require extensive command attention.

The Command Ombudsman Program is shaped largely by the Commanding Officer's perceived needs of the command. The Command Ombudsman is appointed by, and works under the guidance of the Commanding Officer who determines the priorities of the program, the roles and relationships of those involved in it, and the type and level of support it will receive.

## **Ombudsman Code of Ethics**

The Ombudsman Code of Ethics is the essential foundation upon which an Ombudsman's credibility is established and maintained. Ombudsmen must remain committed to strict adherence to the code.