

# PUBLIC ACCESS OMBUDSMAN MEDIATION PROCESS QUICK GUIDE



## Request Dispute Resolution

- Must be made in writing by mail, website form, e-mail, or fax to the Public Access Ombudsman.
- Must include original PIA request, any response(s) from custodian, a brief description of the dispute, and what outcome is being sought through mediation.

## File Opened

- Dispute resolution request generally processed within 10 business days.
- 90-day deadline to complete mediation begins.
- Other party notified, consent to enter mediation requested. If consent is not received, file is closed and Final Determination issued.

## Initial Discussion Between Initiating Party & Ombudsman (0-30 Days)

- Review of information submitted for mediation assistance.
- Discuss next-steps, set expectations for process.

## Ombudsman Outreach to Other Party (30-60 Days)

- Discuss PIA request, custodian response(s), dispute, and desired outcomes.
- Identify next-steps.

## Review Status of Mediation (60 Days)

- Follow-up on any outstanding action items.
- If an extension is necessary, parties and Ombudsman must agree to it in writing.

## Final Determination Issued (90<sup>th</sup> Day)

- Matter will either be resolved, unresolved, or partially resolved.
- A brief description of the outcome should be included where necessary.
- Final Determination must be submitted with any complaint to PIA Compliance Board within 30 days of its receipt.

*The processing times outlined here serve as benchmarks for both the Ombudsman and program users to set expectations. The speed with which a mediation can be conducted depends on a number of factors, including the nature/complexity of the PIA dispute, the responsiveness of the parties, and the number of requests pending in the Ombudsman's queue, as examples.*