

**RULES FOR THE  
NORTH AMERICAN REGION OF THE IOI**

**Whereas** in Canada and the United States of America, a number of Ombudsman institutions have been created at the national, provincial, state, territorial and local or city level to investigate complaints of unfair treatment by government organizations and officials.

**And whereas** these Ombudsman undertake their duties according to legislative powers of a similar kind.

**And whereas** in 1996 the world-wide body of Ombudsman, the International Ombudsman Institute (the Institute) through its By-laws has formally established the North American Region of the Institute (the Region).

Now therefore this document records the rules for the operation of the Region and the election of three Directors including a Regional President of the Institute, as adopted by the Ombudsman of the Region.

1. The members of the Region shall be those Ombudsmen of the Region who have been admitted to membership of the Institute. Only Voting members in good standing shall have voting rights. Only Voting members in good standing may be elected as Directors.
2. The organization of the Region's affairs shall be the responsibility of the Directors of the Institute elected to represent the Region from time to time. The Directors shall by agreement among them determine their own procedures. The Director elected as the Regional President under clause six (6) shall act as Chairperson of the Directors.
3. The Regional President shall act as Chairperson of meetings of members of the Region dealing with Institute matters.
  - a. The Regional President shall include the activities of the Region in the Annual Report of the IOI
4. The Directors may determine what regional initiatives should be undertaken subject to their first ascertaining the views of the members of the Region by such means as the Directors consider to be most appropriate in the circumstances.
5. The Directors shall arrange an annual meeting of members of the Region. When an Institute Conference is held, the regional meeting of members shall be held as part of the Institute Conference.
6. The Voting members shall at each regional meeting held as part of an Institute Conference elect the Directors and the Regional President to which the Region is entitled by virtue of the By-laws of the Institute. The method of election shall be on the basis of one member one vote. Where the Voting member is an Office of the Ombudsman, there shall be only one vote by that office. Any Voting member whose annual fees are in arrears shall be ineligible to vote.

7. The following arrangements shall apply to the election of the Regional Directors and the Regional President:

a. Not later than 1 month before the opening of the Institute Conference, those Voting members seeking to put their names forward for election will be sought by the Returning Officer who shall be the Regional President, or if the Regional President is seeking reelection as Regional Director, by a Regional Director not seeking reelection. If the Regional President is unable to act as Returning Officer, the Returning Officer shall be a Regional Director not seeking reelection. If all Regional Directors are seeking reelection, a Voting member not seeking election shall be selected by the Regional Directors to act as Returning Officer.

b. The Returning Officer will set out a deadline of at least two weeks prior to the opening of the Institute Conference for candidate names to be put forward by e-mail to the Returning Officer.

c. If the number of candidate names put forward is greater than three, the Returning Officer shall arrange for an election at the regional meeting held as part of the Institute Conference. The election shall be chaired and supervised by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer will send the candidates names to all the Voting members who are eligible to vote at least one week prior to the opening of the Institute Conference.

d. Voting members, who will not be in attendance at the regional meeting at the Institute Conference, may vote for up to three candidates in advance by email directed to the Returning Officer. Advance votes must be received before the opening of the Institute Conference.

e. There shall be no provision for Voting by proxy.

f. Each Voting member present at the regional meeting may vote for up to three candidates. The Returning Officer will tabulate the votes received in advance and at the meeting. The three candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be declared elected. In the event that candidates are tied, a further vote by those Voting members in attendance will be held to determine which of the tied candidates will be elected.

g. Following the election of the three Directors, there shall be a further vote by the Voting members in attendance to elect the Regional President from among the Directors.

h. Any vacancies arising between regional meetings caused by the death, resignation, or retirement of a Director shall be filled at the next regional meeting which shall be held no more than 90 days after a vacancy is identified. The term of a director elected under this sub-paragraph shall not exceed the term of the other Directors.

8. A Director shall resign his/her office as a Director on vacating office as an Ombudsman.

9. The Directors may make such rules as are necessary to ensure the smooth functioning and operation of the Region as are not inconsistent with any of the preceding rules or any By-laws of the Institute.

10. The members may by a majority vote, in writing, alter, amend or add to these rules at any time and from time to time.