

# WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE JOB DESCRIPTION

**DATE:** June 3, 2024

**JOB TITLE:** Ombuds, WashU School of Medicine

**FLSA:** Exempt

**DEPARTMENT:** Office of Faculty Promotions & Career Development

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**POSITION SUMMARY:** The Washington University School of Medicine (WUSM) Ombuds Office is a resource for all medical school faculty, students (MD, DBBS, PT, OT, PACS, Genetic Counseling, Medical Physics and Masters or PhD programs), residents, fellows, and postdocs. The Ombuds offer assistance in the informal resolution of work-related conflicts, advocate for fair treatment and processes, and operate on the key principles of confidentiality, independence, impartiality/neutrality, and informality. Visitors to the Ombuds office can voice concerns, ask about available options, learn about relevant policies and procedures, and consider ways to solve problems. The Ombuds do not directly solve problems or act as a formal mediator. The Ombuds are empowered to provide informal assistance only. Formal actions are the purview of other offices. The Ombuds must have demonstrated evidence of a commitment to the advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion in academic medicine/biomedical science.

## **PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Be available to schedule and hold meetings with WashU Medicine faculty, students, residents, fellows, and postdocs (“visitors” to the Office). Meetings may be conducted in person, with Zoom, or by telephone.
- Publicize the confidential, independent, neutral, and informal nature of the Office’s services through a website, promotional materials, and presentations and explain the key principles of the Office (confidentiality, independence, impartiality/neutrality, and informality) to each visitor to the Office.
- Provide visitors a neutral, safe, and confidential environment to talk about concerns related to their roles at WashU.
- Listen with objectivity and discuss questions, concerns, and complaints.
- Explain University and School policies and procedures.
- Help visitors to evaluate and select from their options.
- Coach individuals to resolve problems on their own.
- Provide information about campus or community resources and refer to appropriate individuals or offices.
- Monitor matters arising that may require the review of policies, procedures and/or structures. Provide feedback to the WashU Medicine administration when trends, patterns, policies, or procedures of the School or University generate concerns or conflicts; make recommendation to administration as needed to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all.
- Provide an annual summary to the WashU Medicine administration of visit numbers and the general nature of issues brought to the Ombuds. Confidentiality of visitors must be maintained; no information that might lead to identification of any individual, unit, or department will be included in this annual summary.
- Adhere to professional standards of practice established by the International Ombudsman Association (IOA).
- Engage in ongoing training through the IOA or equivalent sources and as needed to ensure excellence in role.

**MINIMUM EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE:** The Ombuds must hold a faculty position at the Washington

University School of Medicine, at the Associate or Full Professor level (any academic track). A minimum of a Master's degree is required; PhD or MD preferred. Demonstrated experience in conflict resolution and/or negotiation, and experience coaching learners and faculty in the health professions, medicine and/or biomedical science, with the ability to effectively collaborate with a range of internal and external partners.

**PREFERRED SKILLS/EXPERTISE: Up-to-date knowledge of theory and promising practices for ombuds in healthcare settings.** Advanced verbal, written, interpersonal communication and analytical skills. Expertise in coaching across differences in academic medicine/biomedical science. Ability to communicate complex ideas clearly and to navigate difficult conversations while maintaining confidentiality and impartiality, particularly in academic medicine or healthcare settings.

**SUPERVISION EXERCISED:**

N/A.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED:**

The Ombuds Office runs independently. The budget for the Ombuds Offices is handled by the Office of Faculty Promotions & Career Development. Communication with School of Medicine leadership is through the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Promotions & Career Development.

**EFFORT SUPPORT:**

0.3 FTE; appointment will be for a 3-year term, with the option to renew.

**TO APPLY:**

Submit a CV and cover letter outlining interest, relevant experience and qualifications for the position to:

Renée A. Shellhaas, MD, MS  
Senior Associate Dean, Office of Faculty Promotions & Career Development  
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis  
660 South Euclid Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63110  
rshellhaas@wustl.edu

**Application deadline:** 5pm central time, August 29, 2024.