

**From:** [Dowd, Patrick \(GOV\)](#)  
**To:** [OFM Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Contingency Planning  
**Date:** Thursday, May 04, 2017 11:14:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [OFCO Contingency Planning July 1, 2017.pdf](#)

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Attached is OFCO's Contingency Planning Memo for July 1, 2017. Minor changes have been made but the core substance of this memo is the same as the information submitted in 2013. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

*Patrick*

Patrick Dowd, JD  
Director Ombuds  
Washington State Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds  
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206-439-3870



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**OFFICE OF THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S OMBUDS**

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May 4, 2017

**To:** David Schumacher, Director  
Office of Financial Management

**From:** Patrick Dowd, Director Ombuds

**RE: CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR STATE AGENCY OPERATIONS ON JULY 1**

The Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds (OFCO) investigates complaints about agency actions or inaction that involve: Any child at risk of abuse, neglect, or other harm; or A child or parent involved with child protection or child welfare services. OFCO intervenes in cases in which an agency's action or inaction is unauthorized, unreasonable or endangers the health or safety of a child. OFCO's duties and responsibilities are set forth in RCW 43.06A, and are not mandated by the constitution or by federal law. The Director Ombuds is appointed by the Governor for a term. OFCO staff are non-union employees.

Described below are services provided by OFCO which are necessary for the immediate response to issues of public safety (**Category 4**).

**Responding to Emergent Child Safety Complaints**-OFCO screens all complaints and critical incident reports received and determine whether the circumstances described pose an immediate and substantial risk to a child's health, safety or welfare. Complaints or reports meeting these criteria are investigated on an emergent basis. The Ombudsman intervenes in emergent complaints to assure that the state child welfare agency takes appropriate action to protect the child or children's immediate safety and welfare. In 2016, OFCO investigated 70 emergent complaints. The vast majority of children identified in complaints to the Ombudsman are seven years of age or younger and are often in the care and custody of the state.

**Minimum Staff Necessary to Respond to Emergent Complaints-**  
1 FTE Director Ombuds (or Ombudsman designated by the Director)  
1 FTE Office Database Administrator

**OFCO Contact Person-**  
Patrick Dowd, Director Ombuds  
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