

University of Oregon Ombuds Program

FY22 ANNUAL REPORT



Prepared by
Brett Harris, University Ombuds
Sara Ash, Assistant Ombuds

1685 E 17th Ave.
Eugene, OR 97403
www.ombuds.uoregon.edu

ABOUT THE OMBUDS PROGRAM

The Ombuds Program (OP) provides comprehensive conflict resolution services for individuals and groups. Additionally, the OP provides upward feedback for systemic concern resolution.

The OP offers a distinct service in that it is the only campus resource providing confidential, independent, impartial, and informal services for students and employees.

The OP adheres to the International Ombuds Association (IOA) standards of practice, code of ethics, and best practices. The OP also upholds and promotes the vision, mission, and core values of the University of Oregon.



FY22 OMBUDS STAFF

Brett Hathaway Harris has served as the university ombuds since 2016. Brett holds a J.D. and has a background in law, mediation, and HR work, and is an active member of the International Ombuds Association (IOA). Brett recently held two consecutive elected terms as the co-chair for the IOA's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee.



Sara Ash joined the University of Oregon as assistant ombuds in 2021. Sara has over seven years of director-level experience in student affairs. She holds a M.A. in Adult and Higher Education and is pursuing an EdD in Organizational Change and Leadership from the University of Southern California. Sara has completed training in mediation and ombuds work through the IOA.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The OP serves all university students, faculty, and staff. Services are free and confidential.* Many visitors to the ombuds program seek single-party services such as conflict coaching or guidance on university policies and processes. When appropriate, multi-party dispute resolution processes are offered to help resolve conflicts/concerns.

01

INTAKE

When visitors reach out to the OP, staff conducts a brief intake which serves to designate the appropriate ombuds for the case and prepare the ombuds to provide services.

CONSULTATION

02

During appointments, ombuds explain services and visitors share information about their university-related concern. Ombuds then begin the process of identifying options for handling the concern and providing single-party services which may include:

- *guidance on policies and processes*
- *information about and/or referral to other campus resources*
- *communication and conflict coaching*
- *management/supervisory coaching*
- *recommending dispute resolution options*
- *strategizing and preparing for next steps*

03

VISITOR ACTION STEPS

After an action plan is developed, visitors take steps to resolve their concern. When appropriate, other participants are invited into the resolution process for mediation or other multi-party processes. Multi-party services that may be implemented include:

- *mediation*
- *group facilitation*
- *shuttle diplomacy*
- *conflict diagnosis/analysis*
- *informal climate assessment*
- *other group conflict resolution processes including restorative justice processes*

The ombuds program aims to empower visitors to take steps toward resolution but does not force any steps or outcome.

EVALUATION

04

Visitors are welcome to revisit the OP for further consultation and advice as they proceed with steps to resolve their concern and/or work with the OP through multi-party dispute resolution processes.

*Exceptions to confidentiality exist for situations wherein there is an imminent risk of serious harm or where otherwise required by law or policy

FY22 BASIC CASE DATA

CASES

349

In FY22, the OP handled **349 total cases** consisting of 763 separate concerns/ issues.

CONCERNS

763

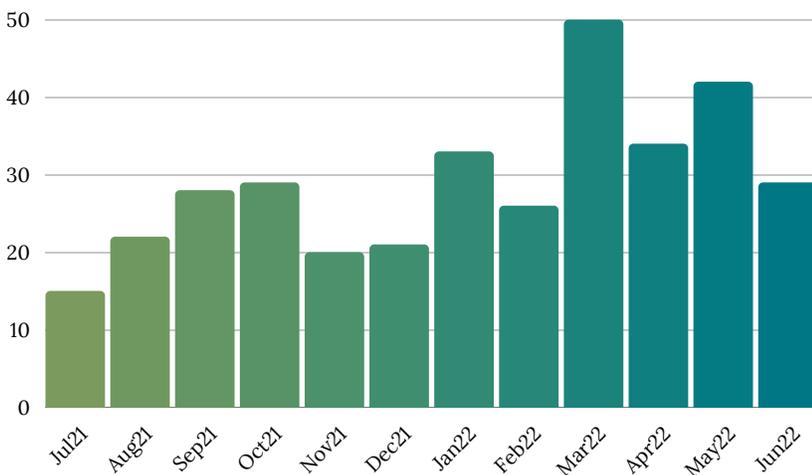
460 visitors sought out program services and over 820 members of the campus community participated in cases and dispute resolution processes.

VISITORS

460

A visitor is anyone who initiates contact with the OP for purposes of seeking services.

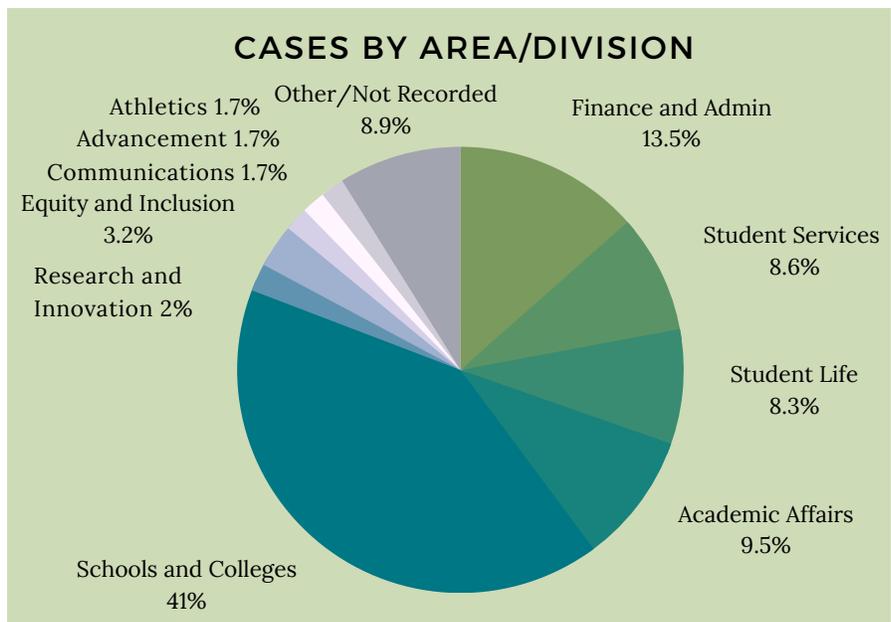
A case is described by this office as a distinct matter brought for the purpose of consultation, coaching, dispute resolution assistance, and/or systemic complaint tracking. A case may contain one or many concerns/issues, and may include one visitor or numerous visitors who share the same concern(s).



Total cases, visitors, and concerns have been relatively consistent in recent years. However, complexity of cases, based on casework hours and number of services and participants per case, continue to increase year by year. In FY22, ombuds spent around **2,600 hours** on casework.

The OP tracks cases by university area/division to identify trends and provide the appropriate upward feedback.

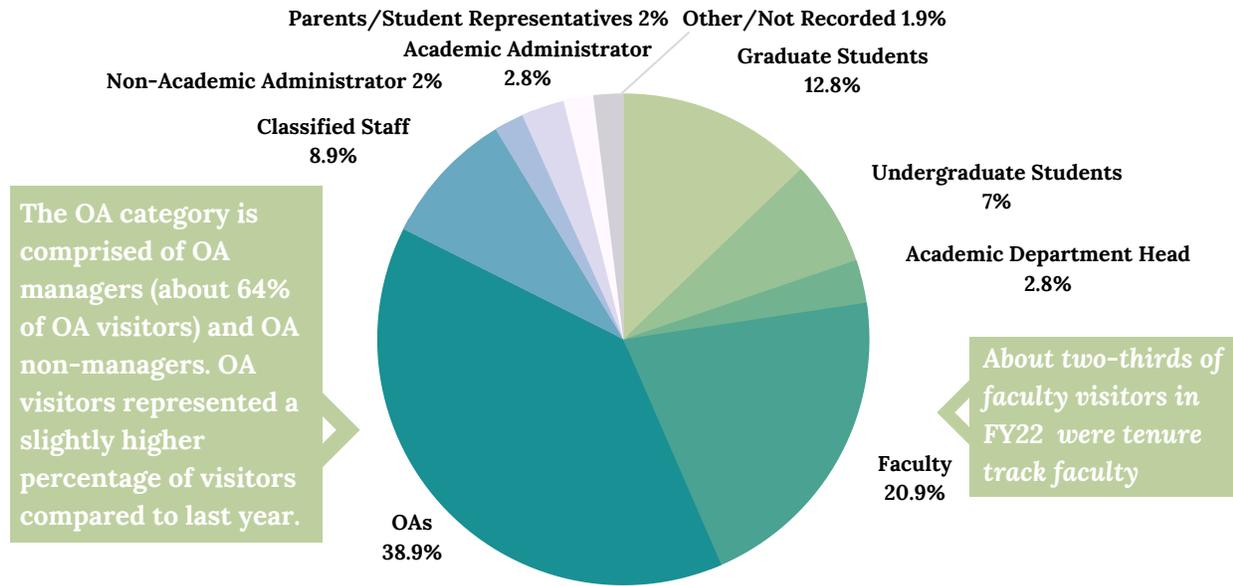
In FY22, 41% of cases were related to schools and colleges, proportional to the approximately half of all non-student employees employed in this division. Additionally, a majority of student cases (those related to departments/ faculty) fall into this area.



FY22 VISITORS

One way that the OP identifies trends in concerns is by tracking the constituency/ affiliation of visitors. In FY22, the predominate visitors to the OP were Officers of Administration (179 visitors), followed by faculty (96 visitors), then graduate students (59 visitors).

VISITORS BY CONSTITUENCY/AFFILIATION



PARTICIPANTS

Visitors (those who initiated contact with the OP) are summarized in the section above. The OP also tracks all **participants** in a case, including both visitors and anyone asked to provide information and/or participate in dispute resolution or group processes.

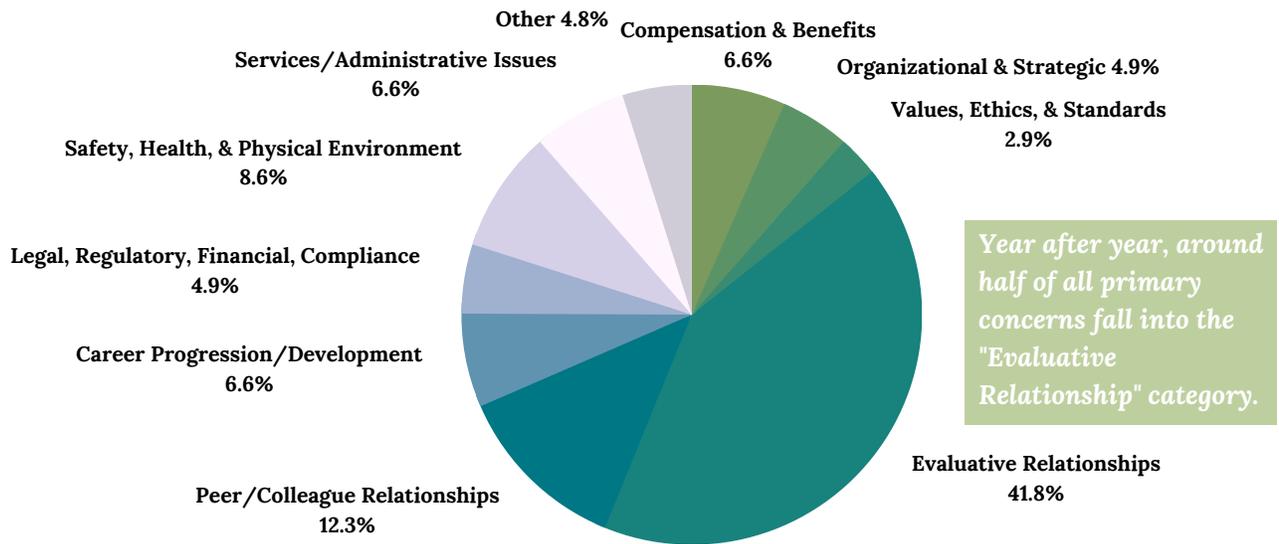
The majority of FY22 cases (217) had only one participant (similar to 208 single-party cases in FY21). However, complex, multi-party dispute resolution cases were higher than in previous years. There were 132 multi-party cases in FY22 (up from 98 in FY21) and a record number of these cases (25, up from 13 in FY21) involved large group dispute resolution processes with over 30 participants. Many were unit-wide climate/culture cases.



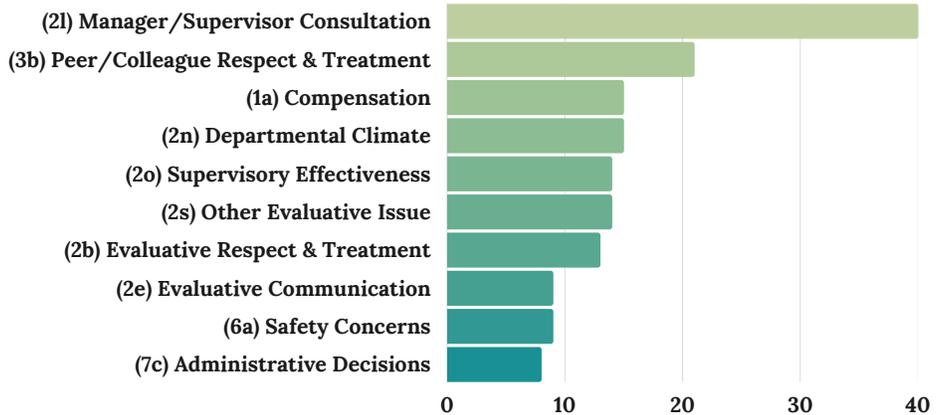
FY22 PRIMARY CONCERNS

The OP utilizes the International Ombuds Association (IOA) Uniform Reporting Categories to track concerns and identify localized and systemic trends. The IOA categories consist of nine broad categories containing over 80 subcategories. The OP notes all concerns brought for resolution and also tracks the **primary concern** for each case. Primary concerns indicate the main reason the visitor seeks services for each case.

TOTAL PRIMARY CONCERNS BY BROAD IOA CATEGORY



LEADING PRIMARY CONCERNS

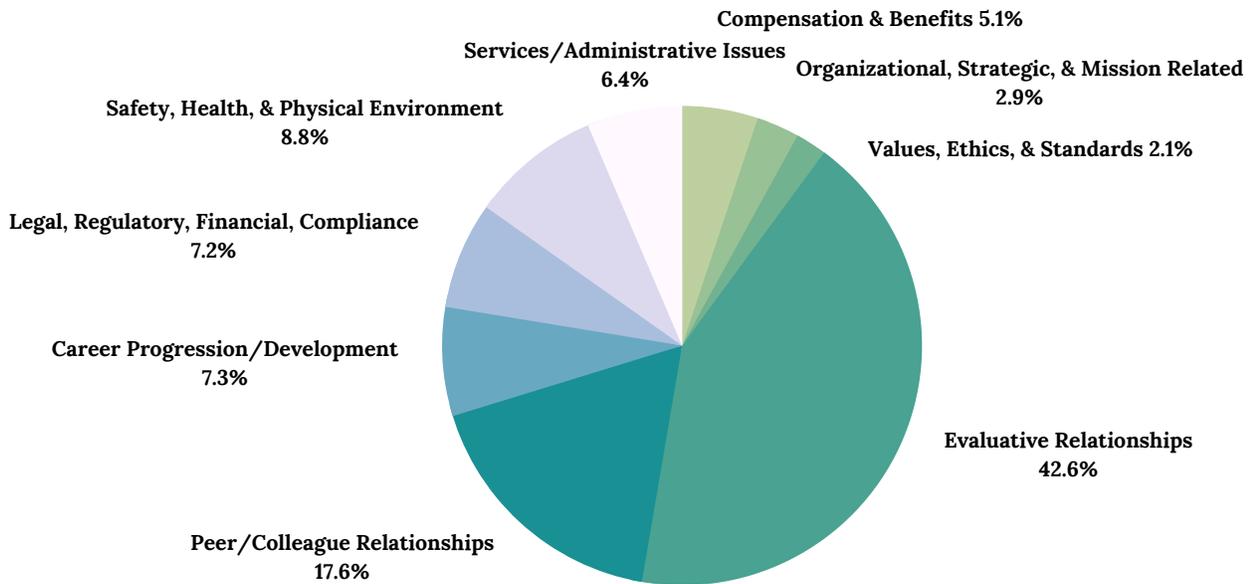


The chart above shows the ten leading primary concerns in FY22 according to subcategory. The top primary concern (2l, manager/supervisor consultations) is the most notable increase from prior years. Categories 3b, 2n, 2o, 2b, and 2e were all leading concerns in FY21 and the remaining categories were consistent in number of total concerns to FY21 although not leading primary concerns.

FY22 TOTAL CONCERNS

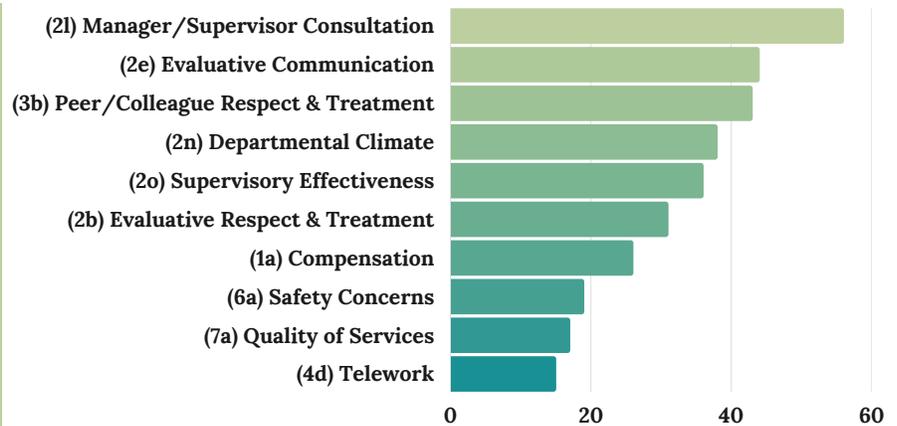
There were a total of 763 concerns brought to the OP for resolution in FY22. The chart below shows all FY22 concerns by broad IOA category.

TOTAL CONCERNS BY BROAD IOA CATEGORY



LEADING TOTAL CONCERNS BY SUBCATEGORY

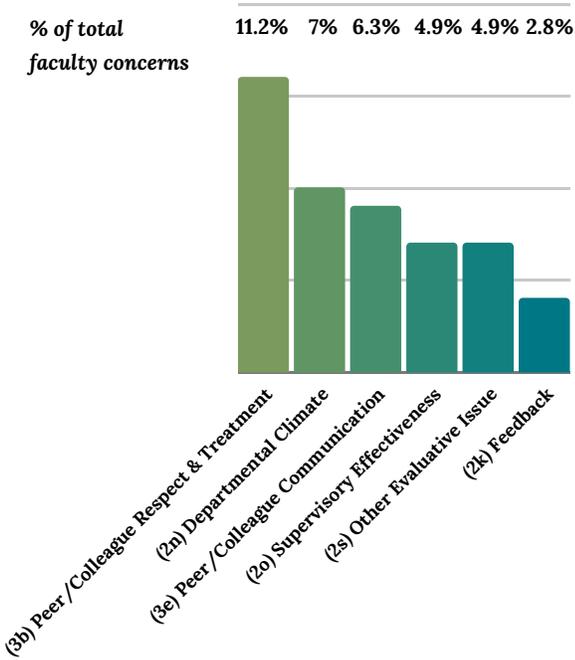
The adjacent chart shows the ten leading concerns in FY22 according to subcategory. Categories 7a, Quality of Services, and 4d Telework are the only top total concern categories that are not also leading primary concerns.



FY22 CONCERN TRENDS

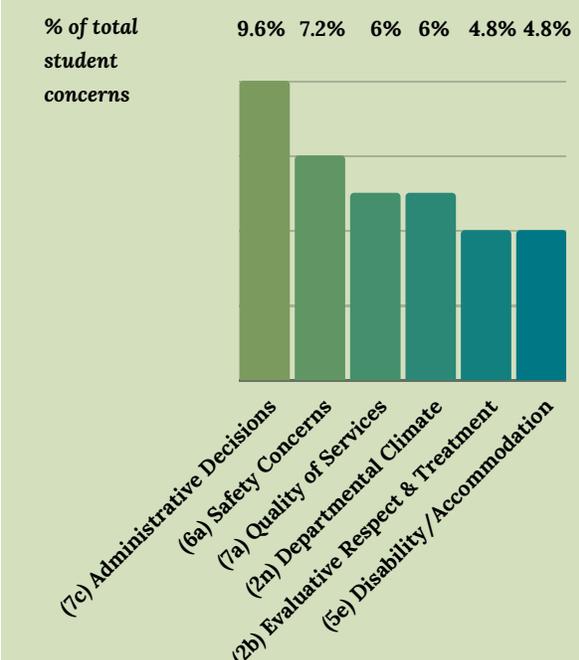
TOP TRENDS FACULTY CASES

Faculty reported the following issues most frequently in FY22.



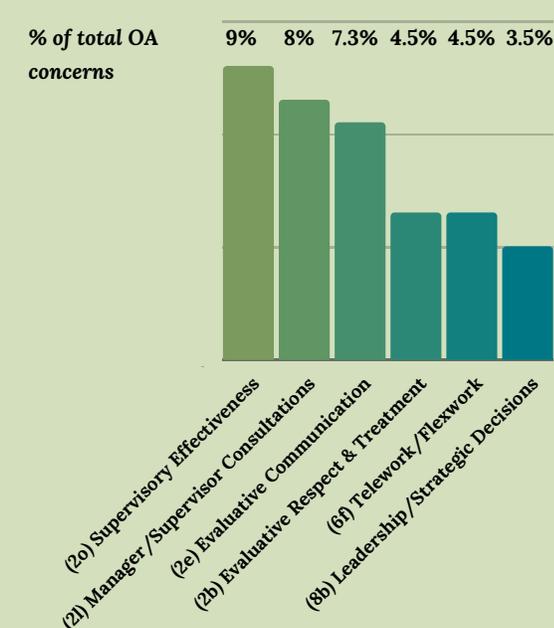
TOP TRENDS STUDENT CASES

Students reported the following issues most frequently in FY22.



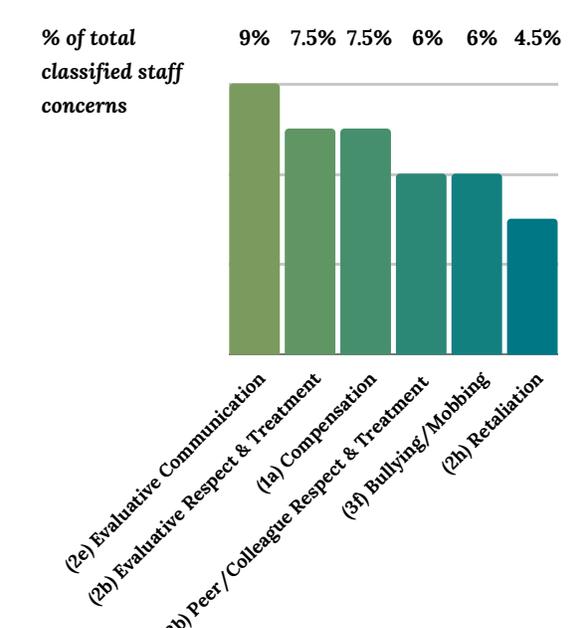
TOP TRENDS STAFF CASES

OAs reported the following issues most frequently in FY22.



TOP TRENDS STAFF CASES

Classified staff reported the following issues most frequently in FY22.



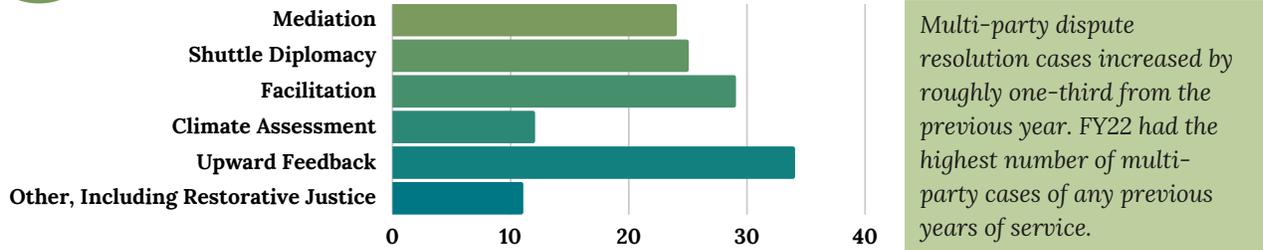
FY22 SERVICES AND OUTCOMES

*Multiple services including single-party services and multi-party services may be provided per case

132

MULTI-PARTY DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICES

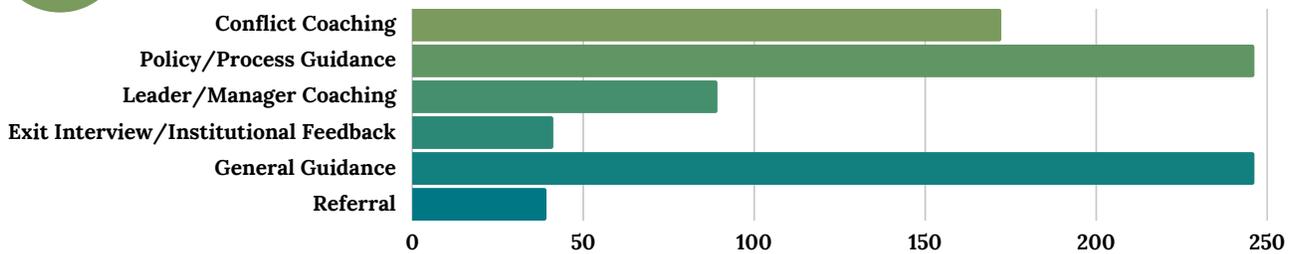
The OP provided dispute resolution involving two or more parties in **132** cases.



303

SINGLE-PARTY DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICES

The OP provided single-party resolution services in **303** cases.



16

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

The OP provided **16** training/workshops on conflict and communication-related topics.

IN-PERSON SERVICES

The OP offered services in-person and remotely via Zoom or telephone. In FY22, there were only 17 requests for in-person visitor appointments.

In FY22, 77% of all cases brought to the OP were resolved

Case outcomes/resolutions are recorded based on visitor indication at the conclusion of case services. Single-party cases are recorded as resolved when the OP has helped the visitor reach resolution and/or the visitor indicates they have received the guidance/assistance needed to resolve their concern on their own. Multi-party services are recorded as resolved when a negotiated resolution is reached or when parties indicate there has been a satisfactory conclusion.

