



# Conflict Resolution Services and Ombuds Office

## 1. Mission and Principles

The Cal Poly Pomona (CPP) Ombuds and Conflict Resolution Services Office, collectively “the Office,” provides a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for all members of the CPP community. The Office supports students, faculty, staff, and administrators by helping individuals and groups navigate concerns, explore options, and build conflict resolution skills in a respectful, nonjudgmental environment.

The Office helps to deepen and enliven CPP’s Principles of Community by:

- Approaching disagreement with empathy and curiosity, valuing diverse perspectives (**Practice Mutual Respect**);
- Equipping people with tools to manage conflict constructively (**Foster Growth**);
- Encouraging open dialogue across perspectives (**Cultivate Belonging**); and
- Supporting ethical action, even in challenging situations (**Act with Integrity**).

## 2. Scope of Services

The Office integrates both Ombuds and Conflict Resolution Services (CRSO) functions, which work in tandem to:

- Offer a safe, confidential, off-the-record space to talk through concerns;
- Facilitate individual and group meetings to improve communication and understanding;
- Provide training and education in conflict resolution and systems thinking;
- Assist in identifying options and making informed decisions;
- Refer individuals to appropriate campus and community resources;
- Report aggregate data and patterns to inform institutional learning and improvement.

Use of services is voluntary. No one can be required to meet with the Ombuds, and the Office does not investigate, conduct hearings, or manage University processes. The Ombuds does not make decisions for individuals, or advocate for individual positions.

The Ombuds may identify and offer informal, neutral perspectives on patterns or practices that support conflict resolution and a healthier campus climate consistent with CPP's Principles of Community. These insights are developed through voluntary conversations and informal engagement.

As a part of the CPP community, the Ombuds may serve as a member of campus committees in a non-voting role and will take care to protect the independence of the Office, avoid conflicts of interest, or prevent the appearance of endorsing specific actions or decisions.

### 3. Professional Standards and Visitor Autonomy

The Office adheres to the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics of the International Ombuds Association (IOA), which provide for:

- **Confidentiality:** Conversations are confidential to the greatest extent permitted by law and CSU policy. The Office does not identify visitors or disclose information without permission, except when legally required.
- **Independence:** The Office is separate from formal reporting and compliance functions, does not take direction regarding individual cases or informal inquiries and maintains structural and procedural separation to avoid the appearance of bias.
- **Impartiality:** The Office does not take sides or serve as an advocate. Its role is to promote fair process and equitable engagement.
- **Informality:** The Office does not maintain formal records, make findings, or compel actions. Visitors retain full autonomy to choose their paths forward.

CPP supports certification of the Ombuds and alignment with International Ombuds Association (IOA) standards when possible under CSU policy. The Ombuds is a management-level employee, and Office staff may include MPP, Confidential employees, or approved fellows and volunteers who agree to abide by these principles.

### 4. Notice and Role Boundaries

The Office is not structured or intended to serve as a formal reporting channel for the University. Although disclosure of certain issues may legally place the University on notice in specific limited circumstances outlined in CSU policies, the Office is not designed to carry out this function. Consequently, individuals who wish to notify the University of a concern that may require action should contact the appropriate designated resource directly.

As outlined in the Office's Terms of Use, individuals using the Office and its services acknowledge and agree that:

- They will not share information with the Office with the intent of initiating formal action;
- They will use designated reporting offices to place the University on notice;
- They will not attempt to compel Ombuds staff to testify or disclose confidential information.

The Ombuds and Office staff are not Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) under the Clery Act, as they do not have law enforcement duties, receive reports of crimes, or oversee student or campus activities. If their responsibilities change, the Clery Director will review such changes and notify the President and Ombuds if CSA designation is needed.

Working with the Office is not a required step in any grievance or other dispute resolution process, and no one may require any student, faculty or staff member to use Office services in connection with a grievance or other dispute resolution process. Moreover, the Office shall not investigate, arbitrate, adjudicate, serve as a witness or perform any role in any formal process or action, including any grievance procedure established by a collective bargaining agreement.

## **5. Structure, Support, and Engagement**

The Office will be located in a space that protects privacy and supports confidential conversations. Visitors may also meet with the Ombuds virtually or in other campus locations when privacy is needed. Staff, including fellows or volunteers, are supervised by the Ombuds when working on Office activities. The Office budget is managed with support from the President's Office.

To support the effectiveness and visibility of the Office, the Ombuds and Office staff may participate in relevant professional associations, networks, and conferences. This engagement helps ensure that the Office reflects the current best practices in the field and brings valuable knowledge back to the University. CPP encourages this involvement to strengthen services, promote a culture of respect and fairness, and contribute to the University's leadership in conflict resolution and ethical practice.

The Office of the President shall support the Office for administrative and budgetary matters. The Ombuds will maintain working relationships with the Academic Senate, Staff Council, Employee Unions, the Office of Equity and Compliance, Employee and Organizational Development and Advancement (EODA), Dean of Students and other campus stakeholders. An Ombuds Advisory Committee may be established to act as a sounding board for periodic issues that might arise in the management of the Office but will not provide direction or oversight regarding core functions in Section 2.

## **6. Accountability and Privacy**

Anyone with concerns about whether the Ombuds or Office staff are following this Charter may share them in writing with the President or the Office of Internal Audit. This does not affect the right to file a formal complaint or grievance through other campus processes. The Ombuds may choose to share limited confidential information to respond but is not required to do so.

The Office does not keep records that identify visitors but may track general patterns or trends. Any notes taken are private, short-term, and destroyed when no longer needed. CPP will not seek visitor identities and will support the Office in protecting confidentiality, except when legally required to disclose.

If the Office is reduced or closed, CPP will take reasonable steps to ensure that confidentiality commitments are honored and that comparable conflict resolution resources will remain available.

## 7. Amendment of the Charter

This Charter may be amended by the University President in consultation with the Ombuds. Authority to amend may only be delegated to a CPP official designated in a Management Personnel Plan (MPP) IV position or equivalent. The Charter remains in effect unless revoked by the President.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Iris Levine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Iris" being more prominent than the last name "Levine".

**Dr. Iris S. Levine**  
**Interim President**

**Date: August 19, 2025**