

APPROVED by
Order No 1V-17 of the Head
of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office
of the Republic of Lithuania
of 4 March 2022

**RULES OF PROCEDURE ON THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE SEIMAS OMBUDSPERSONS' OFFICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

**CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The Rules of Procedure of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – the Rules of Procedure) define the principles of activities of the Seimas Ombudspersons, civil servants and other employees of the Office, the procedure of investigating the matters which fall within the competence of the Seimas Ombudspersons, the procedures and routines of referrals to the Office and the Seimas Ombudspersons and adoption of decisions.

2. The purpose of activities of the Seimas Ombudspersons is to protect a person's right to good public administration which guarantees human rights and freedoms, to oversee whether public bodies fulfil their duty to serve the people well, to promote respect for human rights and freedoms, performing the functions of the national human rights institution (hereinafter referred to as "NHRI") and to carry out national prevention of torture in places of restriction of freedom in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (further on also "NPT")

3. In their activities, the Seimas Ombudspersons, civil servants and other employees of the Office shall be guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Lithuania Law on the Seimas Ombudspersons (hereinafter – the Law), these Rules of Procedure and other legal acts regulating the activities of the Seimas Ombudspersons and of the Office.

4. The Seimas Ombudspersons' Office is a state budgetary institution. The Seimas Ombudspersons' Office is a public legal person, which has a settlement account with a bank and the seal with the Lithuanian State Coat of Arms and the name "Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania", financed from the State Budget of the Republic of Lithuania. The Head Office address of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office is Gedimino pr. 56, LT-01110 Vilnius.

5. The Seimas Ombudspersons' Office has the mark registered with the State Patent Bureau.

6. Activities of the Office are organised in such a way that it is able to effectively assist the Seimas Ombudspersons in performing the functions assigned to them: the investigation of individuals' complaints, and the functions assigned to the national human rights institution and the institution for the national prevention of torture.

7. Public notices of the Office are published on the website of the Office (www.lrski.lt). In accordance with the procedure set by legal acts, public notices are also published in other mass media.

CHAPTER II
**PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVITIES AND ETHICS OF THE SEIMAS OMBUDSPERSONS,
CIVIL SERVANTS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICE**

Section 1
Principles and ethics of activities of the Seimas Ombudspersons

8. In their activities, the Seimas Ombudspersons shall be guided by the principles of respect for the person and the state, freedom of activities and independence, accountability, legality, impartiality and justice, proportionality and publicity, as specified in the Law on the Seimas Ombudspersons. The Seimas Ombudsperson shall protect his professional honour, authority and prestige of the Office. During receptions and consultations of the individuals, the Seimas Ombudsperson shall be official, correct, patient and polite.

9. The Seimas Ombudspersons must look in depth into the complaint being investigated and avoid hastiness and superficiality.

10. The Seimas Ombudspersons shall be bound by the obligation of non-disclosure of the state, official, commercial, banking or other secrets protected by law and the data they learn in performing their duties.

11. The Seimas Ombudsperson may not accept gifts or other tokens of affection, or have access to other services, where this is done – or could be assumed to be done – in order to influence the process of investigation of a complaint, the decision or proposal (recommendation). Seimas Ombudspersons, who have received gifts in accordance with international protocol or traditions, shall follow the description of the procedure for the transfer, evaluation, registration, storage and display of gifts of the Office, received in accordance with international protocol or traditions, as well as gifts intended for representation, approved by the Head of the Office.

12. In performing his/her duties, the Seimas Ombudsperson shall be independent from political parties and other political organisations.

13. The Seimas Ombudspersons shall demonstrate solidarity in defending their colleague from groundless criticism.

Section 2
Principles and ethics of activities of the civil servants and other employees of the Office

14. In their activities, employees of the Office shall be guided by the following principles: the primacy of laws, legality, equality, loyalty, political neutrality, selflessness, transparency, and ownership of adopted decisions, official cooperation, publicity and other principles the concepts of which are provided for in the Law on Civil Service and the Law on Public Administration. Employees shall also be subject to the provisions of paragraphs 8–11 of these Rules of Procedure.

15. Employees of the Office must protect their integrity, prestige and authority of the Office and show respect for human rights and dignity.

16. Activities of all employees of the Office shall be based on their initiative, cooperation, efficiency, discipline, expeditiousness, responsible and timely fulfilment of tasks and assignments.

CHAPTER III
STRUCTURE OF THE OFFICE

Section 1
General provisions

17. The Office shall be run by the Head of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office (the Seimas Ombudsperson). The Head of the Office shall perform the functions of the Seimas Ombudsperson (according to the area of activity assigned to him/her by the Seimas) and of the Head of the Office. In the absence of the Head of the Office he/she shall be deputised by the other Seimas Ombudsperson.

18. In implementing their goals and functions, the Seimas Ombudspersons shall be assisted by employees of the Office who, directly or through their immediate superior, shall report to the Head of the Office.

19. The Head of the Office shall approve the structure of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office in accordance with laws or legal acts adopted on their basis and having regard to the set goals and tasks of the Office, its strategic or annual plans of activities and the maximum authorised number of positions of civil servants and contractual employees of the Office, who receive salaries from the state budget and state monetary funds, approved by the Board of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.

20. The structure of the Office shall include divisions and positions which do not belong to divisions. The Head of the Office shall form the groups of advisors.

21. The Head of the Office shall represent and run the Office, organise its work, determine the functions of the Office's divisions and positions which do not belong to subdivisions, approve the Rules of Procedure on the activities of the Office. Where appropriate, the Head of the Office shall adopt regulations and descriptions detailing the provisions of these Rules of Procedure.

Section 2

Advisors to the Seimas Ombudspersons

22. The Seimas Ombudspersons shall have advisors. They help the Seimas Ombudspersons to carry out the investigation of individuals' complaints about abuse of officials or bureaucracy or other violations of human rights.

23. The advisor to the Seimas Ombudsperson (senior advisor, advisor) shall be a civil servant admitted to, or removed from, office in accordance with the procedure set out in the Law on Civil Service. The advisor to the Seimas Ombudsperson shall be directly subordinate and accountable to the Head of the Office and, furthermore, the advisor shall be accountable to the Seimas Ombudspersons for the fulfilment of their assignments.

24. The advisor to the Seimas Ombudsperson, in accordance with the procedure set out in these Rules of Procedure, shall carry out the assignments of the Seimas Ombudsperson and provide proposals relating to the investigation of complaints received in the Office or performance of investigations started upon the initiative of the Seimas Ombudsperson. Additional tasks and other assignments may be allocated to the advisor by the Head of the Office or by the other Seimas Ombudsperson, on coordination with the Head of the Office.

25. The Seimas Ombudsperson shall task the senior advisor with providing proposals, in accordance with the procedure set out under these Rules of Procedure, regarding the admissibility of a complaint as well as proposals to open investigations on the initiative of the Seimas Ombudsperson, referring to other advisors of the group the complaints assigned for investigation by the Seimas Ombudsperson, coordinating their work, developing and guaranteeing coherent practices of investigation of complaints on the same subject, drafting statements and other documents, providing comments and proposals to originators (executors) of statements and other documents attributed to the group, coordinating such statements and other documents, examining whether the data of investigation of complaints assigned to the group of advisors are correctly entered into the document management system (hereinafter – the DM system) of the Office; analysing the investigations of complaints assigned to the group, preparing summary conclusions and information pertaining to the investigation of complaints, providing proposals to the Seimas Ombudspersons

regarding the improvement of activities of the group of advisors and on other matters relating to the activities of the Seimas Ombudspersons, carrying out other functions specified in the job description and other assignments of the Head of the Office and of the Seimas Ombudsperson.

26. The advisor of the group shall submit proposals to the Seimas Ombudsperson (through the Seimas Ombudsperson's senior advisor) regarding the admissibility of the complaint (part of it), examination, scope and progress of the investigation, mediation by the Seimas Ombudsperson (or use of other rights of the Seimas Ombudsperson), conclusions, recommendations and proposals to initiate investigations upon the Seimas Ombudsperson's initiative or other projects, after analysing the practice of investigating complaints on the same topic, other necessary factual and legal information, drafts statements and other documents and shall submit them to the senior group advisor for coordination, shall revise according to his comments (or shall substantiate the reasons for disagreement with arguments), shall execute the monitoring of the implementation of the Seimas Ombudspersons' recommendations, properly enter the investigation data of the complaints assigned to this advisor into the DM system of the Office; shall advise applicants on the pending complaint or statement; shall conduct the analysis of investigations of complaints assigned to this advisor, shall prepare summary conclusions, reports and information related to the investigation of complaints and the performance of other functions of the Seimas Ombudsperson, shall make suggestions to the Seimas Ombudspersons (through the Seimas Ombudsperson's senior advisor) regarding the improvement of the activities of the group of advisors and other activities of the Seimas Ombudspersons on related issues, shall perform other functions specified in the job description, as well as other assignments of the Head of the Office and the Seimas Ombudsperson (also shall submit through the Seimas Ombudsperson's senior advisor), related to the implementation of the functions assigned to this civil servant.

Section 3

Carrying out the functions of the institution for the national prevention of torture and the national human rights institution

27. In carrying out the national prevention of torture in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the functions of the national human rights institution, the Seimas Ombudspersons shall be assisted by the Human Rights Division of the Office.

28. Employees of the Human Rights Division shall regularly visit places of detention according to the plan of visits coordinated with the Head of the Office (by order of the Seimas Ombudsperson irregular *ad hoc* visits shall also be possible), provide proposals to the Head of the Office regarding the participation of experts, other necessary officials or specialists during such visits, draw up reports (hereinafter – project report) and perform other functions relating to the guaranteeing of the rights and freedoms of persons at places of detention.

29. Experts, performing NPT functions shall be hired in accordance with the description of the procedure for the use of experts in inspections of places of restriction of liberty approved by the Head of the Office.

30. The functions of NHRI shall be carried out by implementing the dissemination of information about human rights and public education projects on human rights issues; presenting the evaluation of the situation of human rights in Lithuania in international organizations and providing them with information in accordance with the obligations of the Republic of Lithuania in international treaties; submitting proposals to state and municipal institutions and institutions on human rights issues; in order to harmonize national legal acts with the international obligations of the Republic of Lithuania in the field of human rights; initiating investigations into fundamental human rights issues.

31. The employees of the Human Rights Division shall perform the NPT functions in accordance with the documents approved by the Head of the Office: the implementation programme of the NPT functions and the regulations of the Human Rights Division.

32. Employees of the Human Rights Division shall perform the NHRI functions in accordance with the documents approved by the Head of the Office, i.e the activity programme of the National Human Rights Institution and the regulations of the Human Rights Division.

33. The employees of the Human Rights Division, when preparing and submitting project reports, when managing project files, if necessary, *mutatis mutandis* shall apply the provisions of this regulation governing the management of files. The documents (project reports, etc.) prepared by the employee (executor) of the division shall be coordinated with the head of this division, who is also provided with information about the implementation of projects and proposals (recommendations) of the Seimas Ombudsperson.

Section 4

Internal administration and control of the Office

34. Employees' work and rest time, remuneration, business trips, the order and procedure of training, promotion and liability, as well as other internal procedure requirements shall be determined by the Internal Rules of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania approved by the Head of the Office.

35. Responsibility for the financial accounting, management of assets, personnel and documents, technical maintenance of the Office shall be vested to divisions (employees) authorised by the Head of the Office.

36. Accounting, management and writing-off of the assets of the Office shall be carried out, the state budget and other funds allocated to the Office shall be managed, estimates of the budget expenditure of the Office shall be prepared and approved in accordance with the procedure set forth by legal acts.

37. The Office shall purchase goods and services by organising public procurement in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts and the Head of the Office.

38. Representation expenses incurred during official meetings and events organised by the institution, when supported by documentary evidence of actual expenses, shall be recorded in accordance with "The Rules for the Use of Representation Expenses in the Office" of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania, following the Representation Expenses Act.

39. Assignments of the Head of the Office (the Seimas Ombudsperson), documents received, prepared and sent by the Office shall be accounted for, distributed, controlled and managed otherwise in accordance with the procedure set forth by the Rules of Procedure and the Head of the Office in the computerised DM system of the Office. The management of documents of the Office shall be carried out in accordance with the documentation plan approved by the Head of the Office.

40. When managing the documents and information of the Office, compliance shall be maintained with the Privacy Policy of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by the Head of the Office, as well as with the Procedure for the Processing of Personal Data and the Implementation of Data Subject Rights in the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania, and other regulations governing the processing of personal data as established by relevant legislation. The handling and processing of personal data within the office shall be overseen by the Data Protection Officer (legal expert), who shall operate in accordance with the regulations approved by the Head of the Office. The Data Protection Officer also shall provide guidance to employees, offers suggestions for improving personal data protection, and assist in the prevention of violations and/or the rectification of identified violations.

41. The website of the Office shall be administrated in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Head of the Office.

42. Reports on violations from individuals at the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania shall be received, registered, investigated, and assessed in accordance with the Procedure for Providing, Receiving, Registering, Assessing, Investigating, and Decision Making

on Information about Violations in the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by the Head of the Office.

43. The internal audit services for the institution shall be procured in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Law on Public Procurement of the Republic of Lithuania.

44. The public (financial (legality) and activity) audit of the Office shall be carried out by the National Audit Office of the Republic of Lithuania.

CHAPTER IV RULES OF RECEIVING AND CONSULTING OF INDIVIDUALS

Section 1 General provisions

45. Individuals, their applications (requests), complaints, other documents shall be received in the Office every working day during its working hours. An individual submitting an application, request, or complaint to the institution via email must send it to the official email address of the Office as listed on its website, i.e. ombuds@lrski.lt. If the application, request, or complaint is received after regular working hours, during a break, or on a holiday, the date of receipt is considered to be the next working day.

46. When consulting individuals, investigating applications and complaints and addressing the issues raised in them, employees of the Office shall cooperate with each other, where appropriate, involving specialists of other institutions and bodies.

47. Information on the procedure of receiving and consulting of individuals shall be displayed in the institution's prominent place clearly visible for applicants, such as the website of the Office.

48. Individuals shall be received at the Office in accordance with the procedure established by the order of the Head of the Office.

49. The Seimas Ombudspersons shall receive applicants in the Office once per month according to the pre-agreed schedules. The employee responsible for the reception (hereinafter – the Reception Specialist) shall prepare such schedules and, no later than 2 (two) working days in advance of the reception, submit them to the Seimas Ombudspersons and senior group advisor according to areas of their activity, who shall notify the Seimas Ombudsperson (Seimas Ombudspersons) and the Reception Specialist which advisor (advisors) or other employee (employees) will be present during the reception by the Seimas Ombudsperson.

50. Advisors and other authorised employees of the Office, according to their competence and following the time schedule set by the order of the Head of the Office shall consult individuals by phone. Information regarding the consultation hours for individuals usually is provided on the website of the Office and in letters sent to them.

51. Where necessary, the Seimas Ombudspersons, advisors and other employees of the Office shall also receive the applicants on other working days.

52. The Reception Specialist shall keep precise records on individuals approaching the Office in the computerised DM system, by filling in a registration card of the individual's approach.

53. During the reception written applications and complaints of individuals shall be accepted. Verbal statements shall be accepted only when they can be handled immediately, without violating the interests of the individual and the institution. Individuals shall be provided with a possibility to set down the application or complaint in writing.

54. Applications and complaints of individuals received during reception shall be registered and investigated in a general manner.

55. Employees of the Office, who receive or consult individuals, shall follow these rules:

55.1. when the phone rings, it is recommended pick up the phone before it rings for the third time;

55.2. introduce themselves to the individual, clearly state the name of the institution as well as their position and surname;

55.3. listen carefully to the individual and, where necessary, ask him to clarify the essence of the appeal;

55.4. answer the individual's questions in a clear and precise manner;

55.5. try to answer the question at once, and where more time is needed to provide a comprehensive answer, indicate the precise time of the next contact by phone or other means of communication or suggest to send a written application to the Office;

55.6. speak calmly and say goodbye politely.

56. The Seimas Ombudspersons, advisors and other employees shall receive individuals in a special room of the Office designated for that purpose.

Section 2

Consulting applicants by phone and via the website of the Office

57. Individuals shall be consulted by phone and via the website of the Office by the Reception Specialist. The Reception Specialist shall provide applicants, who inquire about the investigation of their complaint at the Office, information about the advisor assigned for their complaint case and shall inform them about the consultation hours by phone.

58. The Reception Specialist must be able to explain concisely and intelligibly whether the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office is competent to address the matter of concern to the individual, what other competent body or institution the individual can approach, indicate the address and phone number of such institution, explain, if possible, what documents, and how to submit in order to have his/her application investigated and the raised issue settled.

59. The Reception Specialist may also provide other public information disposed by the Office, which is requested by the individual and which may be made available to the individual in accordance with the Law on the Right to Obtain Information and Reuse of Data.

60. The Reception Specialist shall keep precise records on the calling applicants by filling in the registration card of the individual's phone call in the DM system of the Office, analyse and summarise the information provided by phone.

61. In order to ensure high-quality service to individuals, phone calls may be recorded. The procedure of use of such records shall be determined by the Head of the Office.

62. Individuals' requests for information (consultations) received via the website of the Office shall be registered in the Electronic System for Applications and Questions. If possible, the Reception Specialist shall provide a response on the same working day, with the reply being sent via the email of the Office.

63. Complaints (applications) submitted via the website of the Office shall be registered in a general manner. In that case an employee registering a complaint (application) shall no later than within 3 (three) working days, inform the applicant of the admitted complaint and its registration number.

CHAPTER V

HANDLING OF DOCUMENTS OF THE OFFICE

Section 1

Registration and handling of received documents

64. All incoming correspondence of the Office shall be received and registered by the responsible employee of the Office (hereinafter – the Document Handling Specialist), who looks through all correspondence and having found that there are missing pages in the received document and/or annexes specified in the document notifies to the effect the sender of the document.

65. All documents received in the Office shall be registered on the day of their receipt in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Chief Archivist of Lithuania.

66. Usually individuals shall submit their applications and complaints in writing through the National Electronic Mail Delivery System, known as the E-delivery system, using other electronic communication methods, by regular mail, or hand in person. Electronic delivery services for physical individuals, who send electronic mail to the Seimas Ombudsperson through the E-delivery system, shall be provided free of charge.

67. When applications and complaints from individuals and other documents are submitted through electronic means of communication, a digital copy of the signed application, complaint, or other documents must be provided. Alternatively, the application, complaint, or other documents must be signed with a qualified electronic signature that meets the requirements set out in Regulation (EU) 910/2014. This signature should allow for the identification of the person submitting the application, complaint, or other documents, or verification of their authenticity, and understanding of their content. Upon registering a document received through electronic means of communication, the sender shall be informed, upon request, about the receipt of the electronic message, its date, registration number, and the number of pages.

68. Where the identification of a sender of an electronic document is impossible, the issue of further processing of such document shall be decided by the Document Handling Specialist on coordination with the Head of the Office or a head of division authorised thereby. Anonymous complaints and applications shall be registered in a general manner.

69. All documents received in the Office (including those received by e-mail and submitted via website of the Office) shall be registered and saved in the respective register of the DM system: individuals' applications and complaints – in the Register of Applications, the requests, submissions, recommendations, reports, and similar documents from the employees of the Office typically shall be registered in the Register of Internal Documents. VAT invoices, on the other hand, shall be registered in the Register of Invoices, while other documents – in the Register of Received Documents.

70. Received greetings, advertising brochures, private letters, and other correspondence unrelated to liability and risk which might arise in the case of the failure to enter the documents in the DM system, shall not be registered.

71. Registration stamps usually shall be placed in the upper right corner of the first page of a document. The registration stamp shall include the date of receipt and registration number, along with the indicated number of pages of the received documents.

72. Documents received through the E-delivery system or other electronic means of communication shall not be printed, but instead, a computer-generated registration stamp shall be applied to them, including the date of receipt and the registration number.

73. Handling of documents, including referrals and resolutions, shall be carried out through the Electronic Document Management System (DM system).

74. A stamped copy (with the specified date of receipt and registration number) of an application, complaint or any other submitted document may be issued to an individual at his/her request.

75. Documents received to a wrong address shall be forwarded to the addressee or returned to the sender. Where documents are received by mail, they shall be forwarded alongside the sender's envelope.

76. Where the received correspondence includes original documents confirming legal facts, the Document Handling Specialist shall make a copy of such original document, which is added to the complaint file, and hand over the original to the individual from whom it was received.

77. Documents received by e-mail shall be registered in a general manner. If the original document is received later, it shall be registered under the same date and number as the document previously received via e-mail (excluding applications, complaints, which are registered in a general manner).

78. A document registered in the Register of Applications shall be immediately referred to the Reception Specialist. The procedure of registration and distribution of complaints, applications shall be specified in these Rules of Procedure.

79. A document received and registered through the Lithuanian Courts' Electronic Services Portal (ESP) shall be immediately referred to the Head of the Office through DM system.

80. A registered document, which is unrelated to a complaint or to performance of the function of the national prevention of torture or the national human rights institution:

80.1. via DM system shall be immediately referred to the Head of the Office, who shall get familiarised with the document and via the same system appoint the executor (executors) by resolution, where necessary, formulate the tasks and set the deadlines of their fulfilment. 80.2. If the document is paper-based, it shall be handed over to the employee authorised by the Head of the Office to compile a correspondence file on activities of the Office. The original of the main document and a copy of the response to it shall be attached to this file.

81. Where there are several executors indicated in the resolution of the Head of the Office at DM system, preparation of the answer shall be initiated and arranged by the first executor specified in the resolution. Other executors named in the resolution must, within 3 (three) working days of the day of receipt of the document in the Office, provide the first executor, according to their competence, information and/or proposals on the preparation of the answer and fulfilment of the assignment. The answer shall be coordinated (countersigned) by all direct executors, heads of divisions and/or senior group advisors.

82. Answers received to inquiries of the Seimas Ombudspersons shall be registered in a general manner. In DM system they shall be linked to a particular complaint or other document and referred to the executor. In the DM system they shall be linked to a specific complaint, associated with the execution of functions related to national prevention of torture or the national human rights institution, or any other initiative document, and then referred to the executor.

83. All the internal documents of the Office shall be submitted and processed via DM.

84. Any employee of the Office, who receives a document related to the activities of the Office by e-mail, shall immediately forward it to the Document Handling Specialist to the e-mail address of the Office (ombuds@lrski.lt). When going on vacation or during temporary incapacity, it shall be mandatory to set up an automatic email response indicating the email address of the substituting employee or the email address of the Office, i.e. ombuds@lrski.lt

Section 2

Signing, registration and handling of documents drawn up in the Office

85. The Head of the Office shall sign orders, other internal and outgoing documents related to the activities of the Office, his/her competence as the Seimas Ombudsperson, and the performance of functions of the national prevention of torture and the national human rights institution. If the Head of the Office is temporarily absent, such documents shall be signed and countersigned by the other Seimas Ombudsperson.

86. Employees of the Office by the order of the Head of the Office can be authorised to sign informational or advisory documents.

87. The Head of the Office by its order shall approve blank forms of letters of the Office and of the Seimas Ombudsperson.

88. The Seimas Ombudsperson, according to the sphere of activity assigned to him/her, shall adopt and sign decisions relating to the investigation on his/her own initiative, statements, documents related to complaints or applications (inquiries, cover letters of decisions, and other letters) received in the Office.

89. Documents shall be signed by the Head of the Office and/or the Seimas Ombudsperson after they are countersigned (coordinated) on the front of the page (in the case of

second copies of outgoing documents – on the back of the page) by the direct originator of the document, his/her immediate superior (head of division) or a senior group advisor according to spheres of activity of the Head of the Office (documents related to the investigation of a complaint, application), other employees (according to spheres of activity).

90. By signing (countersigning) a document the employee of the Office shall confirm that he/she has got acquainted with the document and assumes responsibility according to his/her competence. A civil servant or employee, who disagrees with a draft legal act or document (letter), may countersign it and enter a comment or an accompanying statement that a dissenting opinion is enclosed. The dissenting opinion shall be provided in the form of a letter on a separate page.

91. Responsibility for the proper and timely preparation of a document (letter) or a draft legal act and for the collection of all countersignatures required under these Rules of Procedure in the document (letter) or draft legal act, document attachments shall be vested in its direct originator (executor).

92. Documents shall be prepared in accordance with the Rules for the Drawing up of Documents established by the Chief Archivist of Lithuania.

93. Documents drawn up in the Office shall be registered only when they are signed. Documents submitted for signing shall be drawn up properly, written in the common Lithuanian language (excluding documents drawn up in a foreign language), formalised and coordinated (countersigned) in accordance with the set procedure.

94. Normally, one copy of a document shall be signed.

95. Outgoing documents related to complaints or NPT/NHRI projects shall be signed in two copies, of which one shall be sent to the addressee and the second (countersigned by employees of the Office) shall be retained by the Office. Where an outgoing document is addressed to several specified addressees, the copy of the document intended for each addressee shall be signed (except where addressees are sent certified copies or transcripts of documents, or a document is sent only by e-mail). One more copy of the Seimas Ombudsperson's refusal to investigate a complaint, refusal to investigate a complaint by mediation, a statement, a project report signed by the Head of the Office, their cover letters, or a letter on updating a complaint, signed and countersigned by responsible employees of the Office, shall be retained in the file of a complaint or project.

96. The signed letter with the Seimas Ombudsperson's decision shall be immediately submitted for registration and dispatch. The person shall be informed in writing about the decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson regarding the complaint no later than within 3 (three) working days.

97. Outgoing documents shall be registered, scanned, saved in the DM system and sent to addressees by the Document Handling Specialist.

98. The date of sending and the number of registration shall be written on the original copy, which is retained by the Office, of a cover letter of a complaint statement, refusal to investigate a complaint, refusal to investigate a complaint by mediation, project report, letter on updating a complaint, inquiry, notification to the applicant and the document shall be referred to the originator (executor); in the case of other documents the date of sending and the number of registration shall be written on their copies and such document shall be referred to the originator (executor).

99. If a person has not specified the preferred method of receiving a response to his/her complaint and/or the necessary contact information, the Seimas Ombudsperson's statement shall be provided to the applicant in the following order of priority: through the e-delivery system, through other electronic means of communication, or by registered mail. If the person's e-delivery system electronic mailbox is inactive, the statement shall be sent to him/her through the e-delivery system but handed as a registered mail. When a person has indicated his/her preferred method of receiving a response to the complaint and the necessary contact details, the statement shall be delivered to him/her in the manner specified by him/her.

100. Digital copies of original documents drawn up by the Office may be sent to institutions, bodies, or officials by e-mail.

101. In the case of documents sent by electronic (digital) means the acknowledgment of their receipt shall be required. The acknowledgement of receipt of a document shall be printed and referred to the originator (executor) alongside the copy of the document being sent which is retained by the Office. In the event of the failure to receive the acknowledgement of their receipt, the information from e-mail confirming the fact of sending shall be printed and communicated to the originator (executor).

102. Where certified copies or certified transcripts of documents are sent to addressees or a document is sent only by e-mail, a signed document countersigned by the originator (executor) and other responsible employees shall be inserted into the file. In the case of sending a document only by e-mail, it shall be specified on such document that the original of the document will not be dispatched.

103. Where a document being sent is a response, it shall be inserted into the file of correspondence records, complaint or project together with the document to which the response is provided.

Section 3

Registration and distribution of received classified information

104. Received envelopes marked as classified shall not be opened and shall be directly referred to the employee appointed by the Head of the Office responsible for safeguarding classified information.

105. Classified information received in the Office shall be administrated in accordance with the Law on State Secrets and Official Secrets, Rules for the Administration of Classified Information approved by the Government and the Rules for the Administration of Classified "Restricted Information" at the Disposal of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office approved by the Head of the Office.

Section 4

Registration and distribution of complaints and applications

106. Referrals (applications, complaints) of individuals registered in the Register of Applications and other documents shall be promptly referred to the Reception Specialist, who, having assessed the contents of received documents, shall group them into complaints, applications, additional documents. If it is unclear to which group a received document should be attributed, the Reception Specialist shall consult senior group advisors, heads of divisions; in the case of disagreement the final decision shall be adopted by the Seimas Ombudsperson or the Head of the Office.

107. Referrals of individuals according to their content shall be grouped into complaints or applications (requests). An application (request) means a referral in which state or municipal institutions or officials are not complained about, but which contains a request to explain a certain issue, to provide information or documents, etc. Applications shall also include expressions of gratitude, opinions, and appeals received in the institution but addressed to other institutions or bodies, and/or those with no specific requests to the Seimas Ombudsperson. Expressions of gratitude and opinions from individuals shall be submitted to the Head of the Office and to the Seimas Ombudspersons under the competence for review and shall be held separately in the file for expressions of gratitude, with a copy attached to the complaint file. Other communications from individuals regarding abuse by officials or bureaucracy or violations of individual rights in the field of public administration shall be considered complaints.

108. The Reception Specialist, taking account of the content of an application, shall fill in a card of the application in the DM system. In response to applications where individuals request information or seek consultations, the Reception Specialist shall provide a reply.

109. The Reception Specialist shall immediately forward additional documents to the executor in response to complaints. Requests to retrieve documents from the complaint file and/or archive are directed to the Head of the Office or the Seimas Ombudsperson, while other applications are referred to the senior group advisor (according to the areas of activity established by the Head of the Office), who assigns the Reception Specialist or another employee to prepare the response.

110. The senior group advisor shall immediately forward the application to the executor. Responses to applications are provided no later than within 20 (twenty) working days from the day of their receipt at the Office.

111. Answers to applications, except for those indicated in point 108, shall be signed by the Head of the Office or the Seimas Ombudsperson under the competence. Applications and answers to them shall be registered in the Register of Applications and the Register of Outgoing Documents in the DM system and inserted into the file of applications.

112. The Reception Specialist, upon receiving applications at the Office that are addressed to other institutions or bodies but do not contain any specific requests to the Seimas Ombudsperson, shall file them in a folder designated for applications. No responses or opinions are provided for these applications.

113. If an application is based on obviously inaccurate facts, contains uncensored language, or the content is vague and incomprehensible, the application shall be left unexamined according to the decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson. The person is informed about this decision no later than within 5 working days from the day the application was received at the Office.

114. The Reception Specialist, taking account of the content of a complaint, shall generate and fill in a card of the complaint in the DM system: identify the problem, the institution, body or officer complained about, refer the complaint to the Seimas Ombudsperson (according to the area of activity) and on the latter's instruction – to the senior group advisor. The Reception Specialist shall verify the data stored in the DM system and determine whether the correspondence with the applicant was terminated. If the correspondence with the applicant was terminated, the Reception Specialist shall immediately notify to the effect the Seimas Ombudsperson or, by the latter's instruction, the senior group advisor who shall decide whether the Office will investigate a newly received application by generating a file of the new application, or whether the received document should be added to the file which contains the Seimas Ombudsperson's decision to stop corresponding with the applicant.

115. Upon receipt of a complaint, which is signed by more than one individual with respect to the same circumstances and the same institutions, bodies, officials, as a rule, one file of the complaint shall be opened. In that case the response regarding the complaint shall be submitted to the first individual indicated in the complaint (in his/her name the complaint is registered in the DM system), and at the request of applicants – also to other individuals who had signed the complaint.

116. Anonymous complaints and applications, decisions of the Seimas Ombudsperson to open the investigation on his/her own initiative shall be registered in a general manner.

117. The paper complaint file shall be formed only in such cases where the received individual's complaint is printed. In such case, the Reception Specialist shall promptly submit the complaint with attachments to the Document Handling Specialist who shall open a paper file of the complaint and no later than the next working day from the day of receiving the documents at the Office shall hand it to the Seimas Ombudsperson and/or the senior group advisor.

118. The Seimas Ombudsperson shall decide on the acceptability and examination of the complaint. No later than on the next working day, the senior group advisor shall refer the received complaint to the specialist or group advisor (executor) for drawing up a letter on updating the complaint, a refusal to investigate the complaint, or a draft refusal to investigate the complaint by mediation. When it is decided to investigate a complaint on the merits, the senior group advisor shall refer the complaint to the group advisor for the investigation on the merits.

119. A reference to the referral of a complaint or application shall be entered in a DM system. If a senior group advisor identifies an inquiry related to implementation of the functions

assigned to the NPT or the NHRI, the application, complaint via DM system shall be redirected to the Head of the Human Rights Division for review.

120. Information collected on received applications and complaints and on their investigation results shall be stored in computer media of the Office 10 years from the adoption of the decision by the Seimas Ombudsperson.

CHAPTER VI INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS, HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS AND PROJECT FILES

Section 1 General provisions

121. Complaints, as a rule, shall be investigated in chronological order – according to the date of their receipt in the Office, unless the Seimas Ombudsperson establishes otherwise taking account of the nature and other circumstances of the case. The employee in charge of investigation of a complaint – the executor shall be responsible for the proper preparation of draft decisions and other documents and for their submission for timely dispatch.

122. Anonymous complaints shall not be investigated, unless the Seimas Ombudsperson decides otherwise.

123. A complaint signed on behalf of another individual or by an individual who is not authorised in accordance with the procedure set by law to act on behalf of another individual, shall not be dealt with, unless the Seimas Ombudsperson decides otherwise.

124. Where the Seimas Ombudsperson receives a complaint, the investigation whereof might lead to a conflict of interests, or where the risk of a conflict of interests is suspected during the investigation of a complaint, the Seimas Ombudsperson shall refer the complaint by a reasoned letter for investigation to another Seimas Ombudsperson.

125. Where the employee in charge of complaint investigation – the executor receives a complaint, which investigation might lead to a conflict of interests, he/she shall immediately refer the complaint alongside a reasoned letter to the senior group advisor who shall decide on the referral of the complaint for investigation to another executor.

126. The Seimas Ombudsperson may decide to stop corresponding with the applicant who abuses the right of approaching the Seimas Ombudsperson. The correspondence with the applicant shall be terminated if the applicant has already been warned about the possibility of terminating the correspondence with him/her. The executor shall note about this decision in the DM system - the Registry of Applications.

127. If a complaint is related to the areas of activity of both Seimas Ombudspersons, the executor shall record the findings of investigation of the complaint and/or other decisions in one document, which, after being coordinated in the established manner, shall be submitted for signing to both Seimas Ombudspersons according to their activity area. If a general complaint investigation statement is drawn up, a signed original copy of the general statement must be attached to each paper complaint file of the Seimas Ombudsperson.

128. Upon receipt from the individual, in whose name the complaint has been registered, of a request not to investigate the complaint, which is also signed by other individuals, the investigation of the complaint shall be continued by notifying to the effect the applicant who has refused the investigation.

129. The individual shall be informed in writing about the decision made by the Seimas Ombudsperson regarding the complaint no later than within 3 (three) working days. The complainant shall also be provided with the complaint registration number, the deadline for the

complaint investigation (if it is decided to investigate it on the merits), the time for consulting with the advisor regarding the complaint, and any other relevant information. At the same time, the original documents shall be returned to the complainant. The signed letter shall be promptly submitted for registration and dispatch.

130. Documents submitted for coordination, signing and dispatch (letters on updating a complaint, letters of inquiries, statements, decisions on refusal to investigate a complaint, refusal to investigate a complaint by mediation, etc.) shall be coordinated by the executor with the language editor of the Office to whom an electronic version of a document shall be sent. The language editor shall, within the shortest possible time (normally not longer than within 2 (two) working days), proofread the documents, prioritizing the most urgent ones, and send the proofread electronic version of a document by e-mail to the executor. The executor shall revise the document taking account of the proposed corrections. The language editor has the right to request the executor to clarify the information (document) sent for editing. The document shall be edited upon receiving the clarified information (document).

131. By the order of the Seimas Ombudsperson or the Head of the Office, authorized employees of the Office can initiate administrative offense proceedings, conduct investigations into administrative offenses, and draft administrative offense protocols for the failure to comply with the requirements of the Seimas Ombudsperson.

Section 2

Refusal to investigate a complaint

132. The executor, taking account of the time limits fixed by the Law for refusal to investigate a complaint and the time necessary for coordinating and updating of the prepared documents and for adopting a decision, shall, within shortest possible time, draw up a decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson to refuse to investigate a complaint, to refuse to investigate a complaint by mediation, and a letter to update a complaint and submit to the senior group advisor for coordination. The executor shall also update the institution or body complained about, the subject matter of the complaint and other information in the card of the file of the complaint in the DM system.

133. The senior adviser shall assess the received documents and provide observations and proposals to the executor within two working days. The executor shall consider the observations and proposals and, where appropriate, update the prepared document and the file card in the DM system. Observations and proposals shall be provided in the form of a comment or in any other written or verbal form and shall be kept until the letter is dispatched.

134. A decision, letter countersigned (coordinated) by the senior group advisor, alongside the file of the complaint shall be submitted for signing to the Seimas Ombudsperson without undue delay. If the Seimas Ombudsperson does not sign the prepared document, the executor shall update it according to the specified comments. Where appropriate, comments and proposed amendments of the document shall be discussed with the Seimas Ombudsperson.

135. If the applicant who has been asked to update the complaint within the specified time limit (as a rule, within 14 (fourteen) calendar days), fails to update the complaint which prevents from starting the investigation of complaint on the merits, the executor shall draw up the draft decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson to refuse to investigate the complaint.

Section 3

Investigation of a complaint on the merits

136. Where the Seimas Ombudsperson decides to investigate a received complaint on the merits, the executor, after having analysed the received documents and information of the file of the

complaint, shall, within 7 (seven) working days of receipt of the complaint in the Office, draw up the notification to the applicant of the opened investigation of the complaint, where he/she shall indicate the registration number of the complaint, time limit of investigation of the complaint, other information and within 20 (twenty) working days – inquiries to institutions and bodies related to the issues raised in the complaint. The executor can decide not to prepare inquiries if there is enough data (documents) in the file to conduct an investigation of the complaint on the merits.

137. The senior advisor shall, within 3 (three) working days of receipt of the inquiry (within 1 (one) workday from the notification to the applicant) provide observations and proposals to the executor. Observations and proposals shall be provided in the form of a comment or in any other written or verbal form, and written observations and proposals shall be kept until the letter is dispatched. The executor shall assess the observations and proposals, where appropriate, update the letter and repeatedly submit it to the senior advisor.

138. The letter countersigned (coordinated) by the senior group advisor shall be submitted for signing to the Seimas Ombudsperson without undue delay. If the Seimas Ombudsperson does not sign the letter, the executor shall update it according to the specified comments and submit for signing, having informed the senior group advisor. Where appropriate, comments and suggested amendments shall be discussed with the Seimas Ombudsperson. The signed letter shall be submitted for registration and dispatch without undue delay.

139. Where necessary, the executor shall draw up drafts of additional letters of inquiry, propose the senior group advisor site visits for the purpose of investigation of a complaint and/or invite, interrogate representatives and officials of institutions or bodies.

140. By written order of the Seimas Ombudsperson, the executor shall carry out an on-the-spot check of circumstances of the complaint: visit institutions, bodies, officials and the applicant, interrogate them, and collect documents and information necessary for investigation of the complaint. Where appropriate, the executor may be accompanied by a senior advisor of the same and/or another group, other civil servants or employees of the Office. The executor shall fill out the Act of Verification of Factual Data established by the Head of the Office, which shall be stored in the complaint file, and shall note the fact of verification in the complaint card in the DM system.

141. When necessary, the executor shall submit proposals to the senior group adviser to organize meetings with government officials and representatives of other organizations, prepare the summarized information required for the meeting, necessary documents, and participate in the meeting.

142. Additional information and documents necessary for investigation of a complaint may be collected by the executor in other ways in line with the work procedure. The executor shall ensure that only necessary and required information is submitted. A written (e-mail) referral to institutions, bodies of officials and received documents and information shall be registered in the Office, recorded in the DM system and kept in the complaint file.

143. Having collected all information, material and documents necessary for investigation of a complaint, the executor shall analyse and summarise them, assess the identified circumstances, legal acts and the case law, if needed - practice of international institutions. The summarised information of the complaint and the information identified during the investigation and the findings of the investigation shall be entered by the executor in a draft statement and shall be submitted to senior group advisor for coordination.

144. The time limit for the implementation of proposals (recommendations), if any, of the Seimas Ombudsperson shall be specified in the statement.

145. The senior advisor shall, within 4 (four) working days of the day of receipt of the statement alongside the complaint file (within 5 (five) working days if the complaint file is large and/or problems analysed in the statement are complicated) provide observations and proposals to the executor. The senior group advisor, having got familiarised with the complaint file and draft statement, where appropriate, may invite advisors of the same and/or another group or employees of the Office to jointly discuss the problems of the complaint and the findings of the investigation. In that case the time limit for coordinating the draft statement shall be 7 (seven) working days. The

time limits for coordination of the draft statement may also be extended when the senior advisor has to carry out other urgent assignments of the Seimas Ombudsperson.

146. Observations and proposals to the executor shall be provided in the form of a comment or in any other written or verbal form, and written observations and proposals shall be kept in the file until the statement is dispatched. The executor shall assess the observations and proposals, where appropriate, update the statement and information in the card of the complaint in the DM system and repeatedly submit to the senior advisor.

147. If the executor disagrees with the provided observations and proposals, he/she shall inform the senior group advisor to the effect. Where appropriate, the observations and proposed adjustments shall be discussed together with the Seimas Ombudsperson. The executor shall clarify the draft statement taking into account the results of the joint meeting.

148. The statement countersigned (coordinated) by the senior group advisor alongside the cover letter and complaint file shall be submitted for signing to the Seimas Ombudsperson without undue delay. If the Seimas Ombudsperson does not sign the statement, the executor shall update it according to the specified comments. Where appropriate, the comments and proposed amendments to the document shall be discussed together with the Seimas Ombudsperson.

149. A complaint shall be examined and a statement prepared and the decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson made within the shortest possible time (usually within 3 (three) months of the day of receipt of the complaint in the Office).

150. Due to objective reasons (complexity of the circumstances indicated in the complaint, abundance of information, continuous nature of the actions complained of, the need to obtain conclusions, evaluations, conduct investigations, or other reasons), the investigation period of the complaint, by the decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson, may be extended for a maximum of 12 months. The Seimas Ombudsperson shall inform the complainant about the extension of the investigation period and the reasons for such an extension.

151. The executor, understanding that due to objective reasons, the complaint cannot be fully and comprehensively investigated within the 3 (three) month period specified in the Law on the Seimas Ombudspersons, with the deadline approaching but no later than 10 (ten) working days before the end of this term, shall inform the senior group adviser and, in coordination with him/her, shall prepare a draft decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson to extend the investigation period, specifying the reasons for the extension. The Seimas Ombudsperson, after evaluating the complaint case, shall decide on the extension of the investigation period.

152. Upon investigation of the complaint on the merits, its results shall be communicated to the applicant, the official and/or the head of the institution or body, whose activities have been examined and/or in respect of whom the Seimas Ombudsperson's recommendations have been issued, shall also be acquainted with the results of investigation of the complaint. The statement may also be provided for familiarisation to the head of an institution or body of a higher level of subordination, other institutions and/or bodies.

153. Information on complaints, the process and results of their investigations shall not be provided to third parties, except for the publicly released information. Nevertheless, the individual directly named in the statement, having submitted a reasoned written request and the personal identity document or having confirmed his/her personal identity by other means in accordance with the procedure set out by legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, shall have the right to obtain information about him/her, except in the cases provided for by laws of the Republic of Lithuania, when such information is not provided. Where an individual sends a request for information about him/her by post or via courier, such a request shall be accompanied by a copy of the personal identity document certified by a notary or in any other manner established by legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania. Where information about an individual is requested by his/her representative, the representative shall present a document confirming the representation and the personal identity document or shall prove his/her identity in any other manner established by legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania. In such cases an extract from the statement shall be issued. The

extract from the statement shall be issued no later than within five working days by the Office employee responsible for management of the archive.

154. Upon receipt of a written request from the applicant to provide documents contained in his/her complaint file, the copies of documents shall be issued, on consent of the Seimas Ombudsperson: 1) by the executor – when investigation of the complaint or implementation of recommendations provided by the Seimas Ombudsperson is still under way; 2) the employee responsible for storage, management and administration of the archive documents of the Office – when the complaint file has been transferred to the archive of the Office. When providing copies of documents, all original documents shall be stamped with the seal "Certified Copy."

155. The executor shall evaluate the results of the complaints' investigations assigned to him/her and, in accordance with the procedures established by the Head of the Office, shall prepare summaries and reports every quarter. These summaries and reports shall be submitted to the senior group adviser and the Seimas Ombudsperson, as required, typically through the senior group adviser. Additionally, the executor shall prepare other summarized information as needed.

156. If the executor believes that it would be worth to publicize the results of an investigation, he/she shall prepare a summary (report) on the results of the completed complaint investigation within 10 (ten) working days from the writing of the statement and shall propose to the senior group adviser to make this investigation by the Seimas Ombudsperson public (publish it). The executor shall send the agreed-upon report to the Institution's employee responsible for communication or another relevant staff member for publication.

Section 4 **Handling of files of complaints and projects**

157. When the Seimas Ombudsperson signs a statement or refusal to investigate a complaint, a refusal to investigate a complaint by mediation or a project report, the executor shall handle the complaint or project file. The executor shall, within 3 (three) working days, update the card of the complaint (project) in the DM system (by specifying institution or organisation and the issue at hand, entering the information on the Seimas Ombudsperson's decision, the reasons of termination of investigation or of refusal to investigate the complaint, the provided proposals (recommendations), if any, the Seimas Ombudsperson's decision, if any, on the publication or non-publication of the statement on the website of the Office, other complaint or project related information), and shall attach the electronic version of the document signed by the Seimas Ombudsperson.

158. The executor shall keep a complaint and all related documents (paper complaint file) until all information on the implementation of the Seimas Ombudsperson's proposal (recommendation) and other requested information is received.

159. The executor shall control the implementation of the Seimas Ombudsperson's proposals (recommendations), the receipt of requested information according to the time limit and shall assess whether the Seimas Ombudspersons proposals (recommendations) have been fulfilled or properly implemented.

160. Having assessed the information and documents provided by all institutions or bodies, the executor shall, within 10 (ten) working days from the receipt of this information, notify the senior group advisor (in the case of a project – the head of the division) of the results of investigation of a proposal regarding implementation of the recommendation by an institution or body to which the proposal (recommendation) was addressed, to and shall propose to him/her to terminate the control of the implementation of recommendation. Upon receipt of the senior advisor's (the head's of the division) consent to terminate the control of implementation of the proposal (recommendations), the executor shall enter the information on the final result (implemented, not implemented, and other information) into the electronic card of the complaint file in DM system within 3 (three) working days.

161. Where the executor, having assessed the information received about the implementation of the Seimas Ombudsperson's proposals (recommendations) or investigation of the complaint forwarded by mediation to another institution or body and having found that the institution, body or official, to whom the Seimas Ombudsperson's proposal (recommendation) was addressed, has not properly implemented the Seimas Ombudsperson's proposal (recommendation) or has failed to implement it and to state the reasons of such failure, or that the reasons stated, in the executor's opinion, are unsubstantiated, the issue raised in the complaint which has been forwarded for investigation to another institution or body has not been investigated on the merits, or that the applicant's right to good public administration has been infringed otherwise, or that government bodies have failed to fulfil their duty to serve the people, the executor, within 10 (ten) working days from the receipt of information, having coordinated with a senior group advisor (the head of the division), shall submit him/her a draft letter or decision of the Seimas Ombudsperson to repeatedly approach the institution, body or official, to open the investigation on his/her own initiative or to apply other measures by exercising the rights of the Seimas Ombudsperson provided for in the Law on the Seimas Ombudspersons.

162. Having completed the control over the implementation of the Seimas Ombudsperson's proposals (recommendations) or investigation of a complaint in another institution or body, the executor shall supplement (update) the card of the complaint (project) file in the DM system with the received information. On coordination with a senior group advisor (or the head of the division), the executor shall specify in the card of the complaint (project) file whether the file is recommended to be retained permanently. If the case is recommended for permanent retention or in the case of creating a paper file for short-time storage documents (with a storage period of 3 years), the executor shall print the complaint (project) file card generated in the DM system, sign it, and attach it to the complaint case. The complaint (project) file shall be considered to be closed.

163. Within 2 (two) months, the closed files of complaints (NPT, NHRI, projects) shall be transferred to the archive of the Office in accordance with the procedure set out by these Rules of Procedure.

Section 5

Transfer of complaints, project files of NPT and NHRI to the archive

164. The archive of the Office shall be managed in accordance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Documents and Archives, the Rules for the Handling and Accounting of Documents approved by Order No V-118 (hereinafter – the Rules for the Handling and Accounting of Documents of the Chief Archivist of Lithuania of 4 July 2011, the Office Documentation Plan approved by the Head of the Office, other legal acts regulating the uniform system of management of state documents.

165. Responsibility for handling, retention and transfer to the archive of documents of divisions shall rest upon the heads of the divisions. Responsibility for handling, retention and transfer to the archive of applications, complaint files and related documents assigned to the Seimas Ombudsperson's advisor and the Reception Specialist shall rest upon the respective advisors and the Reception Specialist. Other civil servants and employees of the Office not assigned to subdivisions shall be responsible for the handling, retention and transfer to the archive of documents at their disposal.

166. The Archive of the Office shall be managed, and archival documents handled by an employee authorised for this purpose, in accordance with the Law on Documents and Archives, the Rules for the Handling and Accounting of Documents and other legal acts.

167. Completed complaint files shall be stored in the archive of the Office for 3 (three) years, except for files selected for permanent storage. Complaint files the retention period of which has expired, shall be selected for destruction. Files selected for destruction shall be destroyed in accordance with the Law on Documents and Archives of the Republic of Lithuania, the Index of General Document Storage Terms, approved by the Chief Archivist of Lithuania on 9 March 2011

by order no. V-100 "On Approval of the Index of General Document Storage Terms", Rules for the Handling and Accounting of Documents, Documentation Plans of the Office and other legal acts regulating the destruction of documents.

168. The employee responsible for the formation of complaints' files as well as NPT and NHRI project files, shall handle those files in accordance with the Rules for the Handling and Accounting of Documents and in the DM system shall create an Act for transfer of files to the archive, which together with the paper files shall be handed over to the employee of the Office, responsible for handling, storage and administration of the Office's archival documents.

169. Complaints (projects) files shall be processed according to their type:

169.1. if the file is recommended for permanent storage, it shall be a paper file and all the documents that make it up shall be included in such a file, that is: a) originals of paper documents and copies of documents related to them; b) digital or digitized documents of origin, printed from the DM system and certified with the stamp " Copy of an Electronic Document " with the signature and date of the certifying person. The documents of the permanent storage paper file shall be kept in chronological order (the file starts with the earliest received document and ends with the latest). The pages of this file must be numbered according to the procedure established in the Rules for the Handling and Accounting of Documents. The number of pages in the file cannot exceed 200 pages. If there are more pages, another volume of the file is created. A file left for permanent storage must have a title page and a final record with the signature of the file compiler (responsible person) and the date of processing;

169.2. if the file is for the short-term storage and consists of mixed documents, that is: paper, digital or digital documents of origin, a paper file shall be formed and the following shall be added to it: a) originals of paper documents and copies of documents related to them; b) printed out complaint file card and the general list of documents from the DM system, which shows all the data of the documents that make up the file;

169.3. if the file is for short-term storage and consists only of digital or digital origin documents, a paper file shall not be created. This file shall be stored in the DM system for the time specified in legal acts and other documents of the Office.

170. Information and documentary copies from files of complaints (projects) held by executors or in the archive shall be issued to individuals concerned on the basis of their written requests in compliance with provisions of the Law on the Right to Obtain Information and Reuse of Data, and to the Office employees – on the basis of their requests.

CHAPTER VII OTHER WORK ORGANISATION MATTERS

Section 1

Planning the activities of the Office and reports on the activities of the Seimas Ombudspersons

171. Divisions of the Office shall organise their work in line with the regulations of divisions approved by the Head of the Office. Regulations of divisions and job descriptions of employees shall be drawn up by the heads of those divisions who shall submit them to the General Affairs Division (employee) of the Office in charge of personnel management, and the latter shall refer them to the Head of the Office for approval.

172. Heads of the divisions shall be responsible for the performance of functions assigned to those divisions, organisation of work and fulfilment of assignments of the Head of the Office (Seimas Ombudsperson).

173. The Head of the Office shall approve the Strategic Action Plan of the Office. The Head of the Office may assign the organisation and coordination of the drawing up of this plan and

monitoring over the implementation of the approved plan to other employee or the group of employees. The General Affairs Division shall assist the Head of the Office in performance of the control of the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan.

174. The Head of the Office shall determine the annual tasks for employees and divisions directly subordinate to him/her; other tasks may also be determined.

175. The Seimas Ombudspersons shall submit to the Seimas the annual report on the activities of the previous calendar year (hereinafter – Report on Activities) following order and deadlines specified in the Law on the Seimas Ombudspersons.

176. The Seimas Ombudsperson's advisor and/or other employee authorised by the Head of the Office shall be responsible for the drawing up of the Report on Activities, shall organise and coordinate the collection and summarizing of the necessary information, the publication of the Report on Activities, take other necessary measures to ensure the timely presentation of the Report on Activities, etc. The employee in charge of communication of the Office shall guarantee the proper publication of the Report on Activities on the website of the Office.

177. Senior advisors to the Seimas Ombudspersons and other employees shall prepare and provide information necessary for the preparation of the Report on Activities in accordance with the procedure established by the Head of the Office.

178. The Head of the Office shall establish the procedure to be followed by employees and the heads of the divisions of the Office when reporting on their (divisions') performance, preparing information necessary for the drawing up of the Report on Activities and other reports.

Section 2

Publishing the information on activities of the Seimas Ombudsperson and the Office

179. Public comments on complaint investigations and other issues of the Office's activities shall be provided by the Seimas Ombudsperson, the Head of the Office or, on their behalf and having coordinated the content of the comments, the employee responsible for the communication or another employee of the Office, under their competence.

180. Information based on media inquiries, upon the order of the Head of the Office or the Seimas Ombudsperson and having coordinated the content of the answer, shall be provided following the procedure established by the Law on Provision of Informing to the Public, the Law on the Right to Obtain Information and Reuse of Data and other legal acts.

181. Statements signed by the Seimas Ombudspersons are published on the website of the Office in accordance with the procedure established by the Head of the Office.

182. Employees of the Office shall provide the General Affairs Division with information about their participation at events organized by other institutions and bodies. The General Affairs Division shall disseminate this information to the employees of the Office.

Section 3

Use of the seal

183. The Head of the Office shall be responsible for using and keeping the seal of the Office. The Head of the Office may authorise another employee of the Office to keep the seal; such employee shall be responsible for keeping and using the seal in accordance with the procedure set by legal acts.

184. The seal (of a smaller type) with the Lithuanian State Coat of Arms shall be used to certify the documentary copies, official certificates, for stamping permits, etc.

185. When the term of mandate of the Head of the Office expires or is terminated on other grounds set out under the Law on the Seimas Ombudspersons, the Head of the Office shall transfer

the Seal with the Lithuanian State Coat of Arms and the name of the Office to another Seimas Ombudsperson on the basis of a deed of transfer and acceptance.

Section 4

Transfer and takeover of the affairs, deputising

186. Duties of the Seimas Ombudsperson, who is temporarily unable to perform duties, shall be temporarily assigned to the other Seimas Ombudsperson by the Head of the Office.

187. When the term of mandate of the Seimas Ombudsperson expires or is terminated on other grounds established by the Law, the Seimas Ombudsperson shall hand over all files at his/her disposal to the employee of the Office responsible for the management of the archive on the basis of a deed of transfer and acceptance.

188. Where an advisor to the Seimas Ombudsperson is incapacitated due to illness or other reasons indicated in the legal acts, if possible, he/she shall notify to the effect the Head of the Office (or the employee responsible for personnel authorised by the Head of the Office) and the senior group advisor. Complaint files held by the advisor who remains incapacitated for more than 6 (six) weeks by order of the Head of the Office shall be assigned to another (other) advisor (advisors). The performance of other functions or assignments of the absent advisor shall be assigned by the Head of the Office to other employees of the Office.

189. By order of the Head of the Office performance of the main functions of other employee, who is temporarily incapacitated due to illness or other reasons indicated in the legal acts, shall be assigned to another employee. The Seimas Ombudspersons and other employees of the Office shall be notified to the effect by e-mail.

190. Upon replacement or dismissal of the Head of the Office, the Seimas Ombudspersons, or other employees, the affairs shall be transferred on the basis of a deed of transfer and acceptance of affairs (Annex to these Rules of Procedure). A deed of transfer and acceptance of affairs alongside the appendix (final settlement form) shall be countersigned (coordinated) by responsible persons, and the deed shall be approved by the Head of the Office or, on the instruction thereof, by the other employee. The transfer of complaints, projects and assignments shall also be registered in the DM system.

191. A group advisor or other employee of the Office, who is dismissed or goes on maternity and parental leave, must:

191.1. on the basis of a deed of transfer and acceptance, transfer to the senior group advisor the outstanding and controlled complaint files;

191.2. transfer to the immediate superior or other employee designated thereby the documents (in the case of outstanding assignments), held files, information and normative material;

191.3. transfer to responsible employees the books purchased with the Office funds, seals and stamps, room and safe-deposit box keys, tangible fixed assets, intangible assets, current assets obtained individually and held at his/her disposal;

191.4. transfer to the immediate superior all information relating to the possibilities to use special information resources: passwords, keywords and other conventional signs which grant access to special databases, provided that the employee has possessed them as a representative of the Office;

191.5. return all valid certificates, permits, etc. issued by the Office, except in the cases of going on maternity and parental leave;

191.6. deliver the employee responsible for personnel a completed deed of transfer and acceptance of affairs and its appendix – the final settlement form (Annex to these Rules of Procedure).

192. If an employee of the Office responsible for financial management is dismissed, the transfer and takeover of his duties shall be formalised by a deed of transfer and acceptance of affairs, which shall indicate the balances of all the accounts of the Office according to the accounting data.

CHAPTER VIII FINAL PROVISIONS

193. The actions of the Office in ensuring work during mobilization and martial law shall be provided for in the Office's mobilization plan approved by order of the Head of the Office.

194. Liquidation of threatened or occurring emergency situations and elimination of their consequences in the Office, as well as ensuring the continuity of the field of activity assigned to the competence of the Office during impending or existing emergency situations, shall be provided for in the Emergency Management Plan of the Office approved by the order of the Office.

195. All issues not discussed in these Rules of Procedure and other legal acts related to the Office's activities are decided by the Head of the Office according to his/her competence.

196. These Rules of Procedure can be changed by order of the Head of the Office.

Annex to
the Rules of Procedure of the
Seimas Ombudspersons' Office

(Form of the deed of transfer and acceptance of affairs)

THE SEIMAS OMBUDSPERSONS' OFFICE

DEED OF TRANSFER AND ACCEPTANCE OF AFFAIRS

APPROVED by

(position)

(signature)

(forename and surname)

_____ No _____

(date)

In accordance with _____

(document date, number and title)

_____ hereby transfers, and _____ hereby accepts
(forename and surname) *(forename and surname)*
these works and documents:

1. *(to specify the documents or documentary files, unfinished drafts of legal acts, etc. being transferred)*
2. ...

The Final Settlement Form constitutes an inseparable part to this Deed.

Transferred by

(position)

(signature)

(forename and surname)

Accepted by

(position)

(signature)

(forename and surname)

Appendix to
the Deed of transfer and acceptance of affairs No _____
(date)

(Settlement Form)
THE SEIMAS OMBUDSPERSONS' OFFICE

FINAL SETTLEMENT FORM

_____ No _____
(date)

(name of division and/or position, forename and surname)

of the Seimas Ombudspersons' Office has settled in full for the fixed and current tangible assets:

Employee responsible for administration of property of the Office

(signature, forename and surname)

Employee responsible for personnel

(position, signature, forename and surname)

Employee responsible for arrangement of documents

(position, signature, forename and surname)

Senior group advisor

(position, signature, forename and surname)

Immediate superior

(position, signature, forename and surname)
