

DRAFT YOUTH OMBUDSMAN SCORING RUBRIC

An interview rubric is a methodology where recruiters and hiring managers consistently ask the same series of questions. It's a system that scores all candidate interview responses against the same set of job-based criteria. The criteria are designed to evaluate the desired skills and qualifications for a given role.

The following questions are based on what Ohio foster care youth have identified as **must-have characteristics for a Youth Ombudsman**: *What does this skill, experience, or trait look like in practice?*

Scoring Scale:

N/A (0)	Poor (1)	Good (2)	Very Good (3)
Response does not reflect what we are looking for...	1 example provided, but lacks clear vision...	1-2 examples provided that demonstrate what we are looking for in candidate's answers.	3+ examples of thoughtful responses that demonstrate what we are looking for in candidate's answers.

Desired Characteristic	Interview Questions	What we are looking for in the candidate's answer	Score
1.) Commitment to system improvement	a.) What motivated you to apply for this position? b.) Share your vision for what this Office can accomplish and eventually become. c.) What skills, strengths, and/or personal characteristics do you possess that will enable you to be effective in this role? What sets you apart from other candidates?	a.) We are looking for their motivation to be to safeguard youth rights and to safeguard youth from potential harm. b.) We are looking for a focus on systems improvement, rather than career advancement. c.) We are looking for the candidate to specifically refer to this role being youth specific, and not to equate it with the Family Ombudsman Office. It will be a red flag if the candidate cannot distinguish between the two.	

	d.) What do you see as the role of child welfare?	<i>d.) We are looking for the candidate to be committed to level-setting throughout all 88 counties, statewide trends and improving child welfare statewide.</i>	
2.) Visionary leadership, rather than compliance with the system	<p>a.) What does intervening on behalf of the safety of a young person mean to you?</p> <p>b.) Describe a situation when you went up the chain of command to advocate for a young person.</p> <p>c.) Tell me about a time you were able to successfully negotiate on behalf of a client. What was the response, and how did you handle that response?</p> <p>d.) Have you ever worked on a project that involved documenting trends related to youth experience in the child welfare system?</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for a truth-finder, and someone who is able to impartially conduct an investigation.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for someone who is willing to go up the chain of command on behalf of a young person.</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for someone who is able to navigate through barriers, red tape and the status quo.</i></p> <p><i>d.) We are looking for someone who is skilled at tracking and documenting trends that aren't in the best interest of youth and bringing them to the attention of higher ups.</i></p>	
3.) Skill in communicating with children and teens	<p>a.) What experience do you have in communicating with teens who have been through trauma, including at-risk youth?</p> <p>b.) How do you build rapport and safeguard their trust?</p> <p>c.) In what ways do you think that the youth themselves should have a voice when it comes to their Safety, Permanence and Well-Being?</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for experience working with our population of youth, especially teens. Working with our population takes a different approach and requires compassion and understanding.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for the candidate to be able to inspire youth's trust.</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for the ability to empower youth, not just "serve" them.</i></p>	
4.) A sense of urgency when a young person needs to have an	a.) Define safety? What does it entail?	<i>a.) We are looking for understanding of both physical and emotional safety.</i>	

<p>unsafe situation addressed immediately</p>	<p>b.) How does discipline differ from abuse? How would you differentiate between the two?</p> <p>c.) What do you consider child abuse and neglect? Describe some of the telltale signs of abuse, including emotional and verbal.</p> <p>d.) Regarding allegations of abuse, what do you look for while conducting an investigation?</p> <p>e.) How quickly should a complaint be resolved?</p> <p>f.) Describe a time when you had to carry out crisis intervention.</p>	<p><i>b.) We are looking for the candidate to differentiate between discipline (helping a child learn to make a better choice next time) and punishment (making a child suffer or pay for having made a mistake)</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for familiarity with Ohio Revised Code and the definitions of abuse, neglect, and dependency because this office will be bound by those legal definitions.</i></p> <p><i>d.) We are looking for the candidate to recognize the signs of various types of abuse.</i></p> <p><i>e.) We are looking for a sense of urgency in addressing youth concerns.</i></p> <p><i>f.) We are looking for extensive experience in conducting investigations, since that will be the primary role of this Office.</i></p>	
<p>5.) Receptiveness to youth, rather than dismissing their concerns</p>	<p>a.) What are your plans to make this office welcoming to young people?</p> <p>b.) In what ways might it be more difficult for youth to have their concerns heard than for an adult to express concerns?</p> <p>c.) When youth reach out to the Office asking for help, walk me through how you plan to confer with a young person to review and resolve their concerns regarding their care, placement and services.</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for initiative when it comes to the need to be proactive in letting youth know that this Office exists, how to make contact, and what the Office can do to help.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for someone who recognizes that youth concerns are often dismissed just because of their age. If a candidate's first response was to talk about youth who might file false reports, that would be a red flag.</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for a sense of urgency and compassion. For the candidate to seek to understand the root issues, and get to the bottom of what is going on.</i></p>	

	d.) Describe how you prepare written opinions or decisions regarding cases.	<i>d.) We are looking for experience in doing this, as well as receptiveness to youth concerns, thoughtfully listening, and asking follow-up questions.</i>	
6.) Dedication to protect youth from retaliation when they report experiencing abuse or rights violations	<p>a.) For what reasons might children or teens hesitate to report being abused?</p> <p>b.) Describe the risks faced by youth when they self-report being abused or neglected.</p> <p>c.) What would you do in your role to seek to mitigate those risks? What safeguards could this Office put in place to protect youth from retaliation?</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for an understanding of the risk of retaliation for youth who speak out about abuse they are experiencing.</i></p> <p><i>b.) If a candidate's first response was to make a blanket statement that "all youth want to stay in their bio home," that would be a red flag.</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for the candidate to carefully consider how to respond to youth complaints without putting them at risk of retaliation.</i></p>	
7.) Sense of curiosity, rather than being tied to the status quo	<p>a.) Give me an example of when you thought outside the box when it comes to improving child welfare policy and practice.</p> <p>b.) Name a time when your creativity or alternative thinking solved a problem in your workplace.</p> <p>c.) Tell me about an experience in which you analyzed information and evaluated results to choose the best solution to a problem.</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for fresh eyes and a commitment to systems improvement.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for persistence, rather than becoming overwhelmed by hearing the same concerns multiple times and thinking, "Oh, that's just the way things are."</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for a candidate who is skilled in tracking overall trends.</i></p>	
8.) Not emotionally reactive, but rather firm and diplomatic	<p>a.) How do you handle high-pressure situations?</p> <p>b.) Describe a time when you had to tell someone in higher authority something</p>	<i>a.) We are looking for effective strategies for handling these kinds of situations. There are a number of ways that people can handle high-pressure situations that are either hurtful or harmful to themselves or others. The</i>	

	<p>that they did not want to hear. What approach did you take to convey your message?</p> <p>c.) Serving as a Youth Ombudsman might mean that not every decision you make will be popular. What will be your approach in communicating with someone who doesn't like what you have to say, and is displeased with you?</p>	<p><i>person needs to be able to mentally and emotionally deal with situations that occur.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for someone who is fair, credible and unwilling to compromise investigatory findings or cover up documented trends.</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for someone who is an active listener and willing reach out and engage with various entities, including the ability to navigate Crucial Conversations.</i></p>	
9.) Honest and not making false promises to youth	<p>a.) What would you tell a young person who called the office and asked for reassurances that they would definitely be removed from their current situation?</p> <p>b.) What would you tell a young person who reported abuse, but there was insufficient evidence to substantiate?</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for an understanding of how deeply youth's trust can be hurt by false promises, and that this would ultimately undermine the credibility of the Office as well.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for the ability to understand that youth will be traumatized and vulnerable, and need to be told the truth about what is going on.</i></p> <p><i>*This office is long-overdue and building trust at the beginning will be delicate. The Ombuds will need to be honest with youth about what is really going on.</i></p>	
10.) Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	<p>a.) What diversity, inclusion and or cultural competence training have you received and how have you applied what you learned on the job?</p> <p>b.) What does disproportionality mean, and how does this term apply to foster care?</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for a candidate for whom Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are guiding principles in their day-to-day work.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for an understanding that youth from different identify groups are often represented disproportionately in foster care, and may receive disparate services.</i></p>	

	c.) Share your vision to make this Office inclusive to youth, including respect for their chosen names and preferred pronouns.	<i>c.) We are looking for a commitment to being inclusive, and respect for youth's chosen identities.</i>	
11.) An understanding of trauma and how it impacts behavior	<p>a.) Tell us about your trauma-related education and training. Describe the impact of trauma on children and teens.</p> <p>b.) Tell us about a time you worked with a young person who was exposed to trauma. How did you respond to their specific needs?</p> <p>c.) Tell us some of the signs secondary traumatization, otherwise known as "compassion fatigue."</p> <p>d.) In what ways do you plan to seek to support yourself and fellow staff members in maintaining emotional health and a work-life balance?</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for a candidate for whom a trauma-informed lens is their internal compass that guides them in their daily work.</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for an understanding of physical and emotional safety. As well as recognition that being able to make choices, even small ones, can help the trauma victim regain a sense of choice and control.</i></p> <p><i>c.) We are looking for emotional acuity, which refers to becoming aware of your emotional state and paying attention to your behavioral responses.</i></p> <p><i>d.) We are looking for a commitment to identifying coping mechanisms for themselves and fellow staff. There is an emotional response to hearing about the abuse of others.</i></p>	
12.) Respect for individuals who have experienced foster care personally and willingness to hire staff members with lived experience in foster care	<p>a.) Describe to me the value of including those with "lived experience" in the day-to-day operations of this office.</p> <p>b.) How do you foresee incorporating the involvement of foster care youth and alumni in the future?</p>	<p><i>a.) We are looking for commitment to the value that former foster youth could bring to the office (i.e. outreach, web design, providing a sense of urgency, and inspiring the trust of their peers).</i></p> <p><i>b.) We are looking for willingness to consider establishing a cadre of former foster youth to support this office and be involved in a day-to-day basis (i.e. AmeriCorps, SAMSHA Peer Mentoring and/or paid interns)</i></p>	