

From: moniquepierel@aol.com [mailto:moniquepierel@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2009 12:29 PM
To: Ombudsman Program
Cc: Laufer, Pinchus
Subject: Fwd: USPTO considering an ombudsman pilot program - please comment by deadline

To Whom It May Concern,

Here are a few broad comments and questions pertaining to the Ombudsman Pilot Program:

- for clarity purposes, indicate on the website valid reasons why an ombudsman could be contacted, an explanation of the ombudsman's role, how a complainant can be assisted and how much time needs to pass between submitting a patent and contacting the ombudsman;
- a short and immediate email response from the ombudsman to the complainant indicating that a phone call will follow would help the complainant know that he/she is heard and his/her request is acknowledged (two important elements that can reduce the negative elements in a dispute);
- it's unclear how confidentiality will be maintained. If the "record of the database will be solely limited to the contact information" then how will other details, obtained during the initial phone conversation, be kept for subsequent follow-up and other needs;
- is there a form and/or a list of questions that the ombudsman has access to when acquiring the complainants' information that could give specific data for consistent information gathering needed for trends or for other type of research;
- is it your intention to have only one ombudsman for the US Patent and Trademark Office, or more than one. If more than one then how would duplicity and other in-house problems be avoided?
- who will the ombudsman report to?
- after the issue has been handled in-house by the appropriate personnel then not only could the "area send a message back to the ombudsman when the issue has been treated and the pro se applicant or applicant's representative has been notified," but also the ombudsman could contact the original complainant for feedback on how his/her issue has been handled. This could be an important means to acquiring additional research information and to "enhance customer service."

Please let me know if there is anything else I can do or if you would like any clarification to my comments or questions. I would appreciate follow-up information about this program. I am also curious to know when this pilot program will be implemented.

Regards,
Monique

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