

## **RETIRED JUDGE MARGIE VICTOR IS THE NEW INSURANCE OMBUDSMAN**

Retired Johannesburg High Court Judge Margie Victor, the first woman to be elected to the Johannesburg Bar Council in 1996, has been appointed as Ombudsman for Long-term Insurance and Ombudsman for Short-term Insurance for two years, commencing 1 January 2023.

Judge Victor, who replaces Judge Ron McLaren, will be the Ombudsman of the life (long-term) and non-life (short-term) insurance industries.

Possessed of a “progressive” approach and strongly favouring social reform, Judge Victor qualified as a social worker and then as an attorney. She was called to the bar to practice as an advocate. In 2008, after spending 25 years as an advocate at the Johannesburg Bar, she was elevated to the Johannesburg High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Local Division) as a judge. She was a judge of the Competition Appeal Court since 2015. In 2016 she served as Acting Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeal. In 2019 she was appointed as Acting Justice of the Constitutional Court until 2021.

Judge Victor's community work has included establishing a Montessori pre-primary school for underprivileged children. During her career as an advocate, she assisted many abused women with legal advice. In the late 1980's and early 1990's, she did extensive treason trial work, defending young members of communities accused of public violence and related issues. She also undertook a massive environmental law case assisting a small community living in the shadows of an industrial mill. When she was elected to the Johannesburg Bar Council, she led the call for gender and racial transformation in the leadership structures. She has written a seminal constitutional case enabling domestic workers to obtain compensation for workplace injuries or death.

Her contribution outside of judicial work includes being vice-president of the South African Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges. She was also involved in the WOZA Women's Academy of Learning Project - “Women Judges making a difference”. She has over the years mentored many legal practitioners to strengthen their skills.

Judge Victor said she was excited to fulfil her new role as Ombudsman, helping to resolve insurance disputes in an impartial, fair and timely manner.

“The Offices of both the Ombudsman for Short-term Insurance and the Ombudsman for Long-term Insurance are accessible to all. We enhance consumer confidence and will strive to improve insurance services by sharing our insights. But above all, everything we do will be guided by our sense of fairness.”

Denise Gabriels, Deputy Ombudsman for Long-term Insurance, said Judge Victor's achievements during her judicial career will serve her well to fill the large shoes left by Judge McLaren.

Edite Teixeira-Mckinon, CEO of the Office for Short-term Insurance, said: “Given her commendable track record in the judiciary, it is evident Judge Victor will be a

consummate Insurance Ombudsman who will strive to offer an efficient and quick turn-around on complaints."

**ABOUT THE OFFICES**

The Ombudsman for Short-term Insurance has jurisdiction over all types of short-term insurance products, including motor, house owners (buildings), householders (contents), cell phone, travel, disability and credit protection insurance, and commercial insurance.

The Ombudsman for Long-term Insurance has jurisdiction over complaints about long-term insurance products such as life insurance, funeral, long-term disability, credit life and health insurance policies.

The offices of both the Ombudsman for Short-term Insurance and the Ombudsman for Long-term Insurance provide the insuring public with a free, efficient and fair dispute resolution mechanism through an alternative dispute resolution process, applying the law and principles of fairness and equity.

For the Ombudsman for Short-term Insurance, visit website [www.osti.co.za](http://www.osti.co.za) or call 0860 726 890 or email [info@osti.co.za](mailto:info@osti.co.za).

For the Ombudsman for Long-term Insurance, visit website [www.ombud.co.za](http://www.ombud.co.za) or call 0860 103 236 or email [info@ombud.co.za](mailto:info@ombud.co.za).

**Issued by:**

Yogin Devan  
Meropa Communications  
(031) 201 0550 / 083 326 3962

**On behalf of the:** Ombudsman for Long-term Insurance and Ombudsman for Short-term Insurance