



Office for Disability

Accessible Complaints Procedures

It would be a pity to design a complaints procedure only to discover that people who seek to use it cannot access it; or worse that staff handling complaints are unaware of good practice processes.

The following general guidelines are for making a complaints procedure accessible to people with a disability.

Making complaints procedures accessible

- Ensure the procedure is easy to use and easy to understand (see Further information).
- Make available information about the right to complain.
- Make the complaint-handling process visible.
- Promote and publicise the complaint-handling process to staff, customers, members, and clients.
- Clearly identify the problems and complaints a procedure or process covers and does not cover.
- Provide the right for a support person to attend any interviews or meetings with the complainant.
- If the person wanting to make a complaint has a disability, they may:
 - Require assistance to make their complaint, such as an Auslan interpreter. This assistance should be provided and staff informed of how to manage this request.
 - Request someone else to lodge a complaint on their behalf. In this case, written permission must be given.
 - Require assistance in formulating and lodging their complaint.

- Provide more than one way to submit a complaint, such as by phone, in person, in a paper-based format, or online.
- Consider accessible formats or alternative formats (see Further information).
- There should be no cost associated with making a complaint.
- Complaint processes must be confidential.
- Advise the complainant of anticipated response timelines.
- Provide one point of contact for making complaints.
- Ensure that staff or volunteers responsible for handling complaints have adequate training in handling complaints, disability awareness and complex communication needs.

Further information

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) provides information and a free dispute-resolution process to help people resolve discrimination complaints and complaints of sexual harassment, and racial and religious vilification.

The VEOHRC also provides information on the development of complaints procedures. The website www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au contains guidance on:

- developing an effective complaints procedure
- an effective complaint procedure checklist
- resolving complaints.

See also: Office for Disability fact sheets “Accessible Formats” and “Inclusive Procedures” www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au

If you would like to receive this document in an accessible format, contact the Office for Disability:

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The link above was correct at the time of preparation. Contact the Office for Disability if the link no longer works.

This material has been produced by the Office for Disability, Department of Human Services, for use by VicHealth as part of the 'Everyone Wins' framework.