

General Warning

The purpose of this fact sheet is to give general introductory information about the complaints process. It does not contain legal advice.

WARNING: Alternative legal action should be considered before making a complaint. What is included in a complaint may be relevant to any current or future legal proceedings. If you are involved in legal action, you should immediately see a lawyer and not proceed with a complaint.

If you (or the complainant, if you are complaining on their behalf) want financial compensation, support or money you should see a lawyer before making a complaint.

General complaint information

Complaints are rarely about just one thing. When you have a problem, it may be that a number of things have gone wrong. Below are some of the common areas where issues may arise that could lead to a complaint.

Discrimination	Disability and NDIS services	Policing, Custody and Detention
Seniors and Aged Care supports and services	Consumer and Business disputes	Phone and Internet services
Banking, Insurance and Superannuation	Energy and Water services	Housing and Real Estate
Health Care services	Employment issues	Education and Training providers
Government Agencies and Departments	Child Safety and Protection	State Fines and Debts
Corruption	Privacy and Access to Information	Media and Publications

There are different complaint bodies to handle different types of complaints. You should consider the different pathways available to decide the most appropriate pathway for your circumstances. One event could lead to multiple complaints. That means you may need to lodge more than one complaint to have all of your concerns addressed.

The online triage tool on this website can help you to identify the different complaint bodies that may be able to assist you.

It is usually quickest and easiest to try to resolve a complaint directly with the person or body you are having a problem with. Many complaint handling bodies will not act on a complaint unless you have tried to resolve your complaint directly. If you do not feel it is safe or appropriate to complain directly, you should contact the relevant complaint body to discuss your situation.

Complaints involving discrimination

There are state and federal complaints bodies that handle complaints that are about discrimination. If your situation involves discrimination, you should consider making a discrimination complaint in addition to any other complaints. Discrimination may occur when someone is treated less favourably on the basis of: race; sex; gender; disability; age; sexuality; relationship status; pregnancy; caring responsibilities; or having or being thought to have an infectious disease.

WARNING: The state and federal bodies that handle discrimination complaints have different rules, including time limits. You can make a complaint to both the state and federal complaint bodies, but they may decide not to address your concerns if you have already complained elsewhere. For example, if you have already lodged a discrimination complaint to anti-discrimination NSW, it is likely that Australian Human Rights Commission will decide not to act on your complaint. Please carefully review the discrimination factsheets for information about your options before making a discrimination complaint.

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

In this fact sheet, we introduce the **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC)**. We outline how complaints can be made to VEOHRC.

VEOHRC is an independent organisation formed to protect and promote human rights in Victoria. You can make a complaint to VEOHRC if you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, vilification, or victimisation. VEOHRC will work with you and the person or organisation your complaint is about to help you find an outcome.

Legislation and Key Terms

Relevant Legislation: Below are links to legislation that is relevant to the work of the Victorian Equal opportunity and Human Rights Commission.

[Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 \(Vic\)](#)

[Equal Opportunity Act 2010 \(Vic\)](#)

[Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#)

[Change or Suppression \(Conversion\) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 \(Vic\)](#)

Key terms: Below are the key terms that appear throughout this factsheet and their meaning.

Complaint: Any information submitted to VEOHRC via the complaints form which is then assessed by them.

Victimisation: Being treated badly or unfairly because you have made (or intend to make) a complaint about discrimination, sexual harassment or racial and religious vilification, or have helped someone else to make a complaint.

Requests for discriminatory information: It is against the law to be requested or required (in writing or verbally) to supply information that could be used to form the basis of discrimination against someone else.

Direct discrimination: Direct discrimination happens when someone is treated unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by the law.

Indirect discrimination: This happens when there is an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that disadvantages a person, or a group of people, because of a personal characteristic.

Sex characteristics: This refers to physical traits like genitals, hormones, or chromosomes, for example, being intersex or having differences in sex development.

Sexual harassment: Unwelcome sexual behaviour that could make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be a single incident or repeated behaviour; a suggestive comment or an offensive joke. It may happen in the office, a work party or at school. It doesn't matter what the intention is, sexual harassment is against the law.

Protected characteristics: These are parts of who you are that are protected by law. No one is allowed to treat you unfairly or discriminate against you because of any of the following: age, disability, employment, expunged homosexual conviction, gender identity, industrial activity, lawful sexual activity, marital status, parent and carer status, physical features, political belief or activity, pregnancy and breastfeeding, profession, trade or occupation, race, religious belief or activity, sex, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, spent conviction, personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

Protected areas of public life: These are parts of everyday life that are covered by law. You can make a complaint if someone treats you unfairly in any of these areas: aged care and retirement, banking and insurance, clubs, employment, healthcare, hospitals and GPs, hotels, camping sites and rental properties, local government, Police, the courts and government departments, prisons and youth detention, schools, TAFE and universities, shops, restaurants and nightclubs, sports, transport services, volunteering.

Public Life: Public life includes things like workplaces, schools, renting a home, using services, or joining a club.

Step 1: What type of Complaints can be made to this body?**Discrimination**

You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly, excluded, or disadvantaged because of a personal characteristic protected by law.

To be covered, the discrimination must have happened in public life.

Complaint types include, but aren't limited to:

Sub-category	Example
Age	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your age, whether young or old.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 17-year-old First Nations girl was denied a gym membership because the staff said teenagers were "not committed customers." • A 60-year-old man with years of experience in construction was told he was "too old to be on-site."
Disability	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of a disability you have, had, are assumed to have, or may develop. Disability includes physical, sensory, intellectual, neurological, learning, and mental health conditions.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A woman with anxiety was asked to leave a cinema after having a panic attack, even though she asked staff for quiet support. • A man using a wheelchair was told the local tennis club "wasn't equipped" for him and was refused membership. • A student with ADHD was suspended repeatedly instead of being supported to manage his condition.
Racial	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your race, skin colour, ethnic origin, descent, or nationality.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Aboriginal woman was denied a rental property after the agent said they preferred "stable white tenants." • A man of Indian background was refused entry to a club after being told, "You people cause trouble."
Sex	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because you are a woman or a man, or based on assumptions about your sex.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A woman was denied a promotion at a law firm because she was pregnant and "might not come back." • A man was excluded from a single-parent support group run by a community organisation for being male.
Sexual Orientation	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your actual or assumed sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, etc.).</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gay man was refused service at a bar because the bouncer said they "don't want his type." • A bisexual student was told she couldn't bring her girlfriend to a school event.
Gender Identity	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your gender identity, such as being transgender or non-binary.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A trans man was told he couldn't use the men's change room at his gym, despite having updated his membership. • A non-binary teenager was regularly misgendered and excluded by teachers, even after informing them of their pronouns.
Religious Belief or Activity	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your religion, spiritual beliefs, or because you don't have a religion.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Muslim woman wearing a hijab was told she had to remove it to enter a nightclub. • A Christian man was refused leave to attend a religious holiday even though others were granted time off for personal events.
Parental or Carer Status	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because you are a parent, guardian, or carer for someone else.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single mother was denied a rental because the landlord said, "We don't rent to people with kids." • A man caring for his elderly mother was denied flexible hours despite other staff being allowed adjustments.
Pregnancy	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because you are pregnant, may become pregnant, or recently gave birth.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pregnant woman was fired after telling her employer she was expecting. • A café manager reduced a worker's hours after she announced her pregnancy, citing "safety concerns."

Breastfeeding	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because you are breastfeeding, or expressing milk.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A woman breastfeeding her baby in a shopping centre food court was asked to leave. • A worker was denied a private space to express milk and told to "do it in the toilet."
Political Belief or Activity	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your political beliefs, activities, or lack of them.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A council worker was demoted after it was discovered she had attended a protest in her own time. • A student was penalised by a teacher after expressing conservative political views in a class discussion.
Industrial Activity	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly for being part of a union or taking part in workplace negotiations or strikes.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man was overlooked for promotion after joining the union. • A retail worker was penalised for refusing to cross a lawful picket line.
Lawful Sexual Activity	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of legal, private sexual activity.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A woman who disclosed she worked in the adult industry was denied service at a local clinic.
Marital Status	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because you are single, married, de facto, divorced or widowed.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A divorced man was refused access to a parenting program because it was "just for couples."
Physical Features	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your body shape, facial features, height, weight, or other physical traits.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A woman was refused a front-of-house job at a bar because the manager said she wasn't "attractive enough." • A short man was told he couldn't work in security "because people wouldn't take him seriously."
Spent Convictions	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of a criminal record that is legally spent.</p>

	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man was denied a job in a café after a background check showed a minor offence from over 10 years ago that was spent.
Personal Association	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your relationship with someone who has a protected attribute (e.g. race, disability, sexuality).</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man was denied a club membership after they found out his partner was transgender.
Employment Activity	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because you asked about your pay or rights at work, raised a concern, or took part in discussions about workplace conditions.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Jen is a retail worker and was rostered off indefinitely after asking why she was being paid less than others.</p>
Expunged Homosexual Conviction	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of a historical homosexual conviction that has been legally expunged.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Hamish was denied a volunteer role at a local charity after a spent conviction, later expunged, was raised in a background check.</p>
Profession, Trade or Occupation	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of the kind of work you do, including lawful jobs that others might disapprove of.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Jamie works in the adult industry and was refused treatment at a medical clinic after the receptionist found out about her profession.</p>
Sex Characteristic	<p>You should make a complaint if you were treated unfairly because of your physical sex characteristics, such as being intersex or having variations in sex development.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intersex person was told they could not use the changerooms at their gym. • A student was mocked by teachers for having “ambiguous” sex characteristics and excluded from health classes.
Lawful Exclusions	<p>All protected attributes are generally covered across all of these areas unless a specific lawful exception applies. These exceptions are narrow and must meet legal criteria.</p> <p>Some situations where limited discrimination may be lawful include:</p>

- **Single-sex clubs:** A club may lawfully restrict membership to one sex if that is its primary purpose.
- **Competitive sport:** Discrimination based on sex, age, or disability may be lawful where strength, stamina, or physique are relevant.
- **Religious organisations:** Some religious bodies may make employment or membership decisions based on religious belief or sex, in line with doctrine.
- **Positive action:** Measures designed to promote substantive equality (known as special measures) are allowed and not considered discrimination.

If an organisation claims an exception, it must still show it meets the requirements under the law.

Sexual Harassment, Vilification and Victimisation

You should make a complaint if you experienced Sexual Harassment, Vilification or Victimisation. These are serious behaviours that are unlawful under Victorian law and go beyond general discrimination. They cover situations where you were sexually harassed, targeted because of your race or religion, or treated badly for standing up for your rights or helping someone else do so.

Sub-category	Example
Sexual Harassment	<p>You should make a complaint if someone made you feel humiliated, offended or unsafe through unwanted sexual behaviour. This includes touching, sexual jokes, staring, repeated messages, or requests for sex.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A young woman was sent explicit messages by her supervisor after hours.</i> • <i>A non-binary student was repeatedly stared at and propositioned by another student who made sexual comments.</i>
Racial or Religious Vilification	<p>You should make a complaint if someone encouraged hatred, serious contempt or ridicule of you because of your race or religion. This includes hate speech, abuse, threats or public encouragement of violence and can be both in person or online.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A group of young Muslim men were verbally abused at a football match while others nearby encouraged the abuse.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>An Aboriginal woman's photo was used in a racist meme spread online.</i>
Victimisation	<p>You should make a complaint if you were punished or treated badly because you made a complaint, helped someone else, or stood up for your rights.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A man was moved to night shifts after helping a co-worker file a discrimination complaint.</i> <i>A woman was left out of team meetings after making a sexual harassment report.</i>

Step 2: What is the Jurisdiction of the complaints body?

Jurisdiction	Description
State	VEOHRC hears complaints under the laws of Victoria.
Geographical Scope	VEOHRC can usually accept complaints about incidents or behaviour that happened in Victoria. Additionally, if your complaint is about religious or racial vilification, the Commission can accept the complaint even if the incident happened outside Victoria as long as one of the participants (i.e. you or the other person) is a resident of Victoria.
Time Limitations	There is no fixed statutory time limit under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic). However, complaints should be made as soon as possible. VEOHRC may decline to deal with very old complaints, and VCAT may refuse to hear cases if too much time has passed.

Exclusions	<p>VEOHRC can handle complaints about discrimination only if the incident or behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has happened in an area of public life that is protected by the law – such as in recruitment or at work, in education, in the delivery of goods and services, or in accommodation, sport or clubs; or • is about something that happened because of at least one personal characteristic that is protected by the law – such as your race, disability, sex, age, sexuality or gender identity. <p>Other exclusions include where the complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • should be dealt with in another forum (such as the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal or the Victorian Ombudsman); • is about a Commonwealth body; • is not related to discrimination and instead relates to a crime or to consumer rights; • is related to breaches of human rights under the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities</i>. Such a complaint should be directed to the Victorian Ombudsman; or • is related to general or specific types of discrimination which is accepted by law. This includes situations where discrimination is necessary to protect someone's health and safety.
Exercise of discretion	<p>VEOHRC can exercise discretion not to deal with complaints if the complaint is not within its jurisdiction, in which case the complainant may be redirected to a more appropriate forum. If the complaint is not accepted, the Commission will inform you of its decision and provide a reason for rejecting the complaint.</p>

Step 3: Who can you make a complaint against?

Respondent	Description
Individuals	Complaints can be made about individuals if they were directly involved in unlawful behaviour like discrimination, sexual harassment, vilification, or victimisation, and the behaviour occurred in a public setting or context (such as a workplace, school, or service environment).
Employers	Complaints can be made about employers if they are responsible for the behaviour (e.g. failed to prevent discrimination or harassment), or if the unfair treatment occurred during recruitment, employment, or termination.
Managers and Colleagues	You can complain about colleagues, managers or supervisors who personally engaged in discrimination, sexual harassment or victimisation. Their actions are assessed within the employment context.

Service Providers	Complaints can be made against providers of goods, services, and facilities (including healthcare, public transport, banking, retail, entertainment, government services, and more) if discrimination or harassment occurred in the course of accessing those services.
Landlords, Real Estate Agents and Accommodation Providers	Complaints can be made about anyone involved in the provision of accommodation (including landlords, real estate agents, caravan park operators, or supported housing facilities) if the complaint relates to discrimination in rental or access.
Education Providers	Complaints can be made about schools, universities, TAFEs, and childcare centres if unlawful conduct occurred during enrolment, participation, or provision of support or curriculum.
Clubs and Sporting Organisations	You can complain about clubs that provide facilities and benefits to members (including sporting, social or community clubs) if they discriminated unlawfully or failed to act on complaints. Clubs must generally have over 30 members and operate for member benefit.
Government Departments and Public Officials (State or Local)	Complaints can be made about Victorian public sector bodies, local councils, or their officers if they engage in unlawful discrimination or related behaviour while delivering services or performing official duties.
Professional and Trade Licensing Bodies	You can complain about a licensing or registration authority (e.g. for builders, real estate agents, or teachers) if they discriminated during application or renewal processes.
Exclusions	<p>VEOHRC cannot investigate complaints about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth government bodies: VEOHRC can't investigate complaints about federal bodies like Centrelink, Medicare, the ADF, or immigration. These must go to the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC). • Private Individuals in Personal/Private Contexts: You generally can't complain to VEOHRC about behaviour that occurs purely in private life (e.g. between family, housemates, or friends) unless it crosses into a public area like accommodation or work. • Businesses or Conduct Outside Victoria: VEOHRC can only deal with matters that occurred in Victoria, or that involve a Victorian respondent or complainant. Cross-border issues may need referral elsewhere. • Complaints Only About Human Rights (Charter): If your complaint is only about a breach of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (e.g. police misconduct without discrimination), this is handled by the Victorian Ombudsman, unless it's part of a broader discrimination issue.

Step 4: Are you eligible to make a complaint?

Eligibility	Description
Who can make a complaint?	<p>Any person who has experienced discriminatory behaviour or incidents in Victoria.</p> <p>Any person who has experienced vilification anywhere if any person involved in the incident is a resident of Victoria.</p> <p>You can make a complaint on behalf of someone else such as a friend or family member but you require their consent.</p>
Pre-requisite steps	<p>If you are thinking about making a complaint, there are some important things you should know.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service is voluntary: VEOHRC cannot compel anyone to participate. Any party can choose to withdraw from the process at any time. • VEOHRC does not take sides: It does not advocate for or represent anyone in the process. • VEOHRC is not a court or tribunal: It does not have the power to make findings about a complaint or make decisions about the appropriate outcome to resolve it. • The process is confidential: Anything said or done in the process generally cannot be used in any related court or tribunal proceeding.
Can complaints be made on behalf of someone?	Complaints can be made on behalf of another person. Before accepting such a complaint, VEOHRC will ask the person who experienced the discriminatory behaviour for their consent.
Exclusions	<p>Complaints about discrimination cannot be made where the behaviour or incident took place outside Victoria.</p> <p>Complaints about vilification cannot be made unless the incident took place in Victoria or any one of the parties involved in the incident are residents of Victoria.</p>

Step 5: What remedies are available at this body?

Power	Description
Conciliation	<p>If your complaint fits within the law, VEOHRC may offer conciliation (a private, informal process where a trained conciliator helps you and the person or organisation you complained about talk through the issue and try to resolve it).</p> <p>The conciliator's role is to stay neutral and help both sides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the issues • Explore possible outcomes • Reach an agreement that works for everyone <p>The conciliator will talk to you about the outcome you're seeking, and if the other party agrees to take part, they'll help decide the best way to run the conciliation. This might be over the phone, in writing, or in a meeting.</p> <p>Possible outcomes through conciliation:</p> <p>If both parties agree, outcomes may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An apology or statement of regret: acknowledging what happened and its impact • Financial compensation: to cover things like lost income, counselling, or emotional distress • Changes to policies or practices: such as updating complaint procedures or removing discriminatory rules • Equal opportunity or cultural awareness training: for individuals or staff involved • Reinstating a job or service: putting someone back in a role, or restoring access to a rental, education or service • A letter of reference or clarification for future employers • A promise to stop the behaviour: like ending harassment or not contacting the person again • Review of a decision: such as reconsidering a job rejection or service denial • Explanation of what happened: if the person just wants answers • Internal or public acknowledgement: including a formal statement of commitment to fair treatment • Keeping a record of the complaint: so the organisation can track issues and improve practices <p>If an agreement is reached, the complaint is resolved and the matter ends there.</p>

If no agreement is reached, VEOHRC will close the complaint. but you still have the right to apply to VCAT (the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal) for a legal decision.

Step 6: Preparing your complaint. What should it include?

Requirement	Description
Format	<p>Complaints can be lodged using the online form, by email or by phone. A complaint can be made in any language.</p> <p>If you would like the assistance of an interpreter or translator that can be arranged free of charge.</p> <p>If you need help understanding or participating in the process, you can contact VEOHRC to get more information.</p>
Personal Details	In most cases, you cannot make a complaint anonymously. To understand your complaint, VEOHRC requires your personal details including your name and contact details.
Respondent's Details	VEOHRC will ask for the name and contact details of the person or organisation your complaint is about.
Type of outcome you would like	You will need to describe the type of outcome you would like from the conciliation process. This could be an apology, financial compensation or changes to an organisation's policy.
Relevant Facts	<p>Try to describe the main events leading to the complaint in a logical order and in your own words. It may be helpful to write these down before submitting the complaint.</p> <p>If you believe you experienced discrimination, you should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where the incident or behaviour took place • who was involved • why you believed this incident or behaviour occurred (e.g. because of your race, sex, disability etc.) <p>The area of public life where the discrimination occurred is important to include. VEOHRC can only accept complaints about behaviour or incidents which took place in an area of public life.</p> <p>Keep any documents or notes relevant to the complaint in one file. VEOHRC will ask for any documents relevant to the complaint. It is not necessary to provide documents. But providing documents if you have them will help the conciliator reach a fair outcome.</p>
What NOT to include	Do not include information which is not relevant to your complaint.
Additional information you need to know	VEOHRC can make adjustments to the process to help you participate. This includes providing an interpreter free of charge.

If you are not sure whether to make or complaint or need help understand what to include in the complaint, you can contact VEOHRC to confidentially discuss your options. VEOHRC can also help you make a complaint.

Step 7: Lodging your complaint and next steps.

Step	Description
Where to lodge your complaint	<p>Online form: https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/complaints/make-a-complaint/</p> <p>Email: send an email to complaints@veohrc.vic.gov.au with your issue</p> <p>Post: send your complaint in writing by post to Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, Level 3, 204 Lygon Street, Carlton, Victoria 3053</p> <p>Telephone: 1300292153 Monday to Friday, 10am - 2pm (excluding public holidays) Calls to this number are free for most mobile users, but some networks may incur a fee. VEOHRC does not charge any fee for requesting information or help to file a complaint.</p> <p>Interpreter service: VEOHRC has access to interpreters including through Auslan. If you need an interpreter, please let them know.</p>
Next Steps	<p>Making a complaint online or on the phone will take you between 15 to 30 minutes.</p> <p>VEOHRC may ask you for more information or documentation to help with the complaint assessment.</p>
Triage	<p>Once you make a complaint, VEOHRC will assess it to see if they can help you resolve it. If your complaint is accepted, VEOHRC will contact you to discuss the outcome you are seeking. VEOHRC will then notify the person or organisation your complaint is about and invite them to participate to resolve the issue.</p> <p>VEOHRC resolves most complaints within six months, but some will be fast-tracked if they require urgent action. For example, if someone is about to lose their job.</p>
Out of jurisdiction complaints	<p>If the complaint is not within VEOHRC's jurisdiction, this will be explained to you, and you will be provided with information about other avenues that may be able to help.</p> <p>If the complaint is not accepted for some other reason, VEOHRC will explain its reasons for not accepting your complaint and will suggest next steps.</p>
In jurisdiction complaints	<p>If the complaint is within VEOHRC's jurisdiction, a conciliator will contact you to discuss your complaint and the outcome you are seeking.</p>

	<p>The conciliator will notify the person or organisation your complaint is about (the respondent), provide them with a copy of your complaint and invite them to participate in the process. The conciliator will only provide your name to the respondent and not your personal details.</p> <p>If the respondent agrees to participate, the conciliator will suggest the best type of conciliation.</p> <p>Your conciliator will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give all participants an opportunity to share their point of view about what happened • promote frank, honest, and open discussions about possible solutions • encourage the participants to work together to reach a mutually agreeable outcome. <p>Most complaints which are accepted are resolved within 6 months. Some complaints may be fast-tracked if they require urgent action.</p>
Conciliation	<p>The time set aside for a conciliation conference can be flexible and dependent on the needs of the participants. Usually, a conciliation conference goes for about 2-3 hours.</p> <p>If you do not wish to speak directly with the person you complained about, the conciliator can organise a shuttle negotiation. This is where the conciliator shares information between the parties and helps the parties to negotiate by phone or email, without any direct contact between the parties.</p> <p>You do not need a lawyer or advocate, but you can choose to bring one.</p> <p>You can bring a neutral support person such as a friend or a family member to provide emotional support during the conciliation.</p>
Assessment/ Investigation	<p>VEOHRC does not investigate or decide whether there has been a breach of the law.</p> <p>If you wish to get a decision on whether the discrimination you experienced was a breach of law, VEOHRC will direct you to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).</p> <p>VCAT makes decisions as to whether discrimination, sexual harassment, vilification, or victimisation has occurred.</p>
Additional information you need to know	<p>It is a good idea to keep a copy of the complaint made.</p> <p>You should update the complaint body about any changes that impact on your complaint.</p> <p>You should try to provide all relevant information at the outset. If you drip feed information over time, it can slow your complaint down.</p>

Step 8: Post-complaint – what if you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint?

Avenue	Description
Review opportunities	<p>The outcome of the conciliation cannot be reviewed or appealed in a court or tribunal.</p> <p>If you are not satisfied with the result of the conciliation, you may wish to pursue an action in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to determine if the discrimination you experienced was a breach of law.</p> <p>You may wish to seek legal advice to explore other legal options.</p>
Additional information you need to know	<p>It is not possible to review or appeal the outcome of the conciliation. However, you can complain about the quality of service you receive at VEOHRC. This includes feedback about the service or concerns about any staff member.</p> <p>If you are not satisfied with the service or wish to provide feedback, you must first raise it with the staff member who has been assisting you.</p> <p>If this does not resolve your concerns, or you are not comfortable doing this, you can ask the person's manager to handle your complaint.</p> <p>You can also complain about VEOHRC to the Victorian Ombudsman, using the details below:</p> <p>Victorian Ombudsman</p> <p>Level 2, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000</p> <p>Telephone: (03) 9613 6222</p> <p>Toll free: 1800 806 314 (regional only)</p>

Step 9: Other bodies that handle complaints about discrimination:

Complaint body	Description
Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)	<p>Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) can hear and decide cases about unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation or vilification under the <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> (Vic) or the <i>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001</i> (Vic). VCAT can also grant and revoke exemptions under the Equal Opportunity Act.</p>
Australian Human Rights Commission	<p>The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) can handle complaints about discrimination that occurs in employment, education, the provision of goods and services, accommodation, sport or the administration of Commonwealth laws and services. If you have experienced discrimination, bullying or harassment on the basis of you sex, disability, race, age or sexual preference the AHRC may be able to help.</p> <p>There are also State Government discrimination complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.</p>

State Human Rights and Equal Opportunity bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Human Rights Commission • Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW • Queensland Human Rights Commission • Equal Opportunity Commission South Australia • Equal Opportunity Tasmania • Equal Opportunity Commission Western Australia • Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission
Consumer Affairs Victoria	<p>Consumer Affairs Victoria (CSV) takes complaints from the public where a business may not have complied with the law. In most cases, the complaints are not individually investigated. CAV provides tailored services to resolve disputes only in limited circumstances where a member of the public are particularly vulnerable from harm by a business or rental provider.</p>
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	<p>The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) can handle complaints about the way personal information has been handled by Australian Government agencies and some private organisations. The OAIC can also review freedom of information decisions that are made by Australian Government agencies and ministers.</p> <p>There are also State Government privacy and information complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.</p>
National Anti-Corruption Commission	<p>The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) handles complaints about serious or systemic corruption in the Australian Government public sector.</p> <p>There are also a State Government corruption complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.</p>
Public Transport Ombudsman	<p>The Public Transport Ombudsman (PTO) considers complaints from Victorian public transport users, and from individuals who've been affected by public transport-related activities in Victoria. This includes complaints about discriminatory behaviour you may have experienced at the hands of public transport staff such as drivers, authorised officers and customer service staff.</p> <p>Complaints about behaviour by private individuals on public transport are more appropriately handled by VEOHRC.</p>
eSafety Commissioner	<p>The eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) helps Australians prevent and deal with harm caused by serious online abuse or illegal and restricted online content. It investigates cyberbullying and cyber abuse including sexual harassment.</p> <p>Reporting to eSafety is more appropriate if you are seeking action such as removal of illegal, harmful or discriminatory online content about you.</p>

	Reporting to VEOHRC is more appropriate where the behaviour or incident is discriminatory but does not meet the threshold of violating the Online Safety Act.
Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC)	<p>The Health Care Complaints Commissioner (HCCC) can handle complaints about health-related matters involving public authorities.</p> <p>Complaint about to clinical or medical decisions are best handled by the HCCC which has expertise in these matters.</p> <p>Complaints about discrimination experienced in public hospitals, public health services, and the health services provided in correctional settings are more appropriately handle by the VEOHRC.</p>
Fair Work Commission	<p>The Fair Work Commission (FWC) investigates complaints about workplace behaviour and disputes – this includes complaints about discrimination at the workplace or sexual harassment at the workplace.</p> <p>Like the VEOHRC, the FWC also resolves disputes through conciliation. In addition to conciliation, it can resolve disputes through mediation. If these informal processes fail, the FWC can undertake a formal legal process which requires parties to attend a hearing or conference at the Fair Work tribunal. The tribunal can make binding orders about what the parties should do to resolve the dispute. This may include compensation for unfair dismissal or stopping certain practices at the workplace.</p>
Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission	<p>Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) prioritises investigations into allegations of serious or systemic public sector corruption and police misconduct. Complaints to IBAC can be made if they involve serious misconduct by public officials which is likely to continue if nothing is done.</p> <p>It is more appropriate to make a complaint to VEOHRC if it involves behaviour or conduct which does not amount to serious misconduct. This may include discriminatory statements or minor duty failures.</p>
Victorian Ombudsman	<p>The Victorian Ombudsman can handle complaints about Victorian Government agencies. – including complaints about discriminatory behaviour experienced when interacting with government agencies.</p> <p>The Victorian Ombudsman can handle all complaints related to breaches of human rights, even if this does not relate to discrimination.</p> <p>The Ombudsman cannot look into complaints about the police or about private organisations like clubs, private rental agencies, or private schools. Neither the Ombudsman nor VEOHRC can look into complaints about Commonwealth government organisations such as Centrelink, the Australian Tax Office or Australia Post.</p>
Victoria Police	The Victoria Police can handle criminal complaints about sexual harassment, abuse and other types of behaviours which may be crimes. It is more appropriate to make a complaint to the Victoria Police if the incident involves violence or physical or verbal abuse. A complaint to the police can be made even if the incident takes place in

a private place or does not involve discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics.

Complaints should be made to the VEOHRC if the incidents take place in areas of public life, do not involve violence and are not serious enough to be considered criminal offences. The VEOHRC cannot investigate your complaint. It only offers conciliation.

Need help to preparing or pursuing your complaint?

Below are organisations that may be able to help you to make your complaint, provide support or advocacy during the complaint process or give you more information.

Organisation	Contact Details	How they can help
VEOHRC	Website: https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/ Telephone: 1300 292 153	Make a complaint about discrimination experienced in an area of public life.
Translating and Interpreter Service	Website: www.tisnational.gov.au Telephone: 131 450	Provide support to people if English is not their first language.
National Relay Service	Website: www.accesshub.gov.au	Provides a range of services to support people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment to communicate.
VALS	Website: https://www.vals.org.au/ Telephone: Melbourne (03) 9418 5999 Toll free: 1800 064 865	Provides legal assistance and support services for members of the Koori community.
Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria	Website: https://www.fclc.org.au/	Community legal centres give free and confidential legal help to people in need

Self-help tools and additional resources

Resource	How this helps
Make a complaint	Make a complaint to VEOHRC.
Make an anonymous report	Information on making an anonymous report which will not be subject to the conciliation process.
How to make a complaint	Information on the complaints process.
What happens when a complaint is accepted	Information on what happens after a complaint is accepted by VEOHRC.
What happens when a complaint is made about you	Information on what to do if someone makes a complaint about you.
Understanding your rights	Information on the various rights you have under Victorian laws.

<u>Understanding discrimination</u>	Information on what is discrimination and the types of discrimination VEOHRC can take complaints about.
<u>Understanding sexual harassment</u>	Information on what is sexual harassment and the types of behaviour VEOHRC can take complaints about.