

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 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.

Wage Inspectorate Victoria

In this fact sheet, we introduce Wage Inspectorate Victoria. We outline how complaints can be made by workers, parents, contractors, and members of the public to the Inspectorate.

Wage Inspectorate Victoria is a state government body that enforces key Victorian employment laws. It investigates complaints about wage theft, unlawful child employment, long service leave breaches, and unfair treatment of owner drivers and forestry contractors. The Inspectorate can take enforcement action against individuals or businesses that break these laws, including warnings, compliance directions, and prosecutions. This fact sheet explains who can complain, what to include, and what to expect after you lodge a complaint.

Legislation and Key Terms

Relevant Legislation:

- [Wage Theft Act 2020 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Child Employment Act 2023 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Long Service Leave Act 2018 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#)

Key terms:

Child employment: When a person under 15 years old is employed to do work. In Victoria, special rules and licences apply to protect children in the workplace.

Complainant: A person who makes a complaint to Wage Inspectorate Victoria.

Complaint: A report made to the Inspectorate about something that may be against the law, such as wage theft, illegal child employment, or denial of long service leave.

Contractor: A person or small business that provides services under a contract, not as an employee. This includes owner drivers and forestry contractors covered by specific Victorian laws.

Enforcement action: Steps the Inspectorate can take if it finds that a law has been broken, such as issuing a warning, requiring the issue to be fixed, or prosecuting the employer.

Employer: A person, business, or organisation that hires someone to perform work. Employers have legal responsibilities under Victorian law.

Investigation: A formal process where the Inspectorate looks into a complaint, including reviewing documents, interviewing people, and visiting workplaces.

Jurisdiction: The legal power a body has to deal with certain types of complaints, laws, or people. If something is “outside jurisdiction”, the Inspectorate cannot act on it.

Long service leave: Paid leave that a worker becomes entitled to after working for a long period with the same employer or in the same industry, usually after seven years in Victoria.

Owner driver: A small transport business where the person owns and drives their own vehicle to carry goods for others. Special protections apply under Victorian law.

Prosecution: Legal action taken in court by the Inspectorate against someone who is believed to have broken the law, such as through wage theft or illegal child labour.

Respondent: The person, business, or organisation that a complaint is made about.

Wage theft: When an employer dishonestly underpays a worker or withholds entitlements like wages, leave, or superannuation (under Victorian law, this must involve dishonest intent).

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

Complaints to WIV	
Wage Inspectorate Victoria handles complaints about certain breaches of Victorian employment laws. These include wage theft, unlawful child employment, denial of long service leave, and unfair treatment of owner drivers or forestry contractors.	
Sub-category	Example
Underpaid or Unpaid Wages and Entitlements (Wage Theft)	You should make a complaint if your employer has intentionally paid you less than you earned or refused to pay wages or entitlements you are owed. This covers situations where an employer deliberately underpays hourly rates, overtime, penalties, superannuation or other benefits. It's against the law in Victoria for an employer to dishonestly withhold your pay or entitlements. If you suspect the underpayment is not a mistake but done on purpose, you can report it as wage theft. <i>Example: Priya works in a café and regularly works 10 hours but gets paid for only 8. Her boss knows she's doing extra hours off the clock and refuses to pay the difference.</i>
Falsifying Pay Records to Hide Underpayments (Wage Theft)	You should make a complaint if your employer falsifies, alters or forges records of your work hours or pay in order to hide underpayments. This might look like changing timesheets, pay slips or other employee records so it appears you worked less or were paid more than you actually were. Faking records to cover up owed wages is a crime under Victoria's wage theft laws. If your employer is creating false records to avoid paying you correctly, you should report it. <i>Example: Marco notices that the hours on his official payslips are always lower than the hours he actually worked. He suspects his employer is editing his time records to avoid paying overtime rates.</i>
Deliberately Not Keeping Pay Records (Wage Theft)	You should make a complaint if your employer fails to keep proper pay and entitlement records on purpose to hide wrongdoing. Employers are legally required to maintain accurate records of wages, hours, leave and other entitlements. Deliberately not keeping these records (for example, paying in cash with no payslips or destroying timesheets) to gain a financial advantage is illegal. If your boss cannot or will not provide pay records and you suspect it's intentional, you should report this behaviour. <i>Example: Tasha's employer pays her cash-in-hand with no payslips or written record of hours. When Tasha asked for a record of her employment, her boss refused. This raises a red flag that the employer might be intentionally avoiding record-keeping to cover up underpayments.</i>
Denied or Incorrect Long Service Leave Entitlements	You should make a complaint if your employer denies you the long service leave you've earned or miscalculates it so you lose out. In Victoria, most workers who stay with one employer for 7 years or more are entitled to paid long service leave. It is against the law for an employer to refuse to let you take your long service leave or to withhold payment you're due when you qualify. Even if mistakes (or deliberate choices) by

	the employer cause underpayment of long service leave, the result is that you're not receiving the benefit you worked for. You can report an employer who isn't following the Long Service Leave Act 2018, for example, not paying out your leave when you leave the job or not allowing you to take the time off once eligible. <i>Example: After 8 years with the company, Fatima tries to take her long service leave, but her employer keeps making excuses and won't approve the leave or pay her for it. They claim a company policy nullifies some of her accrued leave. Fatima knows that employers must honour long service leave rights and can't withhold these entitlements by using internal policies that go against the law.</i>
Employing a Child Under 15 Without a Permit or Licence	You should make a complaint if you know of a business employing children under the age of 15 without the required child employment licence. In Victoria, it's generally illegal to employ someone under 15 years old unless the employer has obtained a Child Employment Licence from the Wage Inspectorate. Hiring kids without this license (whether paid or unpaid work) is a crime and can be penalised. This rule exists to ensure there's oversight and that children's safety and education aren't being compromised. If a child (under 15) is working at a shop, restaurant, farm, or any business without the proper permit in place, that's grounds for a complaint. (Families employing their own children in a family business are an exception, and school-arranged work experience has separate rules, but other businesses must have a licence.) <i>Example: Jake is 14 and has been working evenings at a local takeaway shop. His neighbour learns that the shop never applied for a child employment licence. Jake is also not related to the owners.</i>
Unsafe or Illegal Work Conditions for Children (Under 15)	You should make a complaint if an employer allows a child under 15 to work in ways that violate the child employment conditions or puts the child's wellbeing at risk. Victorian law strictly limits the type of work and hours children can do to protect their health, safety, and education. For example, children under 15 can only do light work that isn't harmful, and cannot work during school hours or late at night. They must get proper rest breaks and supervision. Certain jobs (like on a construction site, on a fishing boat, or door-to-door sales) are completely off-limits for kids due to safety risks. You should report it if you see or know of a child being made to work excessive hours, in dangerous environments, without required supervision, or in any way that breaks the rules set out in the Child Employment Act 2023. This includes situations in entertainment or advertising where a mandatory Code of Practice applies. For instance, if a child performer is being placed in unsafe or inappropriate situations. <i>Example: A 13-year-old girl, Lin, is hired to help in a warehouse and sometimes works during school hours and late into the evening moving heavy boxes. Her employer doesn't provide extra breaks and there's minimal supervision. This is illegal because it violates child employment rules on work hours and safe duties for children.</i>
Workplace Not Complying with Child Safe Standards	You should make a complaint if an organisation employing or working with children isn't following Victoria's Child Safe Standards, which are rules to ensure children are safe from abuse and harm. Businesses and organisations that employ kids under 15 must meet these standards as an ongoing responsibility. This includes having proper child

	safety policies, training staff in child safety, providing appropriate supervision, and creating a workplace environment where children are not exposed to harm, abuse, or exploitation. If, for example, a company with teenage employees has no child safety protocols or you witness children being bullied, humiliated or placed at risk at work, you can report those concerns. The Wage Inspectorate can investigate whether the employer is complying with the Child Safe Standards. <i>Example: A community theatre group hires 14-year-old actors but has no child safety policy. Children rehearse late at night alone with adults, and one child felt uncomfortable with an adult supervisor's behaviour. A parent in the group should complain because the organisation is likely not following the required Child Safe Standards to keep those kids safe.</i>
Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Treated Unfairly	You should make a complaint if you're an owner-driver or forestry contractor (or their hirer) facing breaches of Victoria's owner driver laws, which protect small business operators in transport and forestry. The Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005 sets basic rights and obligations in these contracts. You can report a business if, for instance, a hirer: fails to provide a written contract for engagements over 30 days, doesn't give the required minimum notice (or payment) before ending a contract, or doesn't supply the mandatory information booklet or rate schedules that inform contractors of their rights. It's also illegal for a hiring business to punish or threaten a contractor for asserting their rights (for example, for asking for a better rate or raising a safety issue). If you are an owner-driver or forestry contractor and your hirer isn't following these rules, such as not giving you a proper contract, cutting you off without notice, or exploiting you with unjust terms, you should make a complaint. The Wage Inspectorate can investigate non-compliance with these laws and take action. <i>Example: Alex is a freelance truck owner-driver who has been hauling for a logistics company for six months without any written contract. One day the company tells him not to come back, with no notice or payout. Alex should report this because the hirer is required to provide a written contract for long engagements and give a minimum notice or payment in lieu before terminating it.</i>
Complaints About Wage Inspectorate Victoria's Service or Staff	You should make a complaint if you are unhappy with the service or conduct of Wage Inspectorate Victoria itself. This is an "internal complaint". For example, if there were excessive delays in handling your case, if an Inspectorate officer was rude or unprofessional, or if you feel an action/decision during an inspection or investigation was not handled properly. The Inspectorate welcomes feedback and has a policy for addressing complaints about its own performance. You can complain about things like poor communication, mistakes or unfair treatment by staff, or other quality of service issues. (However, keep in mind that you cannot use this process to overturn formal legal decisions like prosecution outcomes or licence application refusals, which have separate review paths.) <i>Example: Nina reported a wage theft issue to the Inspectorate, but six months have passed with no update. When she calls, the staff member is dismissive and doesn't answer her questions. Nina can make a formal complaint to the Wage Inspectorate about the delay and the officer's conduct, so that the agency can address her concerns about its service.</i>

Exclusions	The WIV does not handle complaints about: • General underpayments not involving dishonest conduct: If the underpayment is due to error, negligence, or misunderstanding but not intentional or dishonest, it is not considered wage theft. • Unfair dismissal or workplace bullying: The Inspectorate cannot investigate dismissals, bullying, or mistreatment at work. • Matters governed by Modern Awards or Enterprise Agreements: This includes penalty rates, allowances, leave loading, and rostering obligations. • Workplace safety, injuries, or occupational health concerns: These are handled by WorkSafe Victoria. • Superannuation non-payment or issues: Superannuation enforcement is the role of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). • Discrimination or harassment (sexual, racial, disability, etc.): These are dealt with by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission or the Australian Human Rights Commission. • Union disputes, industrial action, and enterprise bargaining: The Inspectorate does not handle union-employer disputes or protected/unprotected industrial actions. • Employment status disputes (employee vs contractor), except forestry and owner-drivers: Broader employment classification disputes fall outside its remit, unless covered by the Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005 (Vic). • Complaints about employers based outside Victoria or federal/Commonwealth employers: Jurisdiction only applies to breaches under Victorian law by Victorian employers. • Business registration, licensing or general regulatory compliance: Issues such as business names, ABNs, ASIC registrations, or other licences are out of scope. • Industrial manslaughter, trafficking, or criminal labour exploitation: These issues fall under the remit of Victoria Police, WorkSafe, or other agencies depending on the nature of the conduct. • Requests for legal advice, advocacy, or representation: The Inspectorate does not provide legal services or act on behalf of workers in disputes. • Interpersonal disputes between co-workers: Personal disagreements or internal team conflicts are not within the Inspectorate's jurisdiction.
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Step 2: What is the Jurisdiction of the complaints body?

Jurisdiction	Description
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State	Wage Inspectorate Victoria has powers to investigate complaints under various Victorian laws, including the <i>Wage Theft Act 2020 (Vic)</i> , <i>Child Employment Act 2023 (Vic)</i> , <i>Long Service Leave Act 2018 (Vic)</i> , and <i>Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005 (Vic)</i> .
Geographical Scope	The conduct must have occurred in Victoria, or the respondent must be operating in Victoria under Victorian laws. The Inspectorate cannot investigate employers located interstate or under Commonwealth jurisdiction unless the relevant conduct occurred within Victoria.
Time Limitations	There is no fixed statutory timeframe for lodging a complaint with the Wage Inspectorate, but unreasonable delay may limit the ability to investigate or prosecute (e.g. due to lack of evidence or expiry of prosecutorial timeframes). The Inspectorate has discretion to investigate historical matters, particularly where serious harm or systemic non-compliance is alleged.
Exclusions	The Inspectorate cannot investigate: • General underpayments that are not intentional or dishonest (handled by Fair Work Ombudsman) • Workplace safety issues (handled by WorkSafe Victoria) • Discrimination, harassment, or unfair dismissal (handled by VEOHRC, AHRC, or Fair Work) • Employment matters involving federal agencies or employers outside Victoria • Matters already being dealt with in another forum (e.g. Fair Work Commission, courts) • Superannuation complaints (ATO jurisdiction) <i>Example: The Wage Inspectorate can investigate child employment breaches by a Victorian café, but cannot investigate the café's failure to pay Sunday penalty rates under an award unless it involves dishonesty.</i>
Exercise of discretion	The Inspectorate may choose not to investigate a complaint if: • There is insufficient evidence • The matter has already been dealt with elsewhere • The complainant is not directly affected and the public interest does not justify intervention • The complaint is trivial, vexatious, or outside the scope of the Inspectorate's functions
Additional information	The Inspectorate also accepts internal complaints about its own service, delays, or staff conduct. These are reviewed in line with its Complaints and Feedback Policy. Reports can be made anonymously; however, anonymous complaints may limit investigation outcomes.

Step 3: Who can you make a complaint against?

Respondent	Description
Victorian Employers	Any business, sole trader, or organisation that employs staff in Victoria and may have breached: • Wage Theft Act 2020 (Vic) • Long Service Leave Act 2018 (Vic) • Child Employment Act 2023 (Vic) • Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005 (Vic)
Individuals Responsible for Breaches	Directors, business owners, managers or supervisors personally involved in: • Knowingly underpaying wages or entitlements • Falsifying or failing to keep pay records • Employing children under 15 without a permit • Breaching child safety requirements in workplaces • Denying long service leave entitlements • Breaching contractual obligations under the Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors laws
Organisations Engaging Children in Work	Businesses or not-for-profits that employ children under 15 or engage children in: • Advertising • Entertainment • Modelling without a valid Child Employment Licence or in breach of the Code of Practice.
Hirers of Owner Drivers or Forestry Contractors	Victorian businesses or operators that engage owner drivers or forestry contractors and: • Fail to provide written contracts (where required) • Terminate without minimum notice or payment • Fail to give required information booklets or rate schedules • Take adverse action in retaliation for asserting legal rights
Wage Inspectorate Victoria itself	You can lodge a service complaint about: • Delays in handling a complaint or inspection • Unprofessional behaviour by a staff member • Poor communication, unclear decisions, or lack of procedural fairness • Any other concerns about how the Inspectorate has managed your matter

Exclusions	You cannot make a complaint about: • Employers Based Outside Victoria: ○ Interstate or overseas employers (unless the breach occurred in Victoria) ○ Federal government departments and Commonwealth public service agencies • Employers Breaching Only Federal Industrial Law: Businesses whose only breach relates to: ○ National Employment Standards (NES) ○ Modern Awards ○ Enterprise Agreements • Labour Hire Firms Outside the Inspectorate's Scope: Labour hire or contracting firms without Victorian connections, or where the breach relates only to workplace safety or exploitation (instead of child employment or wage theft) • Individuals Involved in Workplace Misconduct Outside Legal Breach: Supervisors, co-workers, or managers engaging in bullying, harassment, or discrimination not linked to a breach of Inspectorate laws • Entities Involved in Superannuation Breaches: Employers who fail to pay superannuation but are otherwise compliant with Victorian employment laws. • Respondents in Ongoing Court or Tribunal Matters: If a complaint is already being litigated in a court or tribunal (e.g. VCAT, Magistrates' Court, Fair Work Commission), the Inspectorate generally will not duplicate or interfere with those proceedings.
Additional information	• No registration requirement: Respondents do not need to be registered with a particular authority to fall within the Inspectorate's jurisdiction, but they must have operated or committed the relevant conduct in Victoria. • Anonymous complaints are permitted, but lack of information about the respondent may limit the Inspectorate's ability to investigate. • The Inspectorate does not mediate or resolve interpersonal disputes between co-workers or between an employee and employer unless a clear legal breach under its jurisdiction is involved.

Step 4: Are you eligible to make a complaint?

Eligibility	Description
Who can make a complaint?	Anyone can make a complaint to Wage Inspectorate Victoria.

	You do not need to live in Victoria, but the conduct you are complaining about must have occurred in Victoria, or involve a Victorian employer or entity covered by Victorian law. You can be: • A current or former employee or contractor • A parent or guardian (particularly in child employment matters) • A bystander, advocate, community worker or concerned member of the public There are no age, residency, or citizenship restrictions.
Pre-requisite steps	There are no formal steps you must take before lodging a complaint (e.g. you are not required to raise the issue with the employer first). However, the Inspectorate may consider whether you have already tried to resolve the issue when deciding what action to take. If your complaint is about another government body (e.g. the Inspectorate itself), you are encouraged, but not required, to try informal resolution first.
Can complaints be made on behalf of someone?	Yes. You can lodge a complaint on behalf of another person. If you are making the complaint for someone else and wish to share sensitive information (e.g. names, pay details), it is strongly recommended to get their written consent or authorisation. In cases involving child employment, parents and guardians can complain without needing written authority.
Exclusions	You may be prevented or limited from making a complaint if: • The complaint is too vague, lacks basic facts, or provides no contact information (this may limit investigation). • You are not directly affected and the issue has no clear public interest justification. • The matter is already before a court or tribunal, or has been resolved elsewhere (the Inspectorate generally won't duplicate proceedings). • The issue occurred too long ago and is now impractical to investigate (e.g. due to lost records or unavailable witnesses). • You are making repeated or vexatious complaints with no new information. There are no blanket exclusions for any profession, residency status, or age.
Additional information you need to know	Anonymous complaints are allowed, but may limit the Inspectorate's ability to investigate thoroughly or provide updates. Complainants are protected from victimisation or retaliation under whistle-blower protections in some circumstances.

	The Inspectorate has discretion in deciding whether to act on a complaint, particularly if it involves matters outside their remit, has already been dealt with, or lacks sufficient detail.
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Step 5: What remedies are available at this body?

Power	Description
Investigation and Enforcement	The Wage Inspectorate can investigate breaches of Victorian employment laws such as wage theft, unlawful child employment, long service leave denials, or breaches of owner driver contract rules. Not all complaints will lead to an investigation, but where there is enough evidence or public interest, the Inspectorate may act. Possible outcomes include a formal or informal resolution, payment of owed entitlements, warnings to employers, or compliance directions to fix unlawful behaviour.
Prosecution	For serious, deliberate, or repeated breaches, the Inspectorate can prosecute individuals or businesses in court. This is most common in cases of wage theft, unlawful child employment, or serious breaches of contract obligations. Possible outcomes include fines, criminal convictions, or court-ordered payment of entitlements or penalties.
Employer Compliance Measures	In less serious cases, or where an employer agrees to fix the problem, the Inspectorate may require corrective action without going to court. This could include requiring an employer to pay back wages, stop employing a child unlawfully, comply with child safe standards, or improve internal practices.
Referral to Another Body	If a complaint is outside the Inspectorate's powers, it may refer the complainant to a more appropriate agency such as the Fair Work Ombudsman, WorkSafe, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, or the ATO. The Inspectorate itself cannot take further action in these cases, but the other body may be able to assist.
Internal Complaint Resolution (Service Complaints)	If the complaint is about the Inspectorate's own service, such as poor communication, unreasonable delay, or staff behaviour, it will be reviewed internally. Outcomes may include an apology, staff training, or internal process improvements.
Exclusions	WIV cannot provide: • No financial compensation or damages to individuals: The Inspectorate cannot order an employer to pay compensation for stress, loss of opportunity, or emotional harm. Only a court can award compensation through civil proceedings. • No enforceable orders (like a tribunal or court): The Inspectorate cannot issue binding orders requiring an employer

	to take or stop a particular action. It may issue compliance directions or prosecute, but it cannot function like a court or tribunal. • No mediation or conciliation: The Inspectorate does not provide mediation services or facilitate negotiated resolutions between employees and employers. If you're seeking a mediated outcome, you may need to go through the Fair Work Commission or other appropriate forum. • No reinstatement of employment: The Inspectorate cannot order that someone be rehired or returned to their job after dismissal. Claims for unfair dismissal or reinstatement must be made through the Fair Work Commission. • No penalties payable to the complainant: If a business is prosecuted and fined, the fine is paid to the State of Victoria, not to the person who made the complaint. • No remedies for discrimination, bullying, or harassment: These issues are outside the Inspectorate's powers. If your complaint relates to workplace discrimination or harassment, remedies can only be pursued through bodies like VEOHRC or AHRC. • No review or appeal of court decisions: If the Inspectorate prosecutes a case and the outcome is decided by a court, the Inspectorate cannot overturn or appeal the result on your behalf. You would need to follow legal procedures for appeals. • No resolution of personal workplace disputes without a legal breach: The Inspectorate will not act on interpersonal conflicts, bad management decisions, or internal grievances unless they involve a breach of the laws it enforces.
Additional information you need to know	The Inspectorate does not offer mediation, conciliation, or financial compensation. It cannot make enforceable rulings or orders like a tribunal or court. Its focus is on ensuring compliance with Victorian laws, not resolving civil disputes. If you report something anonymously or are not directly involved, you may not receive updates on the outcome.

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

Requirement	Description
Format	Complaints can be submitted online via the official complaint form, by email, or in writing (letter). In some circumstances, complaints can also be made by phone. A written complaint is recommended for more complex or non-urgent issues, especially where supporting documents can help clarify the issue.

	Interpreters and translators are available upon request to assist non-English speakers.
Personal Details	You are encouraged to include your name, contact number, and email address so the Inspectorate can follow up. Anonymous complaints are accepted, but they may limit the ability of the Inspectorate to investigate or keep you informed. The more information you provide, the more likely the Inspectorate can act effectively on your complaint.
Respondent's Details	You should clearly identify who the complaint is about. Provide as much information as possible, such as the name of the business or individual, their workplace address, and any contact details if known. If you don't know all the details, the Inspectorate can still consider your complaint, but full information makes investigation easier.
Relevant Facts	Include clear, specific, and accurate details such as: • What happened • When it happened (date and time, if known) • Where it happened • Who was involved (including witnesses) • What impact it had on you or others • Any steps you've already taken to resolve the issue (e.g. raising it with your employer) • What outcome you are hoping for You should also provide any supporting documentation, such as: • Pay slips • Employment contracts • Emails or messages • Photos or other evidence There are no strict limits on the number or size of documents, but only relevant and legible materials should be included.
What NOT to include	Do not include false, misleading or exaggerated statements Avoid sending irrelevant personal opinions, insults, or emotional outbursts that don't relate to the issue Do not include sensitive information about other people unless it is directly relevant to the complaint
Additional information you need to know	In most cases, the respondent will not receive a copy of your complaint, but they may be told enough details to respond if an investigation occurs.

	You do not need legal advice to make a complaint, and you do not need a lawyer. Support is available from the Inspectorate for those needing help to lodge their complaint, including language or accessibility support. Minors do not need a guardian's authority to lodge a complaint, especially in child employment matters, but a parent or guardian may lodge it on their behalf. If the complaint is about something that happened a long time ago, you should briefly explain why it wasn't reported earlier, especially if documents or witnesses may now be unavailable.
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Step 7: Lodging your complaint and next steps.

Step	Description
Where to lodge your complaint	Online form: here Email: wageinspectorate@justice.vic.gov.au Post: Wage Inspectorate Victoria, GPO Box 4356, Melbourne VIC 3001 Telephone: 1800 287 287 (Available Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm AEST) In person: In-person complaints are by appointment only. Contact the Inspectorate to request assistance if you need support accessing the complaint process.
Receipt/ acknowledgement of complaint	If you provide contact details, you'll usually receive a confirmation by email or phone within a few business days. Anonymous complaints may not receive an acknowledgement, and updates cannot be provided if you don't include contact information.
Initial assessment	The Inspectorate will assess whether your complaint falls within its powers. This includes checking if it relates to a Victorian law they enforce, and whether there is enough information to act. If it doesn't meet these requirements, they may advise you or refer you elsewhere.
Investigation (if applicable)	If your complaint raises serious, ongoing, or intentional breaches, it may be formally investigated. This could involve contacting the employer, reviewing records, or conducting a site visit. There is no guaranteed timeframe, and not all complaints lead to investigation.
Enforcement action (where a breach is found)	Where the Inspectorate identifies a breach of the law, it can take compliance or enforcement action. This may include requiring the employer to fix the issue, issuing a formal warning, or, in serious cases, prosecuting the employer in court.
Referral to another body (if outside jurisdiction)	If your complaint concerns an issue outside the Inspectorate's legal powers (e.g. unfair dismissal, award entitlements, superannuation, discrimination, workplace safety), they may refer you to the relevant

	agency such as the Fair Work Ombudsman, ATO, VEOHRC, or WorkSafe Victoria.
No conciliation or mediation available	The Inspectorate does not provide conciliation, mediation, or dispute resolution between employees and employers. If you're seeking to resolve a workplace dispute through negotiation, you should contact the Fair Work Commission or a legal support service.
Updates and outcomes	You may not always be informed of the outcome of your complaint, especially in cases involving anonymous reports or prosecutions subject to legal confidentiality. If you do include your contact details, the Inspectorate may provide general updates if appropriate.
Additional information you need to know	Keep a copy of your complaint and any documents you submit. Try to include all relevant information from the start, providing new information later can delay the process. Let the Inspectorate know if your contact details change. Interpreter and accessibility support is available. You do not need a lawyer to lodge a complaint. Anonymous complaints are accepted, but may limit the Inspectorate's ability to investigate or provide updates.

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

Avenue	Description
Internal review of a service complaint	If your complaint was about the conduct, timeliness, or communication of Wage Inspectorate Victoria itself (rather than about an employer), you can request a review under their internal complaints and feedback policy. You should raise your concerns as soon as possible after receiving the response or experiencing the issue. There is no strict time limit, but unreasonable delay may reduce the likelihood of review. The review will generally be conducted by a different officer, and a response will usually be provided within a reasonable timeframe.
No internal review of enforcement decisions	If your complaint led to an investigation or enforcement decision (e.g. the Inspectorate chose not to prosecute, or closed the file), there is no formal internal appeal or review process. These decisions are made at the Inspectorate's discretion based on legislative powers and public interest considerations. You may request information or raise concerns, but there is no legal right to have a decision overturned or reconsidered internally.
Request information or clarity	If you don't understand the outcome of your complaint, or feel the explanation was unclear, you can contact the Inspectorate for further clarification. While they may not be able to disclose all details, particularly in enforcement or prosecution cases, they may provide general information about the process.

External complaint about the Inspectorate's conduct	If you believe the Inspectorate handled your matter unfairly, unprofessionally, or with unreasonable delay, and are dissatisfied with their internal response, you can complain to the Victorian Ombudsman. The Ombudsman investigates complaints about state government agencies, including whether they acted fairly and followed proper process. There is no fee, but you should first try to resolve the issue directly with the Inspectorate before escalating. Timeframes vary, but complaints should be lodged promptly.
Escalating a legal matter or enforcement decision	If you believe Wage Inspectorate Victoria should have taken stronger action against an employer, for example, prosecution or compliance orders, there is no direct appeal path. However, in some cases, you may be able to pursue your own legal remedy through a civil court or tribunal (e.g. for unpaid wages or contract breaches). You should seek independent legal advice before taking this step. Time limits may apply depending on the nature of the legal claim (e.g. 6 years for most wage claims under contract law in Victoria).
Freedom of Information (FOI) application	If you want to access documents or records held by the Inspectorate, including decisions or file notes about your complaint, you can lodge an FOI request under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic). This may help clarify how the complaint was assessed, but some information may be redacted due to privacy or legal exemptions. Fees and timeframes apply.
Additional information you need to know	There is no guarantee that your complaint will lead to enforcement action, even if the employer did the wrong thing. The Inspectorate prioritises cases that involve serious harm, vulnerable people, or systemic breaches. You are not entitled to compensation or personal remedies through this process, separate legal action may be required. If you're unsure of your options, consider seeking advice from a community legal centre, union, or employment lawyer.

Step 9: Other bodies that handle complaints about [complaint category e.g. health] related complaints

Complaint body	Description
Australian Human Rights Commission	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.

	There are also State Government discrimination complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	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. There are also State Government privacy and information complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.
National Anti-Corruption Commission	The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) handles complaints about serious or systemic corruption in the Australian Government public sector. There are also a State Government corruption complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.
Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO)	The Fair Work Ombudsman handles most workplace complaints under federal industrial relations law, including: • Underpayment of wages and entitlements under awards or the National Employment Standards (NES) • Unpaid penalty rates, overtime, or allowances • Record-keeping failures • Sham contracting They may also assist with disputes about whether a person is an employee or independent contractor. If your complaint does not involve wage theft (intentional dishonesty), the FWO is usually the right place to go.
Fair Work Commission (FWC)	The Fair Work Commission handles formal workplace disputes, including: • Unfair dismissal • General protections claims • Enterprise agreement disputes • Conciliation and mediation You should go to the FWC if you are seeking reinstatement, compensation for dismissal, or legal resolution of a workplace dispute.
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC)	VEOHRC can investigate complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment, racial or religious vilification, and victimisation under Victorian law. They also assist with workplace complaints involving equal opportunity, diversity, and human rights breaches, especially when those rights relate to employment.

WorkSafe Victoria	WorkSafe handles complaints about unsafe working conditions, workplace injuries, and breaches of occupational health and safety (OHS) laws. If your concern relates to workplace hazards, injury, or employer failure to comply with health and safety duties, WorkSafe is the correct authority.
Australian Taxation Office (ATO)	The ATO handles superannuation complaints, including when an employer fails to pay superannuation correctly or on time. The Wage Inspectorate does not deal with super, so if your issue relates to missing super payments, the ATO should be contacted directly.
Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC)	The VSBC can help resolve disputes involving contractors, freelancers, or small business operators, including owner drivers, where mediation or negotiation is appropriate. They are a good option for business-to-business disputes that fall outside employee protections but still involve unfair conduct.
Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC)	IBAC handles complaints about corruption or serious misconduct by Victorian public sector employees or agencies. If your workplace complaint involves corrupt conduct in a Victorian government department, IBAC may be appropriate.
Additional information you need to know	If your complaint has already been considered or dismissed by one body, another body may not reconsider the same matter. You may need legal advice to determine which body is the most appropriate, especially if your complaint involves overlapping legal issues. Time limits apply for some complaints (e.g. unfair dismissal must usually be lodged within 21 days at the Fair Work Commission). You can complain to more than one body, but you should check that doing so will not delay or undermine your matter.

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
Victorian Ombudsman	Website: https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/ Email: complaints@ombudsman.vic.gov.au Telephone: 1800 806 314	You can contact the VO directly if you have any further questions or need assistance with your complaint.
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.
Deaf or Hearing Impaired Users	Telephone: Choose preferred NRS channel then 1800 806 314	Provides communication support for deaf or hearing impaired individuals through the National Relay Service (NRS), where you can choose their channel for assistance.

Self-help tools and additional resources

Resource	How this helps
Where to Make a Complaint	A list of complaint services depending on your complaint type from the VO.
How to Make a Complaint	Guidance from the VO on how to make a complaint.
Call It Out	Online register for racism/discrimination experienced or witnessed towards First Nations Australians. Not an official complaints body.
Law Society: Know Your Rights	Guidance for individuals who are uncertain about where to start when seeking legal advice.