

About us

Australian Human Rights Commission

Human rights: *everyone, everywhere, everyday*

Who we are

The Australian Human Rights Commission is an independent statutory organisation that works to protect and promote the human rights of all people in Australia. We were established by the Australian Government in 1986.

Our vision

Our vision is to work towards an Australian society where human rights are enjoyed by everyone, everywhere, every day.

Our strategic goals

Our work is guided by five important goals:

1. *Leadership*

We take a leadership role by being visible, courageous and influential on human rights issues.

2. *Empowerment*

We support and inspire others to contribute in a meaningful way to advance human rights.

3. *Education*

We help all people in Australia to understand and exercise their rights and to respect the rights of others.

4. *Monitoring*

We hold individuals, organisations and government responsible for their human rights obligations.

5. *Innovation*

We have a collaborative, innovative and supportive way of working that enhances the quality and impact of what we do.

Our responsibilities

The Commission has statutory responsibilities under the following federal laws:

- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*

We also have specific responsibilities under the *Native Title Act 1993* (performed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner) and the *Fair Work Act 2009* (performed by the Sex Discrimination Commissioner).

What we do

Our work covers four key areas:

- providing education and raising public awareness about human rights
- handling complaints of discrimination and breaches of human rights
- researching human rights issues and contributing to policy developments
- legal advocacy on human rights issues

How we do it

We fulfil our responsibilities by:

- developing publications, resources and education programs for schools, workplaces and the community
- working with the media to raise public awareness about discrimination and other human rights issues
- supporting community organisations and business on how to protect and promote human rights
- investigating and conciliating complaints of discrimination or breaches of human rights under federal laws
- holding public inquiries and consultations on important human rights issues
- working with and advising parliaments and governments to develop laws, programs and policies that protect and promote human rights
- researching human rights issues
- making submissions to parliamentary and other inquiries about human rights issues
- providing independent advice to assist courts in cases that involve human rights principles
- working with other national human rights institutions, particularly through the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, to address major human rights issues in the region.

Complaints

No one has to put up with discrimination, harassment or bullying.

There are laws to protect you from discrimination in areas of public life such as: employment, education, sport and the provision of goods services and facilities.

These laws apply to everyone in Australia regardless of where they live.

If you think you have been discriminated against, you can lodge a complaint with us. It doesn't cost anything to make a complaint and we aim to deal with it quickly and with a minimum of fuss.

If you are unsure if what you have experienced could be discrimination, you can call us to talk about it or email us and we will let you know if we can help you, or refer you to someone who can.

We will handle your complaint by talking to the people involved and try to resolve the complaint through a process called 'conciliation'.

Outcomes of conciliation will vary depending on the complaint, but they may include an apology, compensation for lost wages, the introduction of anti-discrimination training or practical changes to facilities and services.

To find out more read our complaints information online at:
www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints_information/

This information has also been translated into a range of different languages available at: **www.humanrights.gov.au/about/languages/**

For more information or to discuss a complaint contact our Complaints Infoline at:

Phone: 1300 656 419 (local call) or 02 9284 9888

SMS: 0488 744 487 (0488 RIGHTS)

Complaints email: complaintsinfo@humanrights.gov.au

TTY: 1800 620 241 (toll free)

Fax: 02 9284 9611

Free Telephone Interpreter Service: 13 14 50

How can you get involved?

We all have a role to play in building an Australian society where human rights are enjoyed by everyone, everywhere, every day.

Here are some ways you can get involved and help make this vision a reality.

- Keep up-to-date about current human rights issues by joining our electronic mailing lists at: www.humanrights.gov.au/about/mailing_lists/
- Find media releases, opinion pieces, speeches, media kits and extensive research and project information at our online media centre: www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/ (you can also sign up to receive podcasts and RSS feeds)
- Order our publications, reports, posters, CD Roms and DVDs by calling 1300 369 711 or online at: www.humanrights.gov.au/about/publications/
- Come along to our regular 'Human Rights Seminars' – they are open to everyone and cover a range of contemporary human rights issues (check the website or subscribe to our mailing list for upcoming events).
- Make a submission to one of our inquiries or discussion papers, or have your say in one of our online forums
- Teachers can download a wide range of curriculum-linked human rights education resources at: www.humanrights.gov.au/education/resources/ and students can check out our highly popular resources at: www.humanrights.gov.au/info_for_students/
- Employers can learn how to make their workplace a discrimination-free zone by using our range of useful *Good practice, good business* resources at: www.humanrights.gov.au/info_for_employers/ and
- Employees can access information on discrimination and their rights at: www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints_information/WOYR.html or by calling **1300 656 419** or sending an SMS to **0488 744 487 (0488 RIGHTS)**

Contact us

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TTY: 1800 620 241

Website: www.humanrights.gov.au
Email: paffairs@humanrights.gov.au

Complaints Infoline: 1300 656 419
Complaints email: complaintsinfo@humanrights.gov.au

Our Executive

The Hon. Catherine Branson QC

President and Human Rights Commissioner

Mick Gooda

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner

Graeme Innes AM

Race Discrimination Commissioner and Disability Discrimination Commissioner

Elizabeth Broderick

Sex Discrimination Commissioner and Commissioner responsible for Age Discrimination

For biography information on the President and Commissioners see:

www.humanrights.gov.au/about/president_commissioners/