

For public organisations: conciliation by Victorian Ombudsman

Conciliation is one means of resolving a member of the public's complaint with the Ombudsman about your organisation. It is a voluntary process.

A conciliation meeting brings complainants and public organisations together in a supported conciliator-led environment to discuss a complaint. Our conciliators evaluate parties' positions while giving advice and suggesting options to help the parties resolve the complaint.

Benefits of conciliation

Under the guidance of our conciliators, conciliation can:

- achieve a confidential and speedy resolution of a complaint
- offer a controlled and confidential environment, in which parties agree to rules of respectful engagement
- give organisations an opportunity to explain the reasons for their decisions or actions directly to complainants
- enlighten and allow both parties to appreciate each other's viewpoints
- allow organisations to present a 'human face' in communicating directly with the complainant.

Confidentiality and privacy

- Conciliation meetings are held in private and are confidential.

After conciliation

- If an agreement is reached, the Ombudsman will treat the complaint as 'informally resolved' and closed.
- If parties do not reach agreement the complaint may still be closed, we may resume enquiries or we may consider an investigation.

Preparing for conciliation

- Ensure that representatives familiar with the complaint are present and authorised to propose and enter into any negotiated agreement
- Advise the Victorian Ombudsman who will be attending prior to the conciliation
- Think about the steps you might take to resolve the complaint
- Bring an open mind, be prepared to listen
- Participate in a respectful conversation, see it as an opportunity to present a 'human face' and resolve the complaint.

Contact Details

Michael Heffernan, Principal Officer
Alternative Dispute Resolution

Phone
Email

03 9613 6222
ADR@Ombudsman.vic.gov.au