



ACT Human Rights Commission Client Services Charter 2019-2022

OUR COMMITMENT

All people deserve to be treated with dignity, and respect for human rights underpins our work.

What you can expect from us

- listen to you, be helpful and treat you fairly without unlawful discrimination
- provide you with an accessible and client-centred service
- tell you if we can't help you, and refer you to other places that might assist
- make any reasonable adjustments to help you access to our services
- respect your rights, including personal and information privacy
- respect cultural and religious diversity, including your cultural and language needs
- honour our commitment to cultural safety and reconciliation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

OUR VALUES



Respect



Collaboration



Integrity



Accessibility



Independence

OUR SERVICE COMMITMENTS

1 In Complaint Handling we will

- keep you informed
- be independent and impartial
- disclose any conflicts of interest
- provide you with necessary information
- work cooperatively with all parties to explore resolution
- give reasons for our decisions
- review our decisions where appropriate.

2 In Advocacy we will

- make sure we understand the concern you have raised
- find out what you think needs to happen
- clearly explain what we can do to assist
- work together with others to generate effective outcomes
- promote and encourage improvements

3 In Victims Services we will

- be respectful
- provide timely referrals and accurate information
- provide access to a wide range of support
- provide fair treatment and assistance with access to justice
- respect privacy and confidentiality

4 Education and Training

- If we are providing training to you, or for you, you can expect that our training will be:
- up to date and relevant
 - accessible and interactive
 - informative and respectful
 - value for money for paying audiences, such as private and government sectors

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

OUR VISION

An inclusive community that respects and realises everyone's rights

HOW YOU CAN HELP US

If you need help communicating with us, or writing your complaint, please let us know so that we can help you. This includes receiving information in different formats or organising a translator. We are committed to innovation and continuous improvement.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS

If you are unhappy with the quality of our services, or about a decision that we have made, please call us or write to us to discuss your concerns. If we have made a mistake, we will acknowledge it and work with you to resolve it.

IF YOU ARE STILL DISSATISFIED

If you remain dissatisfied with our service, you can also make a complaint about the Commission to the ACT Ombudsman by calling 1300 362 072 or visiting <http://www.ombudsman.act.gov.au>

ACT Human Rights Commission

Client Services Charter 2016-2019

We believe that all people deserve to be treated with dignity, and respect for human rights underpins all our work.

We are committed to ethical, prompt, respectful and helpful client service.

We are also committed to innovation and continually improving the ways that we interact with our clients and the quality of service that we provide.

This Client Services Charter is developed under s18B of the *Human Rights Commission Act 2005*. It explains:

- who we are
- what you can expect when dealing with us
- how we will provide services to you
- how you can help us to improve our services by giving feedback, or to complain if things go wrong.

About us

The ACT Human Rights Commission is an independent statutory agency and our role is to:

- promote understanding of and compliance with human rights
- provide advice to government & others regarding human rights, and make recommendations about legislation, policies, practices and services
- independently handle health, disability & community services, and discrimination complaints
- encourage service improvement
- increase awareness of the rights and responsibilities of service users and service providers
- promote the protection of children & young people from abuse and exploitation
- promote the protection people with a disability from abuse and exploitation
- advocate for children, young people or adults experiencing vulnerability
- advocate for, and provide support for, victims of crime.

What you can expect from us

When you deal with us we will:

- ensure our services are accessible
- listen to you, be helpful and courteous
- treat you fairly without unlawful discrimination
- provide you with an accessible and client-centered service
- try to find you the information you need
- respond to you as quickly as we can

- tell you if we can't help you, and give you information about other places that might be able to assist you
- make any reasonable adjustments to help you access to our services
- respect your rights, including personal and information privacy
- explain your rights and responsibilities
- ensure staff are trained and professionally skilled
- respect cultural and religious diversity, including your cultural and language needs
- honour our commitment to cultural safety and reconciliation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Our service commitments

Complaint handling

When we handle complaints, you can expect that we will:

- keep you informed about the progress of your matter
- be independent and impartial in all our dealings with you
- disclose any conflicts of interest
- provide you with necessary and relevant information about complaints
- work cooperatively with all parties to explore options to resolve complaints
- give reasons for our decisions and recommendations
- review our decisions where appropriate.

Advocacy services

In providing advocacy services for children, young people and adults experiencing vulnerability, we:

- make sure we understand the concern you have raised
- find out what you think needs to happen to address your concern
- clearly explain what we can do to assist you (as well as anything we can't do)
- work together with others to generate effective and sustainable outcomes
- promote and encourage improvements in facilities, services and systems.

Victim services

When accessing Victim Support ACT you can expect:

- respectful and dignified treatment
- timely referrals and accurate information
- access to a wide range of support
- fair treatment and assistance with access to justice
- privacy and confidentiality

Education and training services

If we are providing training to you, or for you, you can expect that our training will be:

- up to date and relevant
- accessible and interactive
- informative and respectful

- value for money for paying audiences, such as private and government sectors

How you can help us

If you need help communicating with us, or writing your complaint, please let us know so that we can help you.

If you find it hard to understand something we have given you and would like to have that information in a different format, please let us know.

If you have trouble reading or speaking English, then you please let us know so that we can organise a translator to help. You can also call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131450 to speak to us about your needs.

We appreciate any suggestions you can give us about how we can improve our customer service and/or the services we provide.

If you are unhappy with our services

If you are unhappy with the quality of our services, or about a decision that we have made, please call us or write to us to discuss your concerns.

General grievances

If we have made a mistake, we will acknowledge it and work with you to resolve it, including having the President consider your issues.

Complaints against staff and Commissioners

Under the *Human Rights Commission Act 2005*, the Commission undertakes a range of complaint handling functions, particularly under the jurisdiction of the Discrimination, Health, Disability and Community Services Commissioner. When complaints are made in the Commission's jurisdiction about staff of the Commission, the relevant Commissioner will handle your complaint in the same manner as any other complaint and consider the following additional safeguards:

- Notify the President about the complaint who will consider also notifying the Director General of the Justice and Community Safety Directorate
- Protect sensitive information about the complaint from the staff member/Commissioner (and their team) so as to ensure that they are treated, as far as possible, like any other respondent

Ombudsman

You may also be able to make a complaint about some parts of the Commission to the ACT Ombudsman by calling 1300 362 072 or visiting <http://www.ombudsman.act.gov.au/contact-us>. Under the Commission's Governance and Corporate Support Protocol, the President will liaise directly with Ombudsman or any other external scrutineer to resolve complaints that are raised with respect to the HRC's functions. Complaints of a sensitive nature or about an internal management issue will be brought to the attention of the Director-General of the Justice and Community Safety Directorate and such details in connection with it as the President considers appropriate.

Complaints against the President

If you make a complaint about the President to the Commission it may be directed to the Director General of the Justice and Community Safety Directorate who may consider additional safeguards such as notifying the minister or engaging an external reviewer.

Sensitive information about your complaint would not be available to the President and staff, so as to ensure that she is treated fairly, and as far as possible, like any other respondent.

If your formal complaint is accepted in relation to conduct under the *Discrimination Act 1991*, you will be provided with a statement by the Discrimination Commissioner to enable referral of the matter to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Contact us

Email: human.rights@act.gov.au

Telephone: (02) 6205 2222

In person: Level 2, 11 Moore St Canberra

Telephone Interpreting Service: 131 450

TTY: (02) 6205 1666

In writing: PO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

Website: www.hrc.act.gov.au