

# Do you have a human rights complaint?

## ◆ Contact us

The first step is to contact our InfoLine team. Just phone, email, fax or visit our website. We have Language Line and New Zealand Sign Language interpreters available.

## ◆ Informal intervention

Our staff will provide information to help resolve your complaint. If the issue looks like unlawful discrimination, you will be referred to one of our mediators.

## ◆ Mediation

Mediation is impartial (does not take sides), flexible and non-judgmental. A mediator will assist both parties to work through the issues and look at possible solutions. Mediation may involve informal intervention, correspondence, phone calls or face-to-face meetings.

## ◆ Resolution

A resolution might include: an apology, an agreement not to do the same thing in the future, taking an education or training programme, or compensation.

## ◆ Legal action

If a complaint is not resolved at mediation, you can take legal action through the Human Rights Review Tribunal. You can apply to the Office of Human Rights Proceedings for free legal representation.



Human Rights  
Commission  
*Te Kāhui Tika Tangata*

Contact the Human Rights Commission

Toll free InfoLine 0800 496 877

Website: [www.hrc.co.nz](http://www.hrc.co.nz)

Email: [infoline@hrc.co.nz](mailto:infoline@hrc.co.nz)

Language Line and NZSL interpreters available

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact the Commission using the New Zealand Relay Service. NZ Relay is a telecommunications service and all calls are confidential. [www.nzrelay.co.nz](http://www.nzrelay.co.nz)

### Auckland Office

Level 3, Zurich House, 21 Queen Street  
PO Box 6751, Wellesley Street  
Tamaki Makaurau Auckland 1141  
Ph: 09 309 0874 Fax: 09 377 3593

### Wellington Office

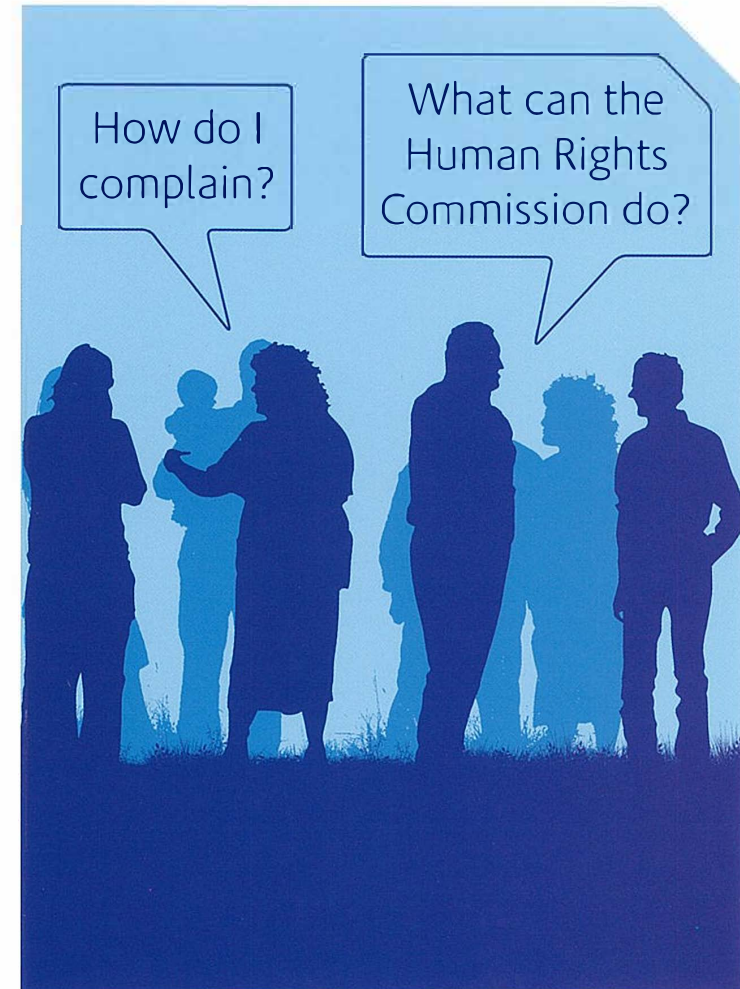
Level 1, Vector Building,  
44-52 The Terrace, Wellington 6011  
PO Box 12411, Thorndon  
Te Whanganui a Tara Wellington 6144  
Ph: 04 473 9981 Fax: 04 471 6759

### Christchurch Office

Appointments may be made with Christchurch staff through 0800 496 877  
Postal Address: c/- PO Box 6 7 51, Wellesley Street  
Tamaki Makaurau Auckland 1141  
Ph: 0800 496 877 Fax: 09 377 3593 (with Att: Christchurch)

Disclaimer: While we have tried to make this information as accurate as possible, it should not be regarded as legal advice.

# Human rights enquiries and complaints



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## Unlawful discrimination and harassment

The Human Rights Commission provides a free and confidential disputes resolution service to deal with discrimination and racial and sexual harassment.

Unlawful discrimination is defined in the Human Rights Act 1993. It occurs when a person or group is disadvantaged by being treated unfairly or less favourably than others, because of one of the reasons listed below:

- ◆ **Sex** – includes being pregnant, transgender or intersex
- ◆ **Marital status** – includes being in a civil union
- ◆ **Religious belief**
- ◆ **Ethical belief** – not having a religious belief
- ◆ **Colour, race, or ethnic or national origins**
- ◆ **Disability** – including physical, psychiatric, intellectual or psychological disability or illness
- ◆ **Age** – if you're 16 years or over
- ◆ **Political opinion** – that is related to central and local government
- ◆ **Employment status** – being unemployed, on a benefit or on ACC
- ◆ **Family status** – includes not being responsible for children or other dependants
- ◆ **Sexual orientation**

### Being treated unfairly?

Call the Human Rights Commission.  
It's free, confidential and you don't need a lawyer. 0800 496 877

## Sexual and racial harassment

Sexual harassment and racial harassment are particular types of discrimination.

- ◆ Sexual harassment is unwelcome or offensive sexual behaviour that is repeated or serious enough to have a harmful effect.
- ◆ Racial harassment is hurtful or offensive behaviour, based on race, that is repeated or serious enough to have a harmful effect.

## Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination is also unlawful. Indirect discrimination occurs when an action or policy that appears to treat everyone the same actually discriminates against someone.

- ◆ For example, a company that only sends bills in hardcopy may be discriminating against customers with visual impairments.

**Not all discrimination is unlawful. It needs to happen in one of these settings:**

- ◆ government or public sector activities
- ◆ employment
- ◆ business partnerships
- ◆ education
- ◆ public places, vehicles and facilities
- ◆ goods and services
- ◆ land, housing and accommodation
- ◆ industrial and professional associations, qualifying bodies and vocational training bodies.

## Making a complaint

If you think you have faced discrimination, you can make a complaint to the Commission. You can complain in writing, online, by telephone, by email or in person at one of our offices.

## Receiving a complaint

If a complaint is made about you or your organisation, we can help by providing advice and information.

## Other human rights complaints

The Commission also deals with complaints about other human rights issues. We can help by providing advice and information, and by suggesting how best to resolve your issue.

## Victimisation

The Human Rights Act protects people from being victimised for making a complaint. This includes contacting the Commission about a complaint, or supporting another person to make a complaint.

