

What can I do to Avoid Discrimination?

As an employer you can

- develop a clear written workplace policy stating that harassment and discrimination are not tolerated
- give every staff member a copy of the policy and ask them to sign to say they have received and read it
- display your policy on your company intranet or noticeboard
- discuss your policy at staff meetings – make sure staff understand the policy and what you expect of them
- provide staff training on discrimination and harassment
- establish a process for hearing complaints confidentially
- appoint an appropriate 'Contact Officer' to deal with complaints
- respond quickly, seriously and effectively to any complaints
- give this booklet to your employees to read
- role model appropriate workplace behaviour

To develop strategies and written policies to address discrimination and harassment you can draw on the views and experience of:

- the Anti-Discrimination Commission
- industry and professional associations
- employer organisations
- unions
- staff

Providing your policy to every employee when they first begin employment with you is a good idea. It then becomes routine and everyone knows what is expected of them before there can be any suggestion that an employee has done anything wrong or, become the victim of inappropriate conduct.

In a very small business where you are the owner/employer and have direct contact with all employees and are responsible for overseeing all aspects of daily operations, a written policy may be unnecessary

– **but you must make sure that you:**

- verbally inform everyone that discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances
- verbally inform everyone that disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who harasses a co-worker, client, customer, contractor, etc.
- provide all staff with brochures containing information on harassment – these can be obtained from the Anti-Discrimination Commission and employer organisations
- keep a diary note of when you inform staff about the policy on discrimination and harassment

As an employee you can

- read workplace policies and make sure you understand them – and ask questions if you don't
- request that a formal complaints process be put in place
- ask for policies to be displayed at work
- discuss the policies at staff meetings
- act promptly if you're offended by someone's repeated behaviour
- make sure you don't harass or discriminate against others

Don't let things get out of hand – seek assistance from your supervisor, contact officer, employee representative or the Anti-Discrimination