



Your right to **A FAIR GO** DISCRIMINATION – RACE

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of a personal characteristic. In Victoria it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their actual or assumed race.

What does 'race' mean?

Race includes colour, descent, nationality, ancestry, ethnic background or any characteristics associated with a particular race.

George unsuccessfully applies for a position with a construction company. When he telephones the company's personnel manager to ask why he did not get the position, George is told: "We've employed people from your country before. You lot simply don't share our work ethic. We won't make that mistake again."

When is discrimination against the law?

Discrimination laws apply to public behaviour, not to private conduct.

Public areas covered by the law include accommodation, clubs and club members, disposal of land, education, employment, goods and services, sport and local government.

Deb and Max are Aboriginal Victorians. When they telephone a local kindergarten to see if there are any places for their son Henry, they are told: "Yes, there's plenty of room." But when Deb takes Henry to the kindergarten, the manager tells her she should take him to a place where he'll fit in.

The VEOHRC complies with Victorian privacy laws and the confidentiality provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 1995. For a copy of the VEOHRC's privacy policy, please go to www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/privacy or contact the VEOHRC.

DISCLAIMER: This information is intended as a guide only. It is not a substitute for legal advice.

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EXCEPTIONS

Discrimination in favour of a particular race in the areas of accommodation, clubs and employment may be permitted if it is in order to meet the special needs of that race. For example, a Ukrainian aged care hostel may refuse to accommodate non-Ukrainian people; a Celtic club may restrict membership to people of Celtic background and a Japanese welfare association may restrict employment to Japanese people.

An employer may also limit the offer of employment to a person of a particular race if it is necessary to maintain authenticity or credibility in dramatic, artistic, entertainment, photographic or modelling performance or similar work.

How can the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission help?

We help resolve complaints of discrimination by offering a confidential, free and impartial resolution service with the aim of achieving a mutual agreement.

Representative Complaints

Victoria's equal opportunity laws were amended on October 11 2006 making it possible for a person or representative body to lodge a complaint with the Commission on behalf of a named person or persons who believe they have been subjected to discrimination or sexual harassment. A representative must be either a person with the same complaint or an organisation with sufficient interest in the complaint.

Contact our free and confidential
Advice Line: (03) 9281 7100
TOLL FREE (country callers) 1800 134 142
TTY: (03) 9281 7110
Email: information@veohrc.vic.gov.au
Free interpreters are available on request