

What is workplace discrimination?

Workplace Discrimination occurs when a person or group is treated less favourably at work because of their background or certain personal characteristics. Discrimination can be direct or indirect and may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Types of discrimination

[Direct discrimination]: when someone is treated unfairly because of a personal characteristic.

Example: A qualified employee is not promoted because they are pregnant, older, or are living with a disability.

[Indirect discrimination]: when a rule applies to everyone but unfairly disadvantages some people.

Example: All meetings are scheduled outside school hours, making it harder for employees with caring responsibilities to attend.

What is protected by law?

Australian legislation makes it unlawful to treat someone unfairly because of certain personal attributes, including:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, country of origin or ancestry
- Sex, pregnancy, marital or relationship status
- Caring responsibilities (including breastfeeding)
- Sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status
- Religious appearance or dress
- Identity of spouse or domestic partner

Everyone has the right to feel safe, respected and treated fairly at work

What should I do if I feel I am being discriminated against at work?

If you believe you are being treated unfairly at work because of a personal attribute (such as age, sex, race, disability, religion, pregnancy, or family responsibilities), support is available. What you can do:

- Raise the issue internally (where safe) by speaking confidentially with your manager or a person you trust in the workplace who is in a position to help
- Document what has been happening including dates, times, locations and what occurred
- If you wish to lodge an external complaint about discrimination, you may contact Equal Opportunity SA or the Fair Work Commission for confidential advice or to make a formal complaint.

You have the right to raise a concern without being victimised for doing so.