



What is

conciliation?

Conciliation is bringing people together to settle a problem. This can offer a satisfactory outcome for all.

The conciliator will help both the person making the complaint, and the person being complained about, try to reach an agreement.

What is a conciliation conference?

This is a meeting to:

- talk about the complaint and look for ways to resolve it
- listen to the other side's version of events
- discuss issues openly, as nothing said can be used in a court or Tribunal
- reach an agreement without any admission of liability.

The meeting can be face to face, by teleconference, by separate phone calls to each person or a combination.

What does the conciliator do?

The conciliator will:

- keep the meeting on track
- encourage open discussion
- explain the law without strengths and weaknesses on both sides
- suggest possible solutions
- help write an agreement.

The conciliator will not:

- take sides
- decide who is telling the truth
- decide whether the law has been broken
- force you to agree.

Who will attend?

The conciliator decides. Generally, both the person complaining (the complainant) and the person the complaint is about (the respondent) will attend.

A company or organisation must send a representative with authority to agree on a resolution.

You can bring a support person, as long as this person was not involved in the complaint (e.g. not a witness or investigator).

You do not have to involve an advocate (or lawyer) in the conference. If you do want an advocate to attend you can request this. If they charge, you will also need to pay for their time. Alternatively, you can arrange a phone call during breaks.

Even if you bring a support person, advocate or lawyer, we would normally ask you to speak in the conference.

If you need an interpreter or any special equipment please tell the conciliator well in advance.

How can a complaint be resolved at conciliation?

Discussion may lead to agreement.

Agreements can include:

- a private or public apology
- changes to policies and procedures

- equal opportunity training
- job re-instatement
- access to previously refused accommodation, entry to a club or admission to a course
- compensation for financial loss or injury to feelings.

How can I prepare?

- **READ** what you want to talk about at the conference and make some notes to bring with you
- **CONSIDER** what the other party might say and be ready with answers
- **SEEK** legal, financial or other advice, if required
- **TALK** to the conciliator if you have any special needs or want an interpreter
- **ASK** the conciliator if you want a support person or advocate to attend
- **DISCUSS** with the conciliator any questions and your ideas about resolution
- **GIVE** the conciliator any documents you want to talk about at the conference.

Need more information?
Want to make a complaint?

Contact the Office of the Equal Opportunity Commissioner



Government of South Australia
Office of the Commissioner for
Equal Opportunity

GPO Exchange, Level 15, 10 Franklin Street,
Adelaide SA 5000

GPO BOX 464, Adelaide SA 5001

Phone: (08) 7322 7070

Fax: (08) 8207 2090

Country callers: 1800 188 163

Email: OCEO@sa.gov.au

Web: equalopportunity.sa.gov.au