

Conciliation Case Studies

The following are summaries of a selection of complaints that have been resolved through the Australian Human Rights Commission's conciliation process.

Additional summaries of conciliated complaints can be found on the [Conciliation Register](#).

Disability discrimination in the provision of goods and services

The complainant has a mobility disability and uses a wheelchair. She claimed she was required to try on clothes in an open lounge area at the respondent retailer's store because the only accessible change room was in the children's department and being used for storage.

On being advised of the complaint the retailer indicated a willingness to try to resolve the matter by conciliation.

The complaint was resolved with an agreement that the retailer:

- provide clear signage to accessible change rooms and clearly label accessible change rooms on store maps;
- ensure accessible change rooms are unlocked and empty of stock;
- write to the complainant apologising for the incident; and
- compensate the complainant for the legal costs she incurred in relation to her complaint.

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Sex discrimination (sexual orientation) in education

The complainants alleged the respondent private boarding high school expelled their 14-year-old daughter following reports that she had kissed and hugged another female student.

The school claimed the complainants' daughter's behaviour was in breach of the student code of conduct.

The complaint was resolved with an agreement that the school pay the complainants \$10,000 and write to their daughter expressing regret for the circumstances in which she was excluded from the school.

The school also agreed to develop and implement an anti-discrimination policy and relevant training for students and staff and to review a range of policies concerning the management of student behaviour.

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Sex discrimination (pregnancy) in employment

The complainant was employed by the respondent aged care facility. The complainant claimed that after she advised her manager that she was pregnant, she was stood her down from her employment for a period of 3 weeks.

On being advised of the complaint, the respondent indicated a willingness to attempt to resolve the matter through conciliation.

The complaint was resolved on the basis that the complainant returned to work and the respondent agreed to pay the complainant's wages for the period that she had been stood down. The complainant retained her employment at the facility.

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Race discrimination in accommodation

The complainant attended an open house at the respondent's property and claimed the respondent did not let her enter because she is of Chinese origin.

She claimed the real estate agent failed to take appropriate action in response to the incident.

On being notified of the complaint the respondents indicated a willingness to participate in conciliation.

The complaint was resolved with an agreement that the owner and real estate agent write to the complainant expressing their regret for the incident.

The real estate agent also agreed to educate its staff and owners about racial discrimination.

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Disability discrimination in education

The complainant claimed the respondent private high school did not allow her daughter to attend a school retreat because she has depression.

On being advised of the complaint the school agreed to participate in conciliation.

The complaint was resolved with an agreement that the school: write to the complainant and her daughter apologising for the incident; review its excursion policies; continue to provide professional development to staff re working with students with disability; and continue to engage with the complainant and her daughter to ensure the best possible educational outcomes.