



The facts:

# What happens after you make a complaint

The Victorian Disability Worker Commission is an independent complaints service about the conduct of disability workers.

It can take complaints about any disability worker in Victoria, regardless of how they are funded.

The Victorian Government has a “zero tolerance” approach to abuse of people with disability. Our complaints service puts this approach into practice.

## Who will handle my complaint?

We will work with you when you make a complaint. We will offer you a safe environment in which you can share information about your complaint.

If you are making the complaint on behalf of a person with a disability, we will speak with them where possible to gain their consent to proceed. Our focus is on the person with a disability and their needs, and we will seek to involve them in the process.

## We will ask you to confirm what you complaint is about

We will confirm the details of the complaint with you. In order to progress your complaint you will be asked to confirm the issue or issues you are complaining about.

## We will ask whether you want a specific outcome

You will be asked about the outcome you would like to achieve. It's okay if you don't want any specific outcome.

If you are unsure, then we can suggest outcomes to you. Some examples are an apology from a worker or settling a complaint by agreement with a worker. You can tell us which outcomes you are happy to agree to.

If you decide to withdraw your complaint we may still continue to look into the matter.

Many complaints can be resolved through us working with you, or the person making a complaint on your behalf, and the disability worker to get outcomes that each person is satisfied with.

## If you need help with languages, writing or communicating

We can arrange in-language interpreters or you can contact us via the National Relay Service, including for Auslan interpreters, to help you make a complaint and to assist you at any time. We can meet with you in person if you need or prefer face-to-face interaction.

## What to expect when you meet with us about a complaint?

You will have the option to meet with us if you choose. This meeting is for the Commission to get a better sense of what your complaint is about and if there are any specific outcomes you want.

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Visit [vdwc.vic.gov.au](http://vdwc.vic.gov.au)  
Call 1800 497 132

## Who will be at the meeting?

The disability worker or workers will not attend. A Commission staff member experienced in handling complaints will attend. We encourage you to bring along a support person if you wish. This might be a friend or family member, a support worker, or someone you feel comfortable with to assist you in explaining your concerns. You can have more than one support person attend.

You can discuss with us who in your existing support network might be appropriate to support you.

## What will be discussed at the meeting

You will have the opportunity to share information about your concerns, including any information you believe will be useful to support your complaint.

## How to prepare for the meeting

### What information should I prepare or bring with me?

Before you meet with us, you might like to consider whether there is any extra information you would like to provide at your meeting.

This might include any supporting information or anything you think might be useful in helping us to understand what happened.

You might like to bring along some questions you would like to ask at the meeting.

## What happens after the meeting?

We will contact you after the meeting to advise you of the next steps.

### Your complaint could be handled in one of the following ways

- Settle by agreement – for example an apology from a worker or an agreement between them and you
- Conciliation – this is a more formal process aimed at reaching an agreement. This can only happen if the parties to a complaint agree to conciliation. The parties will then have certain rights and responsibilities under the Disability Service Safeguards Act 2018
- Counselling – is an educational tool used by the Commission, for example to remind disability workers that they must follow the Disability Service Safeguards Code of Conduct
- Investigation – For further information on investigations please visit: <https://www.vdwc.vic.gov.au/what-happens-when-commission-decides-to-investigate>

## About the Victorian Disability Worker Commission

The Victorian Disability Worker Commission is an independent body established to better protect people with disability and build a stronger, safer disability sector. It is responsible for the Disability Service Safeguards Code of Conduct, establishing the minimum expectations for all workers in Victoria supporting people with disability, and the complaints service. It can accept complaints and notifications, with powers to investigate and ban workers who put people's safety at risk.

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