

Discrimination complaints up 46 per cent

10 November 2011

The Fair Work Ombudsman received and assessed 1171 complaints relating to workplace discrimination last financial year.

The number is up 46 per cent on the 801 complaints received in 2009-10.

The most common complaint was alleged discrimination on the grounds of physical or mental disability (20 per cent).

Complaints based on age accounted for 13 per cent and alleged discrimination over family or carer responsibilities ranked third at 12 per cent.

Eight per cent of complaints related to alleged discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy, and similarly on the basis of sex.

Four per cent of complaints related to social origin, two per cent each to colour, national extraction, political opinion and sexual preference and one per cent each to marital status and religion.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has had the power to investigate discrimination in the workplace since the Fair Work Act commenced on July 1, 2009.

Fair Work inspectors can investigate allegations of discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy, race, colour, sex, sexual preference, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family or carer responsibilities, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

A specialist anti-discrimination team has been established within the Agency's Complex Investigations & Innovation branch.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson says every employee has the right to work without fear of discrimination.

Last financial year, the Fair Work Ombudsman ran education and awareness campaigns on age discrimination, pregnancy discrimination and sexual orientation and preference.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has information about discrimination and various workplace entitlements available on its website at www.fairwork.gov.au.

Alternatively, people can call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 from 8 am to 6 pm weekdays.

Follow the Fair Work Ombudsman on [Twitter @fairwork_gov_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) (https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) for news and updates on workplace relations issues that matter..

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: 13 36 77. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing advice that you can rely on. The information contained on this website is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or workplace relations professional. Visitors are warned that this site may inadvertently contain names or pictures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have recently died.