

Change to complaint handling process to improve co-operative resolutions

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The Fair Work Ombudsman is improving its complaint resolution processes to get complaints resolved sooner.

Fair Work inspectors will now routinely provide employers with a written copy of employee complaints at the start of the complaint resolution process.

In the past, only summarised complaints from employees have been provided to employers.

Acting Fair Work Ombudsman, Michael Campbell, says the change is part of the Agency's drive to encourage a co-operative approach to resolving disputes.

The Fair Work Ombudsman receives about 25,000 complaints every year. About three-quarters of these are resolved voluntarily by employers, without the need for escalation to a formal investigation.

Voluntary resolution involves Fair Work inspectors educating employers and employees about workplace laws that apply to their situation and, if necessary, facilitating voluntary rectification of issues and helping employers to put processes in place to ensure they are following relevant laws in the future.

Mr Campbell said providing employers with a written copy of employee complaints was part of the Fair Work Ombudsman's commitment to improving its processes to ensure even more complaints were resolved quickly and co-operatively.

"We want to ensure our Fair Work inspectors are seen as a neutral third party in disputes and that we are there to assist both employers and employees," Mr Campbell said.

"Complaints are often the result of poor communication between employee and employer or a lack of information. It can be quite confronting for an employer to be the subject of a formal complaint by a worker.

"If we can win the confidence of both employers and employees at the start of contact with the Fair Work Ombudsman, we are hopeful that even more disputes will be resolved directly between the parties. Allowing employers to see the full complaint lodged by an employee is an important step towards that goal."

"Of course, where issues aren't resolved, our inspectors can conduct investigations and ultimately we can take matters to court to seek compliance with workplace laws."

Employers and employees seeking assistance should visit www.fairwork.gov.au or contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Media inquiries:

Ryan Pedler, Assistant Director, Media & Stakeholder Relations,
(03) 9954 2561, 0411 430 902
media@fwo.gov.au

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

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