

Freedom of Information statement

The [Freedom of Information Act 1982 \(Vic\)](#) (FOI Act) gives members of the public the right to request documents held by public bodies in Victoria, including the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (the **Commission**).

The Commission provides this statement by way of information and as required under Part II of the FOI Act. This statement contains details about the Commission's:

- Organisation and functions
- Categories of documents
- Freedom of information arrangements
- Publications
- Rules, policies and procedures
- Report literature

The Commission makes information available online to assist the public. Making information easily accessible can reduce the need for members of the public to submit requests under the FOI Act. Links are provided below to documents about the Commission's functions. Additional information can be found in the Commission's [Annual Report](#) or by searching the Commission's [website](#).

If you are interested in the Commission's work you can also follow us on social media or [join our mailing list](#) for email updates.

Organisation and functions

The Commission is an independent statutory body established in 1977 under Victoria's first [Equal Opportunity Act](#). The Commission is made up of a Board, Commissioner and staff. More information about the structure of the Commission can be found under the '[Our people](#)' section of the Commission's website.

The Commission has responsibilities under four laws: the [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#), [Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001](#), [Change or Suppression \(Conversion\) Practices Prohibition Act 2021](#) and the [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#) (the **Charter**). The Minister responsible for these laws is the Attorney-General, except for the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act which is administered by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

Under the Equal Opportunity Act and the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act the Commission helps people resolve complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and racial or religious vilification through a free, fair and timely dispute resolution service with the aim of achieving a mutual agreement.

Under the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act, the Commission can consider and respond to reports of change or suppression practices, as well as launch investigations where there is evidence of serious or systemic change or suppression practices.

The Commission's role with respect to the Charter includes to educate people about the rights and responsibilities contained in the Charter, and to report annually to the government about the operation of the Charter. The Commission does not handle complaints related to the Charter.

Services provided by the Commission include:

- a free telephone Enquiry Line, 1300 292 153 or enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au;
- a free, fair and timely dispute resolution service;
- information and education about equal opportunity laws, racial and religious vilification, change or suppression practices and the Charter;
- education, training and consultancy services.

The Commission interacts with the public and develops policies and practices in a number of ways, including by establishing consultative processes with the community which vary depending on the focus of the work. These include opportunities for providing feedback on the Commission's website, the Commission Enquiry Line or via an [online chat](#). Members of the public can also write directly to the Commission seeking further information on any aspect of its operations.

Additional information relating to the organisation and the functions of the Commission can be found in the '[About us](#)' section of the Commission's website. You can also [contact us](#) directly to seek information on our functions.

Categories of documents

The Commission creates a large number of documents and records in the course of its work. The Commission holds documents relating to procedures and policy, projects, litigation, investigations, reports, dispute resolution, staff, operational and administrative responsibilities, and general correspondence. The Commission uses a number of Electronic Documents and Records Management Systems to store, access and manage a broad range of electronic and hard copy documents.

Document types

The types of documents maintained by the Commission include:

- Human resource files
- Financial records
- Briefings

- Correspondence
- Meeting records
- General publications
- Research reports, including surveys, research material and statistical data
- Legal and policy submissions
- Advice
- Media communications
- Board papers
- Enquiry line records
- Training materials
- Education resources
- Complaint and enquiry records
- Investigation records
- Intervention records
- Policies and guidelines.

The Commission's website and annual reports outline the areas of work that it undertakes and in which areas these documents would be created.

Freedom of information arrangements

Making a freedom of information request

A freedom of information (**FOI**) request needs to be in writing and must clearly explain the documents sought. It must be accompanied by the application fee, or a request to have the fee waived on hardship grounds.

Requests for documents in the possession of the Commission can be made by:

- email to: foi@veohrc.vic.gov.au
- post to:

Freedom of Information Officer
 Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
 Level 3, 204 Lygon Street
 Carlton VIC 3053

Applicants can contact the Commission's Legal Unit on 1300 292 153 for assistance making an FOI request.

More information about how to make a request, and how the Commission receives and processes FOI requests, can be found:

- In the Commission's [Freedom of information policy](#)
- On the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner's [website](#).

Changing personal records

Members of the public may ask the Commission to have their personal information corrected if it is wrong, incomplete, out of date, or misleading.

Applications to change personal information must still be made in writing, but there is no application fee.

Applications to correct personal records can be sent to the Commission's Freedom of Information Officer at the details above.

Publications

The Commission produces a wide range of publications that are made available to the public free of charge on the Commission's website. Many of these publications can be accessed on the [resources](#) section of the Commission's website, or by clicking on the hyperlinks below.

The following categories of publications are available on the Commission's website:

- Resources for rights holders, explainers and tools (e.g. [There's no place for racism in Victoria – resource centre](#), [explainer: Mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations and your rights 2021](#), [Sexual harassment support and response tool 2020](#))
- Resources for duty holders (e.g. [Business guide: Understanding why and how to achieve pay equality in small-to-medium businesses – 2021](#), [Retailers' guide: Face masks, vaccination and discrimination – 2021](#))
- [Equal Opportunity Act Practice Guidelines](#) (e.g. [Spent Conviction Discrimination Guideline](#), and the [Guideline on Preventing and Responding to Workplace Sexual Harassment](#))
- Brochures, factsheets and FAQs (e.g. [FAQs: Face masks and human rights](#), [Translated factsheets – Change or Suppression \(Conversion\) Practices Prohibition Act 2021](#), [Religious exceptions reform factsheet](#))
- Posters (e.g. [Pregnancy and work](#); [Aboriginal Cultural Rights](#))

- [Reports from research, reviews and investigations](#) undertaken by the Commission (e.g. [Investigation: Preventing sexual harassment in retail franchises](#), [Independent review into workplace equality in Ambulance Victoria](#))
- Charter reports (e.g. [2020 Report on the operation of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities](#))
- [Policy submissions](#) (e.g. [Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Vilification Protections](#))
- [Legal submissions](#) in cases the Commission has previously intervened in, where there is no relevant Court Order preventing publication (e.g. [Intervention in G93966 - HYY \(Guardianship\) VCAT 97](#))
- [Educational resources](#) and information about [education and consultancy services](#) offered by the Commission
- Information about [dispute resolution](#) at the Commission
- Information about reports made regarding [change or suppression practices](#).

Enquiries about publications should be directed to communications@veohrc.vic.gov.au.

Rules, policies and procedures

Guidance documents relevant to the Commission's functions and decisions are published on the Commission's website under '[Our principles, action plans and policies](#)'. These include:

- [Service standards](#)
- [Managing unreasonable behaviour](#)
- [Charter Intervention Guidelines](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Act Intervention Guidelines](#)
- [The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 investigations policy](#)
- [Change or Suppression \(Conversion\) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 investigations policy](#)
- [Privacy policy](#)
- [Public Interest Disclosure Procedures](#)
- [Freedom of information policy](#)
- Action plans (e.g. [Gender Equality Action Plan](#))

If searching for a specific topic, more thorough results may be obtained by conducting a search of the Commission's website.

The resource locations and content presented within the overall Part II Statement provides only a snapshot of the information that is available and is by no means an exhaustive representation.

Report literature

Final reports and records of decisions published by the Commission can be found in the [Resources](#) section of the Commission's website.

The Commission's [annual reports](#) list information, as specified in the Minister for Finance's Standing Directions, to be made available on request to relevant ministers, members of Parliament and the public (subject to FOI requirements, if applicable).