

# Sexual Harassment Reporting Avenues

This document provides pathways for people who experience or witness sexual harassment in the Court or VCAT environments.

(i.e. a report might be made by the public, other members of the legal profession, clients, parties to proceedings, family members, witness, or Court staff, contractors, or volunteers).

For internal complaints (i.e. complaint by a staff/member about another within the same organisation including judicial officers, executive or statutory office holders), please refer to organisations' internal complaints process.

| Complaint against                         | Report to  | About the process   | Contact  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Victorian judicial officer or VCAT member | <b>Judicial Commission of Victoria</b>                       | <p>The Commission can investigate complaints about the conduct of current judicial officers and VCAT members including sexual harassment. Complaints can be made by those directly impacted or others who witnessed or are aware of the conduct. This can be done in writing via our <a href="#">online portal</a> or alternatively, we can arrange a time for a complaints officer or lawyer to take enquiries or to discuss options and processes over the telephone.</p> <p>Complainants can remain anonymous until such time as they decide to make a formal complaint. The Commission's Board consists of four non-judicial members from a variety of non-legal backgrounds appointed by the Governor in Council, including Dr Szoke, and six judicial members.</p>  | <p><b>Phone:</b> (03) 9084 9600<br/> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:enquiries@judicialcommission.vic.gov.au">enquiries@judicialcommission.vic.gov.au</a><br/> <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.judicialcommission.vic.gov.au">www.judicialcommission.vic.gov.au</a></p>  |
|   | <b>Head of Jurisdiction</b>                                  | <p>Anyone can raise a complaint or concern about the conduct of judicial officers or VCAT members past or present with the Head of Jurisdiction.</p> <p>Protocols have been developed in some instances for legal profession groups e.g. <a href="#">VicBar</a> which provide for concern to be raised by members through the President with the Head of Jurisdiction.</p> <p>This is not a disciplinary process but there are a range of steps that can be taken and these can be discussed with the individual.</p>   | <p><b>Web:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.courts.vic.gov.au/complaints">www.courts.vic.gov.au/complaints</a><br/> <a href="http://www.vicbar.com.au/public/about/governance/judicial-conduct-policy">www.vicbar.com.au/public/about/governance/judicial-conduct-policy</a></p>   |
| Lawyer (Solicitors and Barristers)        | <b>Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner (VLSBC)</b> | <p>VLSBC accepts reports and investigates complaints of sexual harassment by barristers and solicitors. We can take disciplinary action against individuals where appropriate. In some circumstances the Commissioner may initiate their own investigations, for example, where a number of reports are made about poor behaviour within a firm.</p> <p>As well as formal complaints, the VLSBC accepts informal reports of sexual harassment, including where a person would like to remain anonymous. Complainants can call or email the VLSBC to speak to a member of the Sexual Harassment Complaints team to discuss their options. Hearing people's personal accounts of harassment assists the VLSBC in their wider initiative to decrease the prevalence of sexual harassment in Victoria's legal workplaces.</p> <p>VLSBC will treat reports and complaints sensitively and we have specially trained case handlers for matters involving sexual harassment.</p> | <p><b>Phone:</b> (03) 9679 8001 (you can request to talk to the Sexual Harassment Complaints team)<br/> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:harassmentcomplaints@lsbc.vic.gov.au">harassmentcomplaints@lsbc.vic.gov.au</a> (monitored only by the Sexual Harassment Complaints team)<br/> <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.lsbc.vic.gov.au/lawyers/practising-law/sexual-harassment">www.lsbc.vic.gov.au/lawyers/practising-law/sexual-harassment</a></p> |
|   | <b>Law Institute of Victoria (LIV)</b>                       | <p>Lawyers can make contact with the LIV to seek confidential advice on their options in relation to how to deal with sexual harassment from both the perspective of the complainant and the accused. To do this they would contact the LIV practice support line. The LIV's Practice Support Line is not for members of the public. It is a service for lawyers. A report to the LIV will <b>not</b> lead to disciplinary action by the LIV as the LIV does not hold any regulatory powers. For an investigation to occur, the complainant will need to make a complaint directly to the VLSBC.</p>  | <p><b>Phone:</b> (03) 9607 9311 (LIV practice support line)<br/> <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.liv.asn.au">www.liv.asn.au</a></p>  |
|   | <b>The Victorian Bar</b>                                     | <p>Informal complaints or reports about a barrister allegedly engaging in bullying, discrimination or sexual harassment, may be made to the Victorian Bar under its code of conduct. Complaints or reports can be made by email or telephone, by raising a Grievance with the Ethics Committee under its Grievance Protocol, or barristers can also approach a Peer Support Barrister for support and guidance.</p> <p>A report to the Victorian Bar will <b>not</b> lead to disciplinary action by the Bar as it does not hold any investigatory powers. Formal complaints should be made directly to the Victorian Legal Services Commissioner.</p>   | <p><b>Phone:</b> (03) 9225 7111<br/> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:policy@vicbar.com.au">policy@vicbar.com.au</a><br/> <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.vicbar.com.au/public/about/governance/internal-conduct-policies-and-reports">www.vicbar.com.au/public/about/governance/internal-conduct-policies-and-reports</a></p>  |
| Victoria Legal Aid (VLA)                  | <b>Victoria Legal Aid</b>                                    | <p>Complaints can be about a staff member or private practitioner providing legally aided services. Complaints may relate to any type of conduct (including sexual harassment), or to dissatisfaction with a VLA service.</p> <p>Complaints can be lodged through the VLA website using the online form, via email or via telephone.</p>  | <p><b>Phone:</b> (03) 9280 3789<br/> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:complaints@vla.vic.gov.au">complaints@vla.vic.gov.au</a><br/> <b>Web:</b> <a href="https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/complaints">https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/complaints</a></p>   |
| Public Prosecutor                         | <b>Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP)</b>                   | <p>Complaints can be made regarding the conduct and behaviour of an OPP Employee. All complaints will be dealt with sensitively and take into account the views of the complainant. If deemed necessary the OPP may initiate their own investigation.</p> <p>Complaints can be lodged through the OPP website or via telephone.</p>   | <p><b>Phone:</b> 03 9603 2526 or 0407 196 242<br/> <b>Web:</b> <a href="https://www.opp.vic.gov.au/complaints-and-feedback/">https://www.opp.vic.gov.au/complaints-and-feedback/</a></p>   |

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| Corrections Officers or staff                                    | <b>Corrections Victoria (CV)</b> | Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) and CV has a zero-tolerance approach towards sexual harassment. Our complaints process applies to all departmental employees (including casual employee), contractors, sub-contractors, suppliers, trainees, interns, work experience students and visitors (employees and workers). All complaints are treated seriously, and DJCS will work with complainants on addressing and resolving concerns raised, in line with our Sexual Harassment Policy and Workplace Behaviour Resolution Guidelines.   | Complaints in relation to sexual harassment can be made by contacting the DJCS Workplace Relations team at: <a href="mailto:workplacerelements@justice.vic.gov.au">workplacerelements@justice.vic.gov.au</a>                           |
| Court Services Victoria (CSV) employee, contractor, or volunteer | <b>Chief People Officer, CSV</b> | Complaints and reports about a range of conduct including sexual harassment can be made to the Chief People Officer at CSV. All complaints will be dealt with sensitively and take into account the views of the complainant.   | <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:csv.hradvice@courts.vic.gov.au">csv.hradvice@courts.vic.gov.au</a>   |
| Victoria Police Officers or staff                                | <b>Police Conduct Unit</b>       | Complaints about poor police behaviour or any kind of sexual harassment type conduct can be reported to the Police Conduct Unit using an online form submission, telephone or by postal address.  | <b>Phone:</b> 1300 363 101<br><b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.police.vic.gov.au/complaints">www.police.vic.gov.au/complaints</a><br><b>Post:</b> Police Conduct Unit GPO Box 913 Melbourne VIC 3001                                    |
| Anyone   | <b>Victoria Police</b>           | Sexual offences can be reported to Victoria Police by calling Triple Zero (000), or at a local police station.<br>A person may also call <b>1800RESPECT (1800 737 732)</b> to access help and support in reporting a criminal offence.  | <b>Phone:</b> In an emergency, dial Triple Zero (000) or contact your local police station<br><b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.police.vic.gov.au/sexual-offences">www.police.vic.gov.au/sexual-offences</a>                             |
|  | <b>VEOHRC</b>                    | Provides a voluntary, free, confidential dispute resolution service in relation to sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation (being treated badly for making a complaint) under the <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> (Vic).  | <b>Phone:</b> 1300 292 153<br><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au">enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au</a><br><b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/get-help/">www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/get-help/</a> |
|  | <b>WorkSafe Victoria</b>         | A person may call WorkSafe's Advisory Service to access advice on work-related sexual harassment.<br>WorkSafe Inspectors conduct worksite inspections and make enquiries with employers in relation to preventing sexual harassment, and also reports of sexual harassment occurring within the workplace. WorkSafe can also commence investigations into potential breaches of the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> (OHS Act) relating to sexual harassment.<br>Information about preventing and responding to work-related sexual harassment can be found on the WorkSafe website: <a href="http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/work-related-gendered-violence-including-sexual-harassment">www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/work-related-gendered-violence-including-sexual-harassment</a><br>Employers have obligations under the OHS Act and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 to report certain incidents to WorkSafe. Whether an incident is notifiable depends on the circumstances of the incident. Further guidance on incident notification can be found at <a href="http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/report-incident">www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/report-incident</a> | <b>Advisory Service:</b> 1800 136 089<br><b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/speak-to-advisor">www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/speak-to-advisor</a>  |

Note there is overlap amongst some categories - for example, a judicial officer or VCAT member may also be a LIV member. Several organisations listed are currently reviewing their sexual harassment complaints handling processes, and the outcomes from the *Review of Sexual Harassment in Victorian Courts and VCAT, Report and Recommendations*, will likely inform future changes or revision of this document. Document Date August 2022.