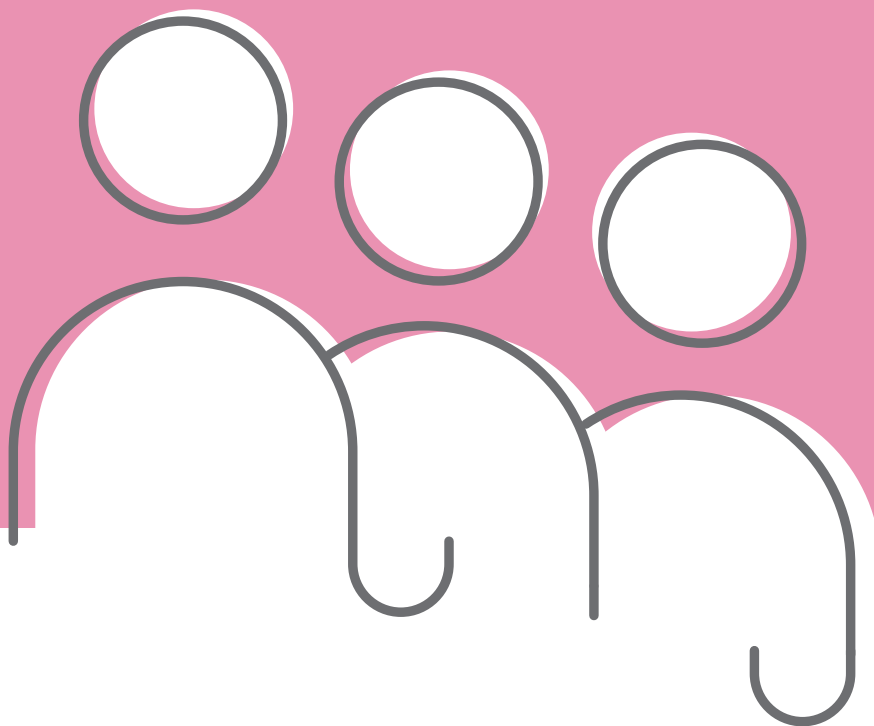


# Your Equal Status Rights Explained

Guide to the Equal Status  
Acts 2000-2012



**Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta  
an Duine agus Comhionannas**

**Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission**



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Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

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The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) was established under statute on 1 November 2014 to protect and promote human rights and equality in Ireland. It promotes a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding and works to eliminate human rights abuses and discrimination.

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# 1. Introduction

# Introduction

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) was established on 1 November 2014 as an independent statutory body to protect and promote human rights and equality in Ireland. We have a specific role to work to combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities in the areas covered by the Equal Status Acts. We also have a role to provide information on the Acts.

This booklet tells you about the main terms of the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2012. These Acts aim to protect individuals from certain kinds of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment that can happen in everyday living – for example, shopping, using services, going to school or college, socialising, or looking for accommodation.

The Equal Status Acts promote equality and ban discrimination across nine different grounds (categories).

If you want more detailed information about the Equal Status Acts, you can get copies of the full legislation online at: [www.ihrec.ie](http://www.ihrec.ie) or [www.irishstatutebook.ie](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie)

The Equal Status Acts do not cover discrimination in the workplace – there are separate Employment Equality Acts in place for that and a separate information booklet covering discrimination in employment is available at [www.ihrec.ie](http://www.ihrec.ie)

This booklet only gives information – it is not a legal document.



## 2. About the Equal Status Acts

# About the Equal Status Acts

## What are the aims of the Equal Status Acts?

The Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2012 aim to:

- promote equality;
- ban certain kinds of discrimination across nine grounds;
- ban sexual harassment and harassment;
- ban victimisation;
- promote 'reasonable accommodation' of people with disabilities (this is explained on page 10); and
- allow a broad range of positive action measures (this is explained on page 11).

## What are the nine grounds?

The Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2012 ban discrimination on the following nine grounds:

### The Gender ground

You are entitled to equal treatment whether you are a man, a woman or a transgender person.

### The Civil Status ground

You are entitled to equal treatment whether you are single, married, separated, divorced or widowed, in a civil partnership or previously in a civil partnership.

### The Family Status ground

You are entitled to equal treatment if you are pregnant or the parent or the

person responsible for a child under 18 years. This ground also protects those who are the main carers or the parent of a person with a disability who is 18 years or over where their disability requires care on an ongoing basis.

### The Sexual Orientation ground

You are entitled to equal treatment whether you are gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual (straight).

### The Religion ground

You are entitled to equal treatment no matter what your religious beliefs are or if you don't hold any religious beliefs.

### The Age ground

You are entitled to equal treatment if you are any age, so long as you are over 18. (The age ground only applies to young people under 18 if they hold a driver's licence and are buying car insurance).

### The Race ground

You are entitled to equal treatment no matter what your race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin is.

### The Traveller community ground

You are entitled to equal treatment if you are a member of the Traveller community.

### The Disability ground

You are entitled to equal treatment if you have a disability. There are different types of disability such as a physical disability (e.g. unable to walk or to see), intellectual disability or learning disability (e.g. dyslexia). Certain mental health issues may also be a form of disability. Disability could also mean that you suffer from a particular medical condition, which is potentially chronic, long-term, debilitating or that gets worse over time.

## Who is protected under the Acts?

The Acts apply to anyone who:

- buys or sells goods that are available to the public or a section of the public;
- uses or provides services that are available to the public or a section of the public;
- provides or uses accommodation (landlords, tenants, hotels and so on); or
- attends or manages a pre-school, school, college or other educational establishment.

Clubs, such as sports clubs, are treated slightly differently under the Equal Status Acts. There is a separate section dealing with clubs on page 28.

## Who decides discrimination claims?

Most claims are brought to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) which is similar to a court. The WRC will examine the claim and make a ruling on it. Most claims of discrimination in relation to clubs and licensed premises are dealt with in the District Court. All appeals under the Acts from the WRC and the District Court are dealt with by the Circuit Court.

## What is discrimination under the Equal Status Acts?

Broadly speaking, discrimination means that you receive less favourable treatment than other people because of who you are. However, not all forms of discrimination are covered by the Equal Status Acts. Discrimination has a specific meaning in the Acts and there are different types of discrimination covered by the Acts.

## What are the different types of discrimination?

- **Direct discrimination** is when a person is treated less favourably than another person in the same situation under any of the nine grounds covered by the Acts.

- **Indirect discrimination** happens where an individual or group of people are placed at a disadvantage as a result of conditions or rules which they might find hard to satisfy and which cannot be reasonably justified.

### Example

A requirement for a permanent address might seem neutral, but it might have a more negative impact on members of the Traveller community than others. This is indirectly discriminatory unless it can be proved that this requirement is justified, appropriate and necessary.

- **Discrimination by association** happens when a person is treated less favourably simply because they are associated with or connected to another person.

### Example

If a person was refused a product or service or was harassed because they were married to a person of a different religion, they are being discriminated against because they are being associated with their partner's religion and are being refused service on that basis.

- **Discrimination by imputation** happens when a person is treated less favourably because it is thought that they belong to one of the categories covered by the nine grounds, whether or not that is the case.

### Example

If you have a dark complexion and are refused a product or service because the service provider assumes that you are of a different race or nationality, this would be discrimination on the race ground.

## **Do the Acts protect against all forms of discrimination?**

The Equal Status Acts set out particular forms of discrimination that are against the law. However, the Acts do not guard against all forms of discrimination. In other words, there are some exemptions in the Acts. Some of these are general exemptions and some apply to particular services.

This booklet has separate sections that deal with how the Acts work in relation to:

- goods and services;
- accommodation;
- educational establishments; and
- clubs.

The exemptions in each category are given at the end of each section. There is a separate section for general exemptions.

## **How do the Acts protect against harassment and sexual harassment?**

The Acts state that sexual harassment and harassment in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and educational establishments, are against the law.

## **What is harassment and sexual harassment?**

Harassment is a form of discrimination. It includes any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds.

### **Example**

Racist slurs, sexist or homophobic comments that are unwanted constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct, which is unwanted and is of a sexual nature.

In both cases, it is conduct which damages the person at the receiving end in terms of their dignity and self-esteem, and places them in a hostile and degrading environment. The unwanted conduct might take the form of actions, gestures, spoken words, written words, emails, text messages, pictures, and so on.

If you are harassed or sexually harassed in a place while accessing services, the person in charge of that place could be held responsible for the harassment or sexual harassment. This includes, for example, school principals, shopkeepers, landlords, public employees and so on. They are responsible for making sure that anyone who has a right to be on their premises is not harassed or sexually harassed and they must take steps to prevent it from happening. This is called 'vicarious liability'.

'Vicarious liability' means that a provider of goods or services (private or public) must take responsibility for their employees, when it comes to discrimination.

### **Example**

If you are discriminated against in a shop by an employee, your claim would be against the shop owner. They must take responsibility for the behaviour of their employees unless they can prove they did everything they could to prevent such behaviour.

## **What is 'victimisation'?**

In relation to the Acts, 'victimisation' is where a person is badly treated or penalised by others because they have made a complaint about discrimination under the Acts or have been involved in some way in a complaint under the Equal Status Acts. Victimisation is against the law.

## Disability – What is ‘reasonable accommodation’?

‘Reasonable accommodation’ means providing specific treatment or facilities to make sure that people with a disability can avail of particular goods, services, housing, and so on. The following individuals and organisations must do all that is reasonable to meet the needs of a person with a disability:

- people and organisations selling goods or providing services;
- people and organisations selling or letting accommodation or providing accommodation;
- schools, colleges and other educational institutions; and
- clubs.

However, these people and organisations do not have to provide special facilities or treatment if it would cost them more than a ‘nominal cost’.

A ‘nominal’ cost will be different for each person or organisation, as it depends on the size of the business and its budget.

### Example

It would be reasonable to expect that a larger store provides ramps and lifts for wheelchair access but a small shopkeeper might not be able to meet this expense, although this has to be decided on the basis of how much the shop earns, and whether cheaper solutions can be found.

## What is ‘positive action’?

Under the Acts, ‘positive action’ means doing something to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disadvantaged categories under the nine grounds; and



- meet the special needs of people who may need extra help.

### **Example**

If a supermarket offers families a free childcare service while they are shopping, it would be a positive action on the ground of family status.

## **What about equality in advertising?**

It is illegal under the Acts to publish or display an advertisement that indicates that certain people or groups would be treated less favourably.

### **Example**

Advertising sales promotions to one gender might indicate an intention to discriminate on the gender ground.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is the relevant body to contact in relation to alleged discriminatory advertising.



3. How do the Acts work in relation to goods and services?

# How do the Acts work in relation to goods and services?

Generally, people may not discriminate when they provide goods and services to the public, even if the goods and services are free.

## What is a service?

If you receive a 'service', it means a person or organisation has done something for you or supplied you with something you wanted or needed. Examples of services are:

- banking, insurance, grants, loans, credit or financing;
- entertainment, recreation, eating out;
- cultural activities;
- transport or travel;
- services or facilities provided by a club (which are available to the public or a section of the public); or
- professional trades or services.

This list gives you some examples of services but there could be many others. The Equal Status Acts cover a wide range of services.

## Are public services covered by the Acts?

Services provided by the State (such as the Health Service Executive, local authorities, and so on) are covered but there are some exemptions. The main exemption is that anything required to be done by another Irish law or EU law cannot be regarded as discrimination under the Equal Status Acts.

### Example

It is not discrimination to refuse a social welfare payment to a person if that person is excluded from entitlement to the payment or benefit under social welfare law.

There are also specific exemptions on the nationality ground in relation to the treatment by public authorities of certain foreign nationals.

(See the section on General exemptions).

## Goods and services exemptions

The Acts allow you to be treated differently on the following grounds:

### Gender

You can be treated differently in relation to cosmetic services that involve physical contact – for instance, hairdressing, body waxing, and so on. You can also be treated differently if there is a risk that you could be embarrassed because of a lack of privacy.

### Example

A woman might feel embarrassed having a body massage, a body wax, or hair laser removal by a man, and can request a female member of staff to do it instead.

## Religion

You can be treated differently in relation to religious goods and services.

### Example

It is acceptable to facilitate people to observe religious occasions such as Christmas, Passover or Ramadan or to provide special places for prayer.

## Age ground

You can be treated differently on the age ground in relation to the adoption and fostering of children. For example, although there is no legal upper age limit in Ireland to adopt a child, an adoption agency might set its own age limit.

## Mixed grounds

### Sporting events

The Acts allow people to be treated differently on the basis of their gender, age, disability or nationality but only if the differences are reasonably necessary and relevant.

### Example

It is acceptable under the Acts to run an event like the Special Olympics exclusively for people with certain disabilities.

## Insurance

This covers annuities, pensions, insurance policies, and so on. Life insurance policies are based on 'risk'. Insurance companies decide how much to charge you for your policy based on what kind of 'risk' you are.

### Example

If you have a strong family history of a particular illness, you might be considered 'high' risk and have to pay more for life assurance than somebody else.

This kind of different treatment is allowed if the differences are based on proper risk assessment, research and statistics. However, EU law does not permit different treatment in relation to insurance on the gender and race ground.

### Drama and entertainment

You can be treated differently on the basis of your gender, age, disability or race but only if it's necessary for the good of the production.

### Example

It would be reasonable to audition only young women for the role of Maria in *The Sound of Music*.

## All grounds

The Acts allow people to be treated differently on any of the nine grounds in relation to the following:

### Wills and gifts

A person making a will or a gift is entitled to choose whoever they want to benefit.

### Promotion of special interests

This covers services that promote or favour the interests of one person or group over another, for example, an active retirement association.

## Special needs

This covers goods and services which can be reasonably considered as being suitable only for the needs of certain people.

### Example

It is not discrimination under the Acts to reserve disabled parking spaces for people with disabilities.



4. How do the Acts work in relation to accommodation?

# How do the Acts work in relation to accommodation?

The general rule is that there can be no discrimination across the nine grounds in relation to:

- selling a property;
- making or ending a tenancy agreement;
- providing accommodation or any related service or amenity (hotels and so on); or
- ending the provision of accommodation.

The premises or lodgings must be available to the general public or a particular section of the public.

## Accommodation exemptions

### Gender

In relation to shared accommodation the Acts allow people to be treated differently in relation to personal privacy where lack of privacy might cause embarrassment.

### Mixed grounds

The Acts allow housing authorities to treat people differently in relation to housing based on:

- family size;
- family status;
- civil status;
- disability;
- age; or

- membership of the Traveller community.

The Acts also allow for different treatment for housing accommodation provided by or on behalf of the Minister for Justice and Equality on these grounds and also on the grounds of gender and nationality.

## All grounds

The Acts allow people to be treated differently on any of the nine grounds in relation to the following:

### **A person's home**

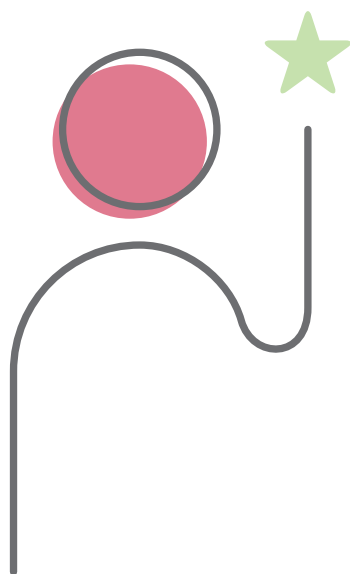
This covers where accommodation is provided by a person in their private home. For example, if a home-owner took in a lodger and then discovered that this was disrupting their private or family life, they would not be discriminating if they asked the lodger to leave.

### **Use of the accommodation by people in a particular category**

This covers accommodation reserved for a particular category of people, for example, retirement homes for older people, hostels for homeless people, and so on.

### **Wills and gifts**

The person making the will or gift can choose who they wish to benefit.



5. How do the Acts work in relation to educational establishments?

# How do the Acts work in relation to educational establishments?

Educational establishments include pre-school services; primary or post-primary schools; adult, continuing or further education establishments; and universities or other third level institutions. They also include private educational establishments.

The general rule is that an educational establishment may not discriminate in relation to:

- the admission of students or the terms or conditions of admission;
- the access of any student to any course, facility or benefit;
- any other term or condition of participation; or
- the expulsion of a student or other penalty.

## Educational establishments - exemptions

### Gender

Single sex schools are allowed. Primary and secondary schools may be boys only or girls only.

### Religion and Gender

Institutions providing religious training to ministers of a particular religion may admit students of only one gender or religious belief.

## Educational establishments - special exemptions

### Religious tradition (Ethos) of the school

The Acts allow primary and post-primary schools which follow the values of a particular religion to give preference to applicants of that religion. Primary and post-primary schools may refuse to admit a student who is

not of that religion. However, they must prove that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school. It is not a refusal under the Acts if the school is fully subscribed and an applicant is put on a waiting list.

## Mature students

The Acts allow universities or other third-level or adult education institutions to treat mature students differently in the allocation of places.

### Example

Mature students may not need to apply for a university place through the Central Applications Office (CAO) points system.

## Scholarships

The Acts allow universities or other third-level or adult education institutions to treat some students differently by way of sponsorships, scholarships, bursaries, and so on.

However, these awards must be in keeping with tradition.

### Example

A scholarship that was established by a law firm might only be open to students studying law.

## Student exchange

The Acts allow universities and other third-level or adult education institutions to select particular students to take part in student exchange programmes. For example, they might limit places to students who have reached a certain mark in exams.

## Grants, fees, allocation of places

The Acts allow universities and other third-level or adult education institutions to treat non European Union (EU) nationals differently in relation to fees, educational grants and the allocation of places.

## Sporting facilities and events

The Acts allow educational establishments to treat people differently on the basis of gender, age or disability but only to the extent that the differences are necessary having regard to the nature of the facilities or events.

### Example

A school organising a sports day could categorise certain competitions according to age and gender.

## Disability

The Acts allow educational establishments to treat students with disabilities differently.

First of all, they must provide reasonable accommodation arrangements for the students (at no more than a 'nominal' cost – see page 10 of this booklet), so that they can learn and participate at the same level of others (e.g. sign language interpreters, scribes, access to classrooms, information and materials in different formats, loop systems, etc.).

However, a school may not have to keep on a student with a disability if the school can show that this would make it impossible or extremely difficult to teach other students.



6. How do the Acts work in relation to clubs?

# How do the Acts apply to clubs?

The Acts deal with clubs that are licensed to sell alcohol to members and certain visitors and that are registered under the Registration of Clubs Act 1904 – 1999.

Clubs such as sports clubs, golf clubs and so on are treated slightly differently under the Acts in that discrimination is not completely banned.

## What is discrimination in relation to clubs?

In general, a club will be regarded as discriminating if:

- it has rules or practices which discriminate against a member or applicant for membership; or
- if a person involved in the club's management discriminates against a member or applicant in relation to any aspect of club business.

### Example

If a staff member or a committee member of a golf club gives preference to an Irish person applying for membership over an applicant from a different country, this would be regarded as discrimination.

## What is allowed?

It is **not** discrimination if a club:

- is for a particular group of people – for example, a gay club, a club for people with disabilities, a club for members of the Traveller community, and so on;
- sometimes only admits certain club members. In this case, the club must offer the same or a similar benefit or privilege to its other

members. For example, a tennis club can run a men-only tournament but it must at some stage offer a similar event to its women members;

- has different types of membership that are not based on any discriminatory ground and its members are free to choose these, for example, full membership, half membership, off peak membership, and so on;
- makes a genuine effort to include people of a particular gender who may have been excluded in the past. For example, a golf club may offer special rates for full membership for women; or
- treats members of a particular gender, age, disability, nationality or national origin differently with regard to sporting facilities or events. For example, a sports club can organise different competitions for different age groups.

## Who decides claims against clubs that discriminate?

These decisions are made by the District Court and on appeal by the Circuit Court. The Workplace Relations Commission does **not** make decisions on claims about clubs that discriminate. Any person, including the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, can apply to the District Court for a declaration that a club is discriminating. If this is found to be true and it is the first order made against the club, the District Court can suspend the club's certificate of registration to sell alcohol for up to 30 days. If a club is found to discriminate a second time, its certificate of registration will not be renewed. However, employees of the club should not be placed at a disadvantage by this order. Under the Acts, the club can appeal the decision to the Circuit Court. Also, the club can apply to the District Court (usually after it has made some changes) to see if it is still considered to be a discriminatory club. Actions taken to the District Court and the Circuit Court may involve costs.

**Note:** Ordinary licensed premises, such as pubs, are not clubs and claims of discrimination which occur on or at the point of entry to a licensed

premises – such as pubs – are also dealt with by the District Court rather than by the Workplace Relations Commission.

### Other clubs

Clubs that do not have a license to sell alcohol are only subject to the Equal Status Acts insofar as they provide goods and services to the public or to a section of the public, and not just to members.

## 7. General exemptions

# General exemptions

There are several significant exemptions in the Acts. Although you should be aware of these exemptions you should remember that the overall purpose of the Equal Status Acts is to promote equality and outlaw discrimination.

## Statutory exemption

This is a general exemption meaning that nothing in the Equal Status Acts should cause a person to breach any other Irish law or any EU laws and treaties that have been adopted by Ireland.

## Exemption regarding certain nationals of other countries

Public authorities can treat certain nationals of other countries differently on the basis of their nationality if they are unlawfully in the State or if provided for by law.

### Example

A foreign national cannot claim discrimination against a decision of a local authority if that person is in the State illegally and for that reason is not entitled to the service concerned.

## Exemption for risk of criminal or disorderly conduct

A person can be refused goods, services or accommodation if an experienced provider believes that there would be a substantial risk of that person abusing the service and causing trouble by being abusive or aggressive.

## **Exemptions for other reasons**

It is not discrimination if a person is treated differently because of a doctor's clinical judgement in relation to the person's medical condition.

It is not discrimination to treat a person differently in circumstances where a person is not capable of entering into a contract or giving informed consent.





8. State bodies that oversee the equality laws and decide claims

# State bodies that oversee the equality laws and decide claims

There are two State bodies responsible for ensuring that the equality laws are promoted and upheld – the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the Workplace Relations Commission.

## The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC)

The IHREC may represent a person bringing a discrimination claim and more generally it is responsible for promoting respect for equality and human rights in Ireland.

## The Workplace Relations Commission (WRC)

The WRC is similar to a court and it has the power to investigate, judge and decide on equality cases.

Equal Status claims are dealt with on appeal by the Circuit Court and there is then a limited right of appeal on a point of law to the High Court.

An appeal to the High Court does not deal with the facts of the case, but instead decides on the law relevant to the complaint. All claims (with the exception of claims on the gender ground which can start in the Circuit Court) must pass through the WRC first.

## 9. How do I make a claim?

# How do I make a claim?

## Step 1: Written notification

First of all, you must write to the person you're complaining about within **two months** of the last incident of discrimination and tell them that you intend to make a complaint under the Equal Status Acts. You can do this by filling out Form ES 1.

This is available from:

**Workplace Relations Customer Service**

Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation,  
O'Brien Road,  
Carlow.

**Lo-call:** 1890 80 80 90

You can also download the forms from [www.workplacerelations.ie](http://www.workplacerelations.ie)

When you get Form ES 1, you will also get Form ES 2. Form ES 2 is filled out by the person you're complaining about and gives them a chance to outline what happened from their point of view. You must send both forms to the person you're complaining about.

You should keep a copy of the completed Form ES 1 and also get a certificate of posting from the post office as proof of posting.

You cannot bring a claim to the WRC unless you have completed this step.

Strict time limits apply for the notification. You can apply to the Director General of the WRC to extend the notification time limit from 2 to 4 months but the Director General will only do this if he or she believes there is a good enough reason to do so. You can also apply to the Director General to dispense with the notification requirement but the Director General will only do this in exceptional circumstances.

**Note:** A parent or guardian can make a claim on behalf of a child or a person with person with an intellectual or psychological disability.

## **Step 2: Advancing a claim**

If you don't get a reply from the person you're complaining about within one month or if the reply is not to your satisfaction, you may send your complaint to the WRC . You must do this within **6 months** of the discrimination. You do this by filling out Form ES 3 (which you can get from the WRC or online) and sending it to the WRC.

**Note:** Strict time limits also apply for lodging a claim with the Tribunal. You can apply to the Director of the WRC to extend the time from 6 to 12 months but the Director will only do this if he or she believes there is a good enough reason.

## **Step 3: At the Work Place Relations Commission (WRC)**

When the WRC receives your complaint, it will deal with it by either mediation or investigation, or both.

### **Mediation**

This is where the Director General of the WRC appoints a mediation officer to help settle the dispute. Mediation will only take place where both parties agree to enter the process. The mediation officer is a neutral person whose job is to work with both parties to reach an agreement and settle the claim. To resolve a dispute through mediation, both parties must agree on the terms of settlement. If a settlement is reached through mediation, the terms of the settlement are confidential and legally binding. Mediation agreements can be enforced through the Courts.

## Investigation

If the case is not dealt with by mediation or mediation fails, the claim then goes to the investigation stage. Here, the Director General of the WRC appoints an adjudication officer to investigate the claim and make a decision. These investigations are held in private – that is, there are no members of the public present and the decision is published anonymously. The adjudication officer's decision is legally binding.

## Representation and costs

If you are making a complaint, you may represent yourself or you can choose to be represented by a lawyer, trade union, community group or some other representative. In general, costs are not covered for either the person making the complaint or the person being complained about and you pay for your own representation.

## Results

If an adjudication officer finds in your favour, they can order compensation of up to €15,000 in total. The adjudication officer can also order people to take specified courses of action. For example, if you were discriminated against in a shop and you win your claim, the adjudication officer might order the shop manager to provide customer care training to staff.

## Dismissing a claim

The Director General of the WRC can dismiss a claim if he or she considers that it was made for the wrong reasons – for example, simply to irritate or annoy somebody. The Director can also dismiss a claim if, after a year, it appears that the person making the complaint has decided to drop it.

## Appeals

All decisions (including decisions on time limits and dismissal of claims) may be appealed to the Circuit Court no later than 42 days from the date of the WRC's decision.

There is a further appeal to the High Court but only on a point of law or thereafter to the Court of Appeal. An appeal on a point of law means that there is a question about the interpretation of the law itself and is separate from the facts of your complaint. Unlike the WRC, costs are awarded in the Circuit Court and other courts.

## Obeying the ruling – enforcement

If settlement terms aren't carried out as ordered by the adjudication officer the matter can be brought to the District Court to enforce the decision. The Court will order that the settlement terms are carried out.





# Appendix A

# Appendix A

## The role of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) has a broad range of tasks under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 in relation to human rights and equality. In relation to the Equal Status Acts IHREC works towards:

- combating discrimination in the areas covered by the Acts;
- promoting equality of opportunity in the areas covered by the Acts;
- providing information on the Acts to the general public;
- reviewing the operation of the Acts; and
- making recommendations to the Minister.

## Information and support

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission provides information to the public on the Equal Status Acts 2000-2012. This guide provides basic information on the Acts.

Additional information is available by contacting our **Public Information Centre** at:

### Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

16-22 Green Street,  
Dublin 7, D07 CR20

Lo-call: 1890 245545

E-mail: [publicinfo@ihrec.ie](mailto:publicinfo@ihrec.ie)

Web: [www.ihrec.ie](http://www.ihrec.ie)

## Legal assistance

The IHREC can also provide legal assistance to claimants. IHREC will make a decision about whether or not it will do so according to its guidelines (available on request). If IHREC does not grant you legal assistance this does not stop you from bringing your case to the WRC. You can represent yourself or be represented by a lawyer, trade union or other representative.

### Workplace Relations Customer Service

Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation,  
O'Brien Road,  
Carlow.

Lo-call: 1890 80 80 90

Web: [www.workplacerelations.ie](http://www.workplacerelations.ie)







**16-22 Sráid na Faiche,  
Baile Átha Cliath 7, D07 CR20**  
16-22 Green Street,  
Dublin 7, D07 CR20

**Public Information Centre**

**Íosghlao/Lo-call 1890 245 545**

**Ríomhphost/Email [publicinfo@ihrec.ie](mailto:publicinfo@ihrec.ie)**

**Guthán/Phone + 353 (0) 1 858 9601**

**Facs/Fax + 353 (0) 1 858 9609**

**Ríomhphost/Email [info@ihrec.ie](mailto:info@ihrec.ie)**

**Idirlíon/Web [www.ihrec.ie](http://www.ihrec.ie)**

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