

# Guarantee of Service



## **Why is there an Anti-Discrimination Board?**

The Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW was set up in 1977 under a NSW law, the Anti-Discrimination Act. The Board is an independent statutory body.

## **What do we do?**

We administer the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act.

Approximately 38 staff work for the Board. It is their job to:

- inform and educate the people of NSW, employers and service providers about their rights and responsibilities under anti-discrimination law;
- help resolve individual complaints of discrimination, harassment or vilification;
- let the NSW government know when the anti-discrimination law needs changing.

## **Who's who at the Board?**

### **President**

Stepan Kerkyasharian  
(supported by four Board members)

### **Enquiries and Conciliation Branch**

Manager: Elizabeth Wing

### **Education Services Branch**

Manager: Sharmalee Elkerbout

### **Liaison and Support Branch**

Manager: Mohinder Singh

### **Board members**

Suzanne Jamieson  
Phillipa McDermott  
Cameron Murphy  
Peter Wertheim

## **How will the Board's staff treat me?**

We treat all our clients fairly in a respectful, helpful and efficient way. We will help you when it is within our power to do so.

## **What can I expect from each of your services?**

### **General enquiry service and employers' advisory service**

The staff on our general enquiry service can help answer any general enquiry about your (or other people's) rights or responsibilities under NSW anti-discrimination law. They can also give you more information about how the Board works.

If you are an employer, manager, supervisor or other employer representative, you can use our specialist employers' advisory service for help with any employment-related enquiry to do with discrimination or harassment. For example, we can provide advice on a particular discrimination problem, or on more general personnel policies and procedures.

You can use either of these services by phoning or visiting any of our three offices (in Sydney, Wollongong or Newcastle) between 9am and 5pm. You can also write to us. You can expect accurate, prompt, objective, confidential and free advice. You don't have to give us your name if you don't want to.

If you visit us, an officer will see you as soon as possible. You don't need an appointment in the Sydney office. However, as our Newcastle and Wollongong offices are very small, it is best to phone to make an appointment before you visit.

### **Discrimination complaints service**

If you think you have been discriminated against, is a good idea to phone our general enquiry service first for advice before you lodge a written complaint with us. This is because firstly, we may not have the power to handle your complaint — it may be outside the current NSW anti-discrimination law. If this is the case we may be able to refer you to somewhere else that can help. Secondly, we may be able to advise you how to sort out the problem yourself, so that you don't need to write a complaint to us.

If you want us to help resolve your discrimination complaint, you must write us a letter about it, or fill in a discrimination complaints form, and post, fax or bring it in to us. In your letter you should explain what type of discrimination has happened to you, and when and where it happened, and

give us your name, contact address and phone number. You can write this letter in your own language, or in Braille, and we will have it translated at no cost to you.

You can expect us to handle your discrimination complaint confidentially, efficiently, fairly and free of charge. If your complaint is urgent (for example, you are about to lose your job or your accommodation) — either phone us, or make sure your letter says 'urgent' at the top. We can give priority to these types of urgent complaints.

If your complaint appears to be covered by the anti-discrimination law, we will generally try to conciliate it. This means we will help you and the person or organisation you are complaining about try to reach a private settlement. Most complaints can be settled in this way.

It's impossible to say exactly how long any complaint will take to settle as this depends on the nature of your complaint and the other people involved. We must give the organisation or person you are complaining about the chance to explain things from their point of view. This generally takes between 6-12 months. The officer handling your complaint may be able to give you an estimate of how long your particular complaint could take to settle.

### **Publications**

We have a wide range of publications to suit different people's needs. For example, we have factsheets which explain your rights, and guidelines which explain different groups' responsibilities under the anti-discrimination law. We also publish a quarterly email newsletter *Equal Time*. We try to make our publications as easy to read and useful as possible.

Some of our publications are free, and you can download these from our website. Anyone who wants any of our printed publications can write, phone or call in at any of our offices. If there is a charge for the publication(s) you want, we will tell you before we send them to you so that you can decide if you still want them.

### **Talks and training sessions**

The Board has a team which provides training/information sessions to various groups in the community who need to know about their rights and/or responsibilities under anti-discrimination law. We can usually provide speakers and trainers on request, and there is generally a fee for this service. For more information please refer to our website, or phone the Education Services Branch at our Sydney Office, or one of our regional offices.

### **What if I want to complain or make a suggestion about any of your services?**

We aim to provide the best possible service we can for everyone in NSW, and your feedback is important to us. So if you have a complaint about any of our services, or any suggestion about how we could better meet your needs, please let us know. Similarly, please let us know when we have provided you with excellent service! That way we will be able to continue to improve. Please make any complaint or comment about our service — by phone or letter — to the President, Stepan Kerkyasharian, at at our Sydney Office.

### **How can I contact the Board?**

#### **Sydney**

Level 4, 175 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
PO Box A2122, Sydney South NSW 1235  
Ph (02) 9268 5555; fax (02) 9268 5500  
TTY (02) 9268 5522  
General enquiry service (02) 9268 5544  
Employers advisory service (02) 9268 5544

#### **Wollongong**

84 Crown St, Wollongong NSW 2500  
PO Box 67, Wollongong NSW 2520  
Ph (02) 4224 9960; fax (02) 4224 9961  
TTY (02) 4224 9967

#### **Newcastle**

Level 1, 414 Hunter St, Newcastle West NSW 2302  
Ph (02) 4926 4300; fax (02) 4926 1376  
TTY (02) 4929 1489

#### **Toll free number**

1800 670 812  
for people calling from outside the Sydney area

#### **Website**

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb>

#### **Access details**

All our offices are open 9am to 5pm and all are wheelchair accessible. Parking can be arranged for people with disabilities at the Sydney and Wollongong offices if you phone in advance.

#### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service**

Please phone (02) 9268 5555 to speak to a member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team.

#### **Telephone Interpreter Service**

Please phone 131 450.