

Now that you have completed our checklist, you will have a better idea of how much work your business needs to do to manage EO effectively. This section of the kit includes tools to help you:

▶▶▶ a simple 4-step EO action plan



a fact sheet for employees which you can photocopy and distribute to staff




a sample EO policy which you can adapt and use



a sample procedure for handling EO related problems which you can use or adapt

Sample EO action plan

▶▶▶ Action 1: Have an EO policy


It's important to make a formal statement of commitment to EO through a policy. You, as owner or manager of the business, should endorse this written policy with the company chop. You should then display or circulate the policy in the workplace. To assist you, we have included a sample policy (see ). You can simply adapt and use it to suit your business. It will help you meet your legal obligations as an employer.

If you decide to develop your own policy, it should, as a minimum, state:

- that unlawful behaviour such as discrimination, harassment, vilification and victimization will not be tolerated
- what kind of behaviour is unacceptable
- what to do about unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification or victimization

As in our sample policy, we recommend that you consider taking the scope of behaviour covered by the policy beyond current law to include unfair treatment, harassment or vilification based on race, age and sexual orientation, as such behaviour could cause EO related problems. As a minimum your policy should be consistent with current EO law.

▶▶▶ Action 2: Have a procedure for handling EO related problems


It is nearly always better for EO related problems to be handled in-house. We have included a sample procedure for handling EO related problems (see ). As with the policy it is for you to use, adapt or change as necessary. It will help you meet your legal obligations as an employer.

The best way to ensure issues are handled effectively and, wherever possible, consistently, is to have your own written procedure for handling EO related problems.




The procedure should be simple and accessible, confidential and impartial. It should allow for different ways of dealing with issues, from self-help (for example, speaking to the person causing the problem) through to formal investigation by management. It should provide for the quickest possible resolution of problems. The procedure should state that victimization will not be tolerated.

The person responsible for EO (see Action 4 on page 20) should also be accountable for ensuring the procedure is followed and reviewed as required.

▶▶▶ Action 3: Provide regular information about EO

All staff and management need to know about the EO policy and procedure for handling EO related problems as well as the importance of equal employment opportunities. They need to know what is and isn't acceptable behaviour and what their rights and responsibilities are. You should regularly provide employees with up-to-date EO information. Make EO part of the information you give all new staff. Consider photocopying the fact sheet  and giving each staff member a copy.

In the event that someone makes a complaint against you or your business, simply having written policies may not be enough to show that you took 'reasonably practicable' steps to prevent unlawful behaviour.

We suggest you use the enclosed tools (see   ) to implement EO. For further assistance, call the EOC for advice and information. We can provide publications on many topics and can even design and deliver training for your workplace. See page 25 for contact details.

▶▶▶ Action 4: Appoint an existing and appropriate employee to look after EO

It's important for someone to have responsibility for EO in your workplace. This can be part of the duties of an existing employee. Ideally this person should be trained in EO, or at least informed about EO, and about related issues such as confidentiality and problem resolution. The role needs to be publicized and be seen to have some authority and support from you as the business owner or manager. The person who looks after your HR or payroll may be best suited to this role.

When it comes to meeting your legal obligations and being able to raise the defence that you took reasonably practicable steps to prevent unlawful behaviour, taking these steps is a good start. EO is an ongoing issue, however. You will need to keep checking your policy and procedure, or ask the EOC to check your policy and procedure. And you will need to make sure that staff stay informed about EO. Help is available. See page 25 for useful contacts.

