![Queensland Human Rights Commission]

Contact Officer

Course duration: 7 hours

PURPOSE

This practical course will give Contact Officers an in-depth understanding of the role, as well as the knowledge, skills and confidence to carry it out. The course aims to help Contact Officers understand workplace policies and legislation around discrimination and harassment, become familiar with workplace procedures for dealing with these behaviours, convey this information to colleagues, and help them decide how to deal with problems they are experiencing.

DELIVERY

This face to face session is highly interactive with a variety of visual and small group activities, and time for questions and discussion. Activities focus on the practical aspects of the Contact Officer role, on workplace policies and procedures, and on real cases or scenarios to help participants understand the key relevant legal concepts.

WHAT DO CONTACT OFFICERS DO?

Contact Officers are often the first port of call for staff experiencing bullying or harassment. Their role is not to resolve or investigate issues, but to:

- give staff an opportunity to talk informally about a problem;
- provide information about the options available to resolve the issue; and
- help staff decide what course of action to take.

The quality of the Contact Officer service can often determine whether workplace issues escalate, or are resolved quickly and effectively. They need to be good communicators, level-headed, understand impartiality and confidentiality, understand their role, and be capable of working within its limitations.

HOW CAN THEY REDUCE RISK FOR AN ORGANISATION?

Trained Contact Officers are an important part of an effective system for dealing with complaints of inappropriate behaviour. Employers may be held liable for an employee's behaviour, unless they can show they took 'reasonable steps' to prevent and manage it. Along with effective policies, complaints procedures and training, Contact Officers are one of the steps employers can take to support their commitment to a safe and productive workplace where all are treated fairly and with respect.

THIS COURSE WILL ENABLE PARTICIPANTS TO:

- provide appropriate Contact Officer services, utilising suitable communication and active listening skills, and dealing with issues of confidentiality, duty of care, impartiality and vicarious liability;
- identify behaviours that could be unlawful or in breach of policy, such as discrimination,

sexual harassment or workplace harassment (bullying);

- explain organisational policies and procedures relating to discrimination and harassment, and the options available to staff for resolving issues;
- assist staff in clarifying their concerns, provide relevant information, and help them decide what action to take to try and resolve their issue;
- provide appropriate information to management or H.R. personnel on the incidence of discrimination and harassment in their workplace;
- recognise potential impacts of discrimination and harassment on individuals and the organisation;
- assist in promoting relevant workplace policies;
- identify the different roles and responsibilities of Contact Officers and managers / supervisors; and
- participate as part of a Contact Officer network.

RECOMMENDED FOR:

Prospective or current Contact Officers with no previous training, and human resource or supervisory staff who support them.

PRE-COURSE PREPARATION

We recommend that participants read existing organisational policies and complaints procedures relating to fair treatment, discrimination and harassment prior to the course, and bring copies to use in course activities.

BOOKINGS

We can deliver this course directly to your team in your workplace. We also offer public training sessions around Queensland throughout the year - you can find our schedule on our website.

Contact our training team:

- **1300 130 670**
- **training@qhrc.qld.gov.au**