

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Senior Conciliation Officer
Position Number:	100351
Work Unit/Division:	Complaints, Operations
Classification:	VPSG 5.1
Salary Range:	\$116,413 to \$128,631 per annum plus 12% employer superannuation contribution
Employment Type:	Ongoing
Position Reports to:	Senior Manager, Complaints
Location:	Level 2, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne Vic 3000

About Us

The Victorian Ombudsman (VO) provides a free, independent, accessible and impartial service to the public. Our purpose is to ensure fairness for the public in their dealings with the Victorian public sector, to improve public administration, and engage within both public organisations, the government sector and the broader community. The *Ombudsman Act 1973* (Vic) is the governing legislation.

The VO's role is to ensure that the services of state and local government, and other public organisations are delivered in a fair and reasonable manner that is compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic) and that human rights have been taken into consideration in decision making.

About the Role

The Senior Conciliation Officer (SCO) is an advanced practitioner and internal expert in conciliation and Alternative Dispute Resolution within the Victorian Ombudsman's Complaints Group. The SCO leads complex conciliations, develops and refines the VO's conciliation function, coaches CROs in conciliation practice, and acts as an escalation point for complex and high-risk matters. The SCO plays a key role in embedding best-practice complaint resolution, quality assurance, systemic issue identification and a culture of continuous improvement within the Complaints Group.

Core to your success in this role is the ability to obtain a strong understanding of the *Ombudsman Act 1973*.

Key Accountabilities

- Under minimal supervision, identify and lead conciliations on complex matters, including in-person, applying advanced ADR skills and trauma-informed engagement throughout.
- Lead the refinement of conciliation policies, procedures, documentation, KPIs and QA standards to ensure conciliation is an effective, fair and accessible resolution tool.
- Develop, coach and coordinate CROs in conciliation skills including trauma-informed engagement, vulnerability identification, culturally safe practice, early resolution and interest-based problem-solving.

- Apply and coach others in vulnerability and hardship frameworks, ensuring appropriate responses for complainants with complex needs.
- Triage complaints for conciliation based on complexity, urgency, risk, strategic priorities and complainant vulnerability, including communities experiencing marginalisation.
- Act as escalation point for CROs on complex, escalated or high-risk matters, including matters involving behavioural escalation, trauma presentations or vulnerability risk.
- Support systemic issue identification and the flexible use of oversight tools to maximise impact.
- Contribute to quality assurance activities including case auditing, calibration and quality reporting and use QA findings to drive continuous improvement.
- Use performance data and dashboards to monitor trends, identify issues and implement process improvements. Apply data literacy skills to interpret complaint data and communicate insights.
- Contribute to human-centred design of complaint and conciliation processes, including feedback loops, process testing and evidence-based improvement.
- Prepare and present briefings for the Director, Complaints and Senior Managers on matters of strategic significance.
- Actively contribute to community outreach, Domain activities, training and projects.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Demonstrated understanding of, and significant experience in, Alternative Dispute Resolution in a legislative context including leading conciliation meetings with external parties.
2. Significant experience in statutory complaint handling or case management or access to justice service in a legislative context.
3. Demonstrated ability to apply trauma-informed engagement practices in complex or escalated complaint handling, and to coach others in these practices.
4. Proven ability to coach, support and develop colleagues to achieve work plans, priorities and quality standards.
5. Demonstrated strong interpersonal, influencing and negotiation skills for sensitive and complex matters.
6. Proven analytical and problem-solving capability including lateral and strategic thinking.
7. Highly developed oral and written communication skills with record of producing complex reports and briefings at advanced professional level.
8. Sound data literacy — ability to read and interpret complaint data, identify trends and communicate insights to support decisions and systemic issue identification.
9. Good knowledge of Victorian public sector and relevant legislative frameworks.

Highly Regarded

- NMAS Mediator accreditation (or willingness to obtain).
- Qualifications in Law, Social Sciences, Government Administration or equivalent.
- Formal training in trauma-informed practice, vulnerability frameworks or cultural safety.
- Experience with human-centered design or continuous improvement methodologies.

Capabilities

Knowledge and Skills

Capability Description

Influence and persuasion	Adapt the content style and message or tone of communications to suit the audience to gain agreement to proposals and ideas using effective written and verbal communication skills.
Stakeholder Management	Identify stakeholders impacted by decisions, takes steps to keep interested parties engaged while managing expectations on outcomes
Interpersonal skills	Recognise and regulate one's emotions; understands interests and emotions of others to achieve best outcomes possible in an authentic manner.
Critical thinking and problem solving	Objectively analyse and evaluate available data, points of view, needs of stakeholders and potential solutions before recommending relevant actions or decisions.
Partnering and co-creation	Build effective partnerships with the client/customers/community throughout problem solving process to gain critical insights and develop effective solutions.
Systems Thinking	Consider the wider context, break complex topics or situations into smaller parts to gain better insights and inform actions required.
Data Literacy	Utilise diverse data sources to improve the speed and quality of service delivery and decision-making processes.
Customer Focus	Understand customer need, applying skills, knowledge and experience to deliver high impact services that address those needs.

Personal Qualities

Capability Description

Self-awareness	Has conscious understanding of the impacts of own behaviours, emotions and thought processes; takes action to improve personal effectiveness.
Flexibility and adaptability	Adjust approach in line with changing priorities, is open to acquiring and developing skills and knowledge, adapt to new ways of working or organise work to deliver results.
Resilience	Maintain a positive attitude and consistently deliver quality work in the face of challenging situations.
Outcomes thinking	Think and work in different ways to create better public values for Victorians; Establish ways to clearly and effectively measure the impact of government activity.
Working collaboratively	Build trust and rapport with others; Sets common goals through a high degree of empathy; Display willingness to share control and responsibility with peers, the service, external partners and community in the delivery of work and outcomes.
Develop capability	Improve knowledge, skills and ability of others to deliver against performance expectations and outcomes for the community.
Manage people	Builds an organisational culture in line with public sector values; Respects the dignity and rights of others; Inspires commitment towards goals and vision of the organisation; Drives a positive organisational culture; Promotes and maintains the wellbeing and motivation of others.

Responsibilities:

Environmental: VO is committed to lead by example, through environmentally sustainable practices in our workplace and activities.

OHS: Under section 25 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others and cooperate with their employer in the workplace.

Recordkeeping Responsibilities: As an employee of the officer in charge of a public office, full and accurate records of the business of the office must be kept in accordance with Section 13(a) of the *Public Records Act 1973*.

Other relevant information:

All appointments to Victorian Ombudsman are subject to reference checks, pre-employment misconduct screening, Working with Children and criminal record checks.

Mandatory checks include:

- Applicants must be an Australian Citizen, Permanent Resident or hold a valid work permit or visa.
- The successful applicant will be employed pursuant to the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2024 and VO's relevant policies.
- Appointments will be subject to a National Police Check and Working with Children Check
- Completion of a conflict of interest and declarable associations form.
- Satisfactorily complete (as per legislation) a:
 - Statutory Declaration for recruitment purposes
 - Confidentiality Declaration
- All new employees are required to take an oath or affirmation on commencement.
- All new employees will refrain from engaging in any other remunerative employment without the explicit prior consent of the Ombudsman.

VO Values: Our values support our work towards a constructive culture. They act as a compass for how we work together and with others.

Fairness

- We pursue fairness in our work.
- We keep people at the centre of decision making and seek to address inequity.
- We treat each other and everyone with dignity, respect and compassion.

Impact

- We make intentional choices to bring about meaningful and enduring change.
- We work with those we oversight to develop innovative solutions to improve the lives of Victorians.
- We bring creativity and curiosity to our work.

Trust

- We build trust with the community and government by listening and acting with independence and integrity.
- We strive to be a valued voice in improving public administration.
- We work in a spirit of openness and collaboration to support a constructive workplace culture.

All VO employees comply with the Victorian Public Sector Employees of Special Bodies values. These values require that public officials demonstrate responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership, and that they respect and promote human rights.