

Early conciliation

If you want to make a claim

Before you make an employment tribunal claim, it's a good idea to try to resolve your workplace problem ('dispute') by:

- [raising the problem informally](#), for example with your line manager
- [raising a formal grievance](#)

You do not need to do this to make an employment tribunal claim, but it could help you. This is because:

- you may resolve your dispute informally so you no longer need to make a claim
- it could affect how much compensation you're awarded if you do make an employment tribunal claim

If you raise the problem with your employer first, the [time limits](#) to make an employment tribunal claim do not change.

Tell Acas first before making a claim

You must tell Acas first before making a claim to an employment tribunal about a workplace dispute.

When you tell us you want to make a claim to an employment tribunal you're 'the claimant'.

The other person in the dispute who will respond to the claim, for example your employer, is 'the respondent'.

When you tell us you want to make a claim, we'll offer you 'early conciliation'. This is when we talk to both you and the respondent about your dispute. It gives you the chance to come to an agreement without having to go to tribunal.

Acas is not part of the tribunal service and we will not discuss any matter with the tribunal.

The benefits of using early conciliation are:

- it's free
- it's confidential
- it's quicker than going to tribunal
- it's easier – there's a lot of paperwork to prepare for a tribunal
- it's voluntary – you or the respondent can refuse talks
- you can agree outcomes – including outcomes that you cannot get from a tribunal, for example a job reference

During early conciliation, if you agree, we'll contact the respondent. Our conversations are confidential and you decide what we can and cannot share with them.

Talks take place over the phone for up to 6 weeks.