



Guide to Parties

Conferences at the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal

What is a conference?

A preliminary conference is an informal, private meeting organised by the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT).

What do I get to do?

You get a chance to tell your side of the case. You get to talk about the issues in dispute. The aim is, where possible, for you to come to an agreement with the other side about how the case should be resolved.

What does the convenor do?

A Member or Registrar of the Tribunal will be the convenor. The convenor will:

- guide and assist discussion and ask you and the other side questions;
- seek to identify and limit what is in dispute; and
- assist parties to work towards an agreed outcome.

At a conference, a convenor can not make the decision for you. It is for you and the other party to see if you can agree on an outcome.

What happens next?

If you reach an agreement, the convenor can make orders on the day of the conference that reflect the terms of your agreement.

If no agreement is reached, the matter will be listed for a hearing. The convenor will tell you and the other side what you need to do before the hearing, including what further documents you need to provide.

In relation to some types of disputes, you will need to be prepared to proceed to a hearing on the same day as the conference. Your notice from the ACAT will tell you if this is the case.

What can I do if the conference date is unsuitable?

It is very important that you attend the conference. If you cannot do so, you must request an adjournment. You will be notified if your adjournment request is granted. Unless you hear otherwise from the ACAT, you are still required to attend the conference.

If you wish to attend a conference by telephone, you need to seek approval from the ACAT. Approval should be sought at least 5 business days before your conference date.



What happens if I do not attend?

If you do not attend a conference or cannot be reached on the telephone number you give to the Tribunal this may mean orders may be made against you, or your application may be dismissed.

Tips:

Some tips for conference include:

- if you decide to get legal advice or representation, do this early. Legal representatives can attend a preliminary conference with you;
- consider early whether you want to bring a support person, and any arrangements you may need to make;
- before the conference, think about what you want and what you might agree to: remember this is your chance to settle the matter without having to go to the additional time and effort of a hearing;
- you can authorise someone to appear on your behalf, but you must fill in a Power of Attorney form: http://www.acat.act.gov.au/applications_and_forms ;
- if you are going to attend a conference for a corporation, you must fill in the Authority to Act for a Corporation form: http://www.acat.act.gov.au/applications_and_forms ; and
- on the day of the conference, allow plenty of time for car parking and bring your documents, including the paperwork sent to you by the ACAT and anything sent to you by any other parties.

How do I contact the ACAT?

Further information can be obtained by contacting:

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal

ACT Health Building, Level 4, 1 Moore Street

GPO Box 370

Canberra City ACT 2601

Business Hours:

9.00am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday

Telephone: (02) 6207-1740

Facsimile: (02) 6205-4855

Website: www.acat.act.gov.au

Email: tribunal@act.gov.au