

# Role of a witness

## HR Fact Sheet

Developed by **Human Resources**  
Business and Corporate Partnership

You may find this factsheet useful if you have been identified as a witness in a complaint or an investigation process.

### What is a witness?

A **witness** can be any person who may have relevant information about the matter at hand, including current or former employees.

Witnesses play an important role in helping establish the relevant facts of a matter under [investigation](#).

You may be:

- the colleague of an employee who has had allegations made against them
- identified as having witnessed an event, or
- mentioned in a document or referenced in some way related to the matter.

### Interview for an investigation or complaint

As a witness you may be interviewed by the investigator in an investigation or by management for a complaint because you have some information or have some detail needed to be considered.

Sometimes, as a witness, you may also be the complainant and may have provided a statement about what you have witnessed. The interviewer may decide that your information is sufficient for the process and you do not need to be interviewed.

#### *Before the interview*

You will be informed that, as a potential witness, you may have information about a matter under investigation and that you are required to attend an interview.

You may be provided with the broad nature of the matter before you attend the interview but you may not be told the specific details of the matter or what information is required of you, until the interview itself.

You can bring with you to the interview or email to the investigator prior to the interview any information and documentation you have to corroborate your version of events. Information can also be provided to the investigator after the interview.

You are invited to arrange for an appropriate support person to attend the interview with you if you wish [[fact sheet support person](#)].

You will be given the name and contact details of [case manager](#) for the matter.

#### *At the interview*

The purpose of the interview is for you to discuss the information that you have in relation to the investigation or complaint. Interviews are often audio recorded and you will be offered a copy of the audio record. The interview will usually be during work time and in a private place.

The length of the interview varies but the interviewer can give you an estimated duration.

You will be asked to provide the investigator or interviewer all the relevant factual information that supports your version of the events relating to the matter.

You will be reminded of the confidentiality requirements for the matter and advised that you name details may be raised with the [subject officer](#) or [respondent](#).

#### *After the interview*

The investigator or interviewer may provide you with a written summary based on your interview. After the investigator or interviewer has interviewed all relevant witnesses in the matter, a report will be prepared and provided to the decision maker for their consideration.

#### *Do I have to attend the interview?*

As an employee of the department you do have an obligation to participate in workplace processes, and you can be directed to do so. However, you are encouraged to participate willingly.

#### **When will I be told the outcome of the complaint or investigation?**

You will be provided advice in writing when the matter has been finalised. You may be advised of the outcome in general or you may be given an assurance that the matter has been resolved but that due to confidentiality no further details can be provided.

## **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is important as workplace investigations and complaint processes are private matters between the department and the employee involved.

Confidentiality is critical to maintain the integrity of the process, to provide privacy and to protect all those involved. It is not appropriate to discuss the matter with anyone who does not have a legitimate reason to know about the matter. It could be viewed as collusion if employees are found to be discussing matters that they have been directed not to.

You will be directed to keep confidential the process you are involved in. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please contact the case manager.

### **For further information contact**

- Your manager/supervisor
- Your HR representative
- Your regional business services/support contact (DNRM only) or
- Human Resources at [HR@dnrm.qld.gov.au](mailto:HR@dnrm.qld.gov.au)