

WRITING A DEMAND LETTER

A demand letter is a formal letter that presents your case as a worker who has been harmed. By providing a **condensed account** of the situation, it demonstrates the grounds on which you have to proceed with legal action against your employer and outlines the remedies you are seeking to rectify the injustice instead.

A demand letter is typically written **before** you take legal action in hopes of resolving matters with your employer on a quick, private, and informal basis. **A strong demand letter should not exceed one page.**

BRIEFLY SUMMARIZE THE SITUATION

In a few sentences, describe the unfair act or practice you're contesting. Use dates and details, and include any law you believe has been broken.

There are often several events and circumstances that contribute to an unfair work situation, but try to be concise and only include relevant information. The tone of the letter should be calm and direct.



SET OUT YOUR DEMANDS

List reasonable outcomes you hope to achieve. Are you owed wages? Human rights damages? Severance? Each worker situation varies, as do appropriate remedies. Please contact the Halifax WAC if you're unsure.

When you invite your employer negotiate privately, you can also request remedies that would not be awarded through formal legal action. Some workers will request a letter of reference, for example.



RESPONSE AND NEGOTIATION

Set a clear deadline by which you expect a response (a week day, two weeks from your date of submission is generally reasonable).

Negotiating is a back-and-forth process. The employer may send a denial letter stating why you are wrong and they are right. Don't take it personally. Alternatively, they may provide a counter offer or simply accept the terms outlined in your letter. If you like, an organizer at the Halifax WAC can discuss next steps with you.

In exchange for their offer, the employer may require you to sign a **non-disclosure agreement** and thereby promise not to disclose the terms of your settlement, speak publicly about the experience, speak negatively about the company etc. If you are asked to sign such an agreement, you can send it to the Halifax WAC for review.

If you are unable to arrive at a settlement, you may decide to take legal action against your employer. If you are unsure how to proceed, feel free to contact the Halifax WAC.