

Telephone hearings

This fact sheet provides information on how to participate in a hearing that is conducted by telephone in NCAT's Consumer and Commercial Division.

What is a telephone hearing?

A telephone hearing is an accessible alternative to a face-to-face hearing. NCAT uses telephone hearings when parties or the Tribunal Member cannot attend the hearing in person.

NCAT may decide to hold a hearing by telephone when it is the most timely and effective way to hear the matter. This may happen when there are not enough matters to be heard at a remote hearing venue.

Telephone hearings are used by NCAT as an accessible alternative to a face-to-face hearing

How to request a telephone hearing

To request a telephone hearing you must meet the following criteria:

- You are located more than 200km or 2 hours travel from the NCAT hearing venue, or
- You cannot attend the hearing in person due to disability or health reasons.

Your request for a telephone hearing must be in writing. Applicants can request a telephone hearing on their application form.

Your request should include the reasons why you need a telephone hearing and any documents to support your request.

Make sure that the telephone number you provide is a direct line and that the telephone is located in a quiet room with no distractions.

What will happen at a telephone hearing?

Telephone hearings follow the same format as a hearing in person. The Tribunal Member will explain the purpose of the hearing and how it will be conducted. The Member will also encourage parties to resolve their dispute through conciliation.

The time allocated for a telephone hearing is generally 30 minutes.

Telephone hearing tips

- Be ready at least 30 minutes before the hearing start time.
- Make sure you will not be interrupted during the telephone call.
- If using a telephone with a loudspeaker, test that it is working before the hearing begins.
- Be prepared and have all your paperwork with you.
- During the hearing, listen carefully to the other party and the Tribunal Member. Do not interrupt or talk over anybody else.

Common questions

Can I use a mobile phone?

Parties are encouraged to use a landline to avoid any issues with telephone reception. If you only have access to a mobile phone, make sure you will have good reception and that your mobile phone is fully charged before the hearing.

Who pays for the telephone call?

If you are located within Australia, NCAT will contact you directly on your nominated telephone number to participate in the hearing. Parties located overseas will need to phone into NCAT for the hearing at their own cost.



What happens if I am overseas?

NCAT will send you a Notice of Hearing that includes a direct contact number and time for you to call. Times will be provided in Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) or Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT).

Parties located overseas will need to pay for the cost of the international telephone call. Please take note of any international time differences.

What if NCAT can't contact me on the telephone number?

If you have arranged for a telephone hearing and then you cannot be contacted, a decision may be made in your absence.

Can I get a sound recording of the telephone hearing?

Yes. All Consumer and Commercial Division hearings, including telephone hearings, are sound recorded. A copy of the sound recording of the hearing can be ordered at cost from NCAT.

Can I use an interpreter?

If you need an interpreter for the hearing, NCAT can organise for a telephone interpreter to assist during your hearing.

Contact NCAT

1300 006 228 | www.ncat.nsw.gov.au
Interpreter Service (TIS) 13 14 50
National Relay Service for TTY users 133 677

For more information and assistance visit the NCAT website www.ncat.nsw.gov.au or contact NCAT on **1300 006 228**.