

If your job offer is withdrawn

An employer can withdraw a [job offer](#). How they can withdraw it depends on whether your job offer was 'conditional' or 'unconditional'.

Conditional job offer

If your job offer depends on references or other checks, this is a conditional job offer.

For example, before you can be employed, the employer might need to see:

- references
- criminal record checks (for example, a DBS check – find out more about [DBS checks on GOV.UK](#))
- medical checks
- proof of your academic qualifications
- proof of your right to work in the UK

An employer can withdraw a job offer if the conditions of the offer are not met. For example, if your [references](#) show you might not be able to do the job.

You can ask an employer why they have withdrawn a conditional job offer. An employer does not have to tell you the reason.

Unconditional job offer

Some job offers are made without any conditions. Sometimes this means you have an employment contract.

For example, you might have an employment contract if all the following apply:

- there were no conditions, for example, no need for references or background checks
- the employer set out the terms in a clear and definite way – verbally or in writing
- you accepted the job offer

By law an employment contract could begin as soon as someone accepts a job offer, even if they only accepted it verbally. So an employer should not withdraw the offer without also ending the contract.

The contract should be ended fairly by giving notice and following the contract's terms. Remember that [not all terms are written](#).

If the employer has broken ('breached') the contract's terms, you might be able to make a court claim. You can:

- find out more about [making a court claim on GOV.UK](#)
- [speak to an Acas adviser](#) to discuss your options

If you are considering making a claim, it can help to raise the issue directly with the employer first and:

- ask why the job offer was withdrawn
- explain the impact on you, for example, if you've moved for the job
- say what you'd like to happen to resolve the issue

If you are not able to resolve directly with the employer and want to make a court claim it's a good idea to [get legal advice](#) first.

If your job offer was verbal

A verbal job offer is legally the same as a written one, but it can be difficult to prove the details if it's not in writing.

If you feel you need it you can ask the employer for a written job offer. For example, you could ask the employer to email you to confirm:

- the job being offered
- where the job is located
- when the job starts
- specific [terms of employment](#), for example pay, working hours or holiday entitlement
- if the job offer has any conditions, for example references or background checks

If you think you've been discriminated against

An employer could be breaking [discrimination law](#) if they withdraw a job offer because of any of the 9 'protected characteristics':

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

For example, if your employer finds out you are pregnant, it's against the law for them to withdraw your job offer because of your pregnancy.

If you think you've been discriminated against, you can [call the Acas helpline](#) to discuss your options.

Discrimination claims can be taken to an employment tribunal. If you go to tribunal the employer will have to prove they did not discriminate against you. If you have evidence of the discrimination you can show this at tribunal.

Read more about [making a claim to an employment tribunal](#).

Raising an issue about a job withdrawal

If you have an issue with your job offer being withdrawn, try speaking to the employer or person hiring.

It can help if you:

- ask why the job offer has been withdrawn
- explain your concerns
- show any relevant evidence, for example, emails or background checks
- say what you'd like to happen to resolve the issue
- are prepared to listen to their point of view

Read more about how to [raise an issue with an employer](#).

If you've spoken to the employer and you're still not satisfied you can [call the Acas helpline](#) to discuss your options.