



Villamanta
DISABILITY RIGHTS LEGAL SERVICE

Easy Read Submissions to the

State Disability Plan 2027-31

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About this document

This document explains what **we** (Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service) think should be included in Victoria's next State Disability Plan.

We are a legal and advocacy service for people with disability.

We help people with disability understand and protect their rights.

We work with people across Victoria.

This is an Easy Read version of our submission.

The **State Disability Plan** helps the Victorian Government improve the lives of people with disability.

We may refer to the Victorian Government as **the Government** in this document.

What is important?

We say government decisions should be:

- transparent
- fair
- rights-based

This means people should understand their rights and be treated fairly.

Transparent decisions

Transparent means people can easily find information.

People should know:

- how to ask for support
- who to contact
- how long a decision will take
- how to ask for a review
- how to make a complaint

Information should be easy to find and understand.

Fair decisions

People should be able to challenge decisions they think are wrong.

There should be:

- review processes
- appeal processes
- clear timeframes

Rights-based decisions

Government services should respect human rights.

People with disability have the right to:

- equal opportunity
- inclusion
- dignity
- participation

These rights should guide decision-making.

Inclusive Communities

People with disability should be included in all parts of community life.

Community attitudes

We support education about violence against people with disability.

Many people with disability still experience:

- physical violence
- financial abuse
- controlling behaviour
- social isolation

Some family members stop people from:

- accessing support workers
- using equipment
- joining community activities
- speaking with advocates

More education is needed so workers and the public can recognise family violence.

Transport

Public transport should be accessible for everyone.

Accessible transport helps people:

- get to work
- attend education
- see doctors
- visit family and friends
- access services

We want the Government to release its transport accessibility work and continue improving transport.

Digital inclusion

Many people rely on the internet to communicate and access services.

Some people have poor internet access.

Some people do not have email or computers.

This can make it difficult to:

- complete forms
- sign documents
- access support

The Government should help people who have limited digital access.

Community services could help people use online systems.

Health, housing, and wellbeing

People with disability should have equal access to health and housing.

Health

Hospitals should be accessible for people with disability.

We say Disability Liaison Officers are important.

A **Disability Liaison Officer** helps people with disability when they use hospitals and other health services.

However, people report that:

- Disability Liaison Officers can be difficult to find
- some work limited hours
- some have limited influence inside hospitals

People with disability should be asked about their hospital experiences.

Hospital staff should receive disability rights training.

Hospitals should:

- identify barriers to access
- make reasonable adjustments
- listen to patient feedback

Housing

Everyone needs safe and accessible housing.

We want more information about progress on accessible housing.

The government should report on:

- new accessible homes
- public housing accessibility
- community housing accessibility

Protecting housing rights

Some people with disability are being asked to leave housing unless they get NDIS Specialist Disability Accommodation funding.

Specialist Disability Accommodation is housing for some people with disability who need a lot of support.

We believe this is unfair.

People should not lose their homes because of funding changes.

The government should protect residents from these practices.

Problems with disability housing

Some people lose housing when disability support arrangements change.

This can leave people:

- without housing rights
- facing eviction
- unable to afford alternative housing

The government should:

- stop unfair housing arrangements
- strengthen housing protections
- fund legal help for renters with disability

Supported Residential Services

We are concerned about safety in Supported Residential Services.

Residents may face problems such as:

- poor complaint systems
- lack of protections
- delays in addressing health risks

Stronger safeguards are needed.

Safeguards are things that help keep people safe and protect their rights.

Housing after prison

Some people stay in prison longer because accessible housing is not available.

The government should improve planning and housing support before people leave prison.

Improving access to housing

People should be able to request:

- home modifications
- transfers to more accessible housing

There should be clear and fair processes for these requests.

Supporting a Strong NDIS

The NDIS is important for many Victorians.

We want governments to work together to maintain a strong NDIS.

People should not lose necessary disability supports when:

- they are in hospital
- they are in prison
- systems disagree about responsibilities

People need consistent support wherever they are.

Fairness and Safety

People with disability should be safe and treated fairly.

Disability advocacy

Advocacy helps people understand and exercise their rights.

We say more disability advocacy is needed.

This includes support with:

- guardianship
- administration
- disability housing
- restrictive practices

More funding is needed so people can access help when they need it.

Auslan interpreters

There are not enough Auslan interpreters.

This can make communication difficult.

The Government should continue supporting workforce growth in this area.

Delays at VCAT

Some people wait many months for information from the Victoria Civil and Administrative Tribunal (**VCAT**).

VCAT is an organisation that makes decisions about some legal and community issues, including guardianship, administration and housing.

These delays can affect people's rights and wellbeing.

We want faster responses.

Preventing Abuse and Neglect

People with disability have the right to be safe.

We are concerned about abuse and neglect in some disability settings.

Better safeguards are needed.

Better data and oversight

The Government should collect and use data to identify risks.

Information about deaths of people with disability should help improve safety.

Better monitoring could help prevent future harm.

Family and Sexual Violence

People with disability experience family and sexual violence at higher rates.

More support and protection is needed.

Guardianship and family violence

Some people experience family violence from people involved in guardianship cases.

There should be ways to protect people from perpetrators during legal proceedings.

Processes should be safe, fair and accessible.

Justice System

People with disability should have equal access to justice.

We support efforts to improve accessibility.

However, major barriers remain.

Disability in prisons

Many people with disability enter prison without a formal diagnosis.

This can mean they miss out on support.

Better disability screening is needed.

NDIS supports in prison

People often lose disability supports when they enter prison.

This can lead to:

- poorer wellbeing
- loss of therapeutic relationships
- reduced support

People should be able to access disability supports while in custody.

Access to information

People in prison should know:

- what support is available
- how to request support
- how decisions are made
- how to ask for a review

These processes should be clear and accessible.

Transition from prison to community

People need support before they leave prison.

Without proper housing and disability supports people may face serious challenges.

The Government should improve planning and coordination.

Police and courts

People with disability can find legal processes difficult.

Programs that help communication and participation are important.

The Government should regularly report on whether these programs are working.

First Nations people with disability

First Nations people with disability are over-represented in the justice system.

The Government should track outcomes and strengthen accountability.

Restrictive practices in justice settings

Restrictive practices include actions that limit a person's freedom.

We are concerned about the use of restrictive practices in prisons.

People with disability may be secluded or restrained because staff do not understand disability-related behaviours.

The Government should:

- reduce restrictive practices
- improve staff training
- improve oversight and reporting

Opportunity and Disability Pride

People with disability should have opportunities to participate and lead.

Employment and financial participation

Some people under administration orders have limited opportunities to manage money.

An **Administration Order** is a decision by VCAT that allows another person or organisation to help someone manage their money and finances.

Financial skills programs should be:

- easier to access
- fair
- modern
- practical

People should understand how to apply and how decisions are made.

Voice and leadership

People with disability should be able to speak about their experiences.

Their voices should be valued in decision-making.

Participation in community life and democracy is important.

Summary

We want the State Disability Plan 2027-31 to focus on:

- fair and transparent decisions
- accessible communities
- safe and accessible transport
- digital inclusion
- better healthcare
- safe and secure housing
- a strong NDIS
- disability advocacy
- protection from abuse and violence
- an accessible justice system
- employment opportunities
- leadership and participation by people with disability

People with disability should be included in decisions that affect their lives.