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| Disability action plan Framework 2019 – 2022: 2020 – 2021 implementation planDepartment of Justice and Community Safety |



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## Introduction

The Department of Justice and Community Safety’s (the department) vision is for a justice and community safety system that works together to build a safer, fairer and stronger Victoria. Access to, and equal participation in, the justice system is considered central to the notion of citizenship. If we are to achieve this vision, we have a responsibility as a department to address the barriers that hinder people’s equal access to the justice system, this includes people with disability.

The department’s [Disability Action Plan Framework 2019 – 2022](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/disability-action-plan-framework-2019-2022) <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/disability-action-plan-framework-2019-2022> (the Framework) provides a whole of department focus for improving outcomes for people with disability who come into contact with the justice system and our ongoing work to become a disability confident employer.

It also provides the overarching structure and context for this plan, the **2020 – 2021 implementation plan**, including:

* policy context
* underpinning principles
* key goals
* underpinning outcomes
* indicators of success.

## About this implementation plan

This document includes actions that demonstrate the department’s ongoing commitment to be an inclusive workplace and to ensure Victoria’s justice and community safety system is accessible and inclusive of people with disability, including:

* improving the experience and outcomes for people with disability in contact with the justice system and ensuring that the department promotes and protects the rights of people with disability
* reducing the significant over-representation of people with disability at all stages of the justice system as victims, witnesses, defendants, offenders and detainees
* building our internal departmental capability to create accessible, equitable, inclusive and safe structures, practices and culture within our workplace for people with disability
* in the current context, responding to the disproportionate impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people with disability including staff, service users and clients.

The implementation plan should be read in conjunction with the Framework, which feeds into broader departmental priorities as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1: Departmental context for the disability action plan**

Figure 1: Department context for the disability action plan 
1. Statement of Direction 2019 – 2023: Outlines the department’s overarching policy and delivery priorities and outcomes that will assist us in achieving our vision of ‘A justice and community safety system that works together to build a safer, fairer and stronger Victoria’.
2. Disability action plan Framework 2019 – 2022: The department’s disability action plan Framework outlines how we as a department will continue ongoing work to become a disability confident employer and reduce barriers experienced by people with disability in accessing the justice system. 
3. Disability action plan: implementation plan 2020 – 2021: Outlines actions to be undertaken during July 2020 - June 2021 including actions that specifically respond to the profound impacts of COVID-19 for both the department’s service users and staff with disability. 

## Current policy context

The following have directly contributed to the development of and priorities within the 2020 – 2021 implementation plan:

### Getting to Work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018 - 2025

As a major employer, DJCS is committed to working towards attaining employment targets set out in [Getting to work: ⁠Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018 – 2025](https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/resources/disability-employment-action-plan/) <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/resources/disability-employment-action-plan/>. Getting to Work sets a six percent employment target across all Victorian government departments and Victoria Police by 2020, increasing to twelve percent by 2025. DJCS is implementing fit-for-purpose actions to achieve meaningful employment and increased representation of people with disability across every level of our department.

### Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

The [Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability](https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/) <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/> (the Commission) was established in April 2019 in response to community concern about widespread reports of violence against, and the neglect, abuse and exploitation of, people with disability. In June 2020 the Commission announced a [public hearing to examine the experiences of people with disability during the ongoing the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic](https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/public-hearings/public-hearing-5) <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/public-hearings/public-hearing-5>. Some of the key areas of concern during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic have included[[1]](#footnote-2):

* access to health care, including regular and vital therapeutic appointments and medications
* access to personal protective equipment and screening and testing for coronavirus
* access to accessible and inclusive mental health services
* access to essential support services
* access to information on the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that is accessible and available in different formats.

The department has welcomed the opportunity to support and respond to the work of the Commission and is committed to improving services and supports for people with disability in contact with the justice system. The findings from the Commission will inform future plans, approaches and actions to address inclusion adopted by the department over the coming years. The department is also working with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and the Commonwealth Government to improve service integration at the interface between the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the Victorian justice system.

### Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System

The [Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System](https://rcvmhs.vic.gov.au/) <https://rcvmhs.vic.gov.au/> is currently exploring how to improve mental health outcomes and access to supports and has emphasised the intersection between the services that support people with both mental health and disability.

It is likely that the Mental Health Royal Commission will make recommendations about how Victorian systems can best support and provide effective services to people with psychosocial disability or mental health issues. Future actions to address policy and service system gaps regarding people with disability will be considered in light of the findings of the Mental Health Royal Commission.

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had an acute impact on our safety, health, wellbeing and economic security. The pandemic has brought to light and only exacerbated the inequalities and discrimination experienced by people with disability within society. People with disability experience discriminatory attitudes, structures, systems and institutions within their lives. For instance, people with disability are more likely to experience poor health, compromised immunity and increased risk of morbidity. People with disability also experience higher levels of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. People with disability further encounter barriers to accessing services in an appropriate and timely manner due to delays in waiting times, cost, inaccessibility of facilities and discrimination by some professionals and services.

These experiences of inequality and discrimination for people with disability are not only replicated and reinforced in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, but amplified by the unique circumstances, challenges and barriers brought about by the pandemic. As such, they are disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic including:

* increased risk of contracting coronavirus due to higher number of co-morbidities and underlying health conditions, such as chronic diseases and respiratory illnesses, and barriers to accessing available services in the prevention, screening and treatment for coronavirus
* difficulties in gaining access to, and using, essential health supplies to keep safe, such as personal protective equipment, hand sanitiser and sterilising equipment
* reduced access to support services including support workers, particularly in the home, and where available there is a fear or risk of transmission of coronavirus
* increased risk to the health and wellbeing of people with disability living in closed residential settings including prisons and youth justice facilities
* increased risk to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people with disability who face increased risks in several aspects of life
* difficulties in accessing information that is accessible in all formats and for different accessibility requirements
* challenges in maintaining or gaining financial security[[2]](#footnote-3).

Barriers to equal participation in the workforce have become more pronounced for people with disability including for workforces that have shifted to remote working. Examples include:

* increased social isolation and anxiety - for some people, the use of online methods to communicate, interact and receive feedback has been distressing
* reduced supports from paid staff and services and increased dependency or caring needs placed on loved ones
* meetings and information delivered through online platforms (such as Teams and Zoom), including items related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, not being available in appropriate formats to accommodate different access requirements
* difficulties and delays in staff gaining access to appropriate workplace adjustments while working from home, particularly where these are different to those required in the office
* balancing staff requests to work in an office with the health and safety of staff due to the increased possibility of transmission
* finding meaningful work that can be performed remotely/at home for staff who were previously performing a hands-on, office-based role prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
* ensuring there are multiple accessible options available to maintain connections with colleagues and the workplace
* targeted assistance provided to staff with disability in an emergency situation to support individuals with unique circumstances.

As heard by the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, the raft of disproportionate impacts is also underpinned by fear expressed by people with disability that they are being left behind in government responses to the pandemic. There is also concern that discrimination or unconscious bias could impact their access to critical and lifesaving health care during this crisis.

Acknowledging these impacts, the changed working arrangements have offered benefits and opportunities for staff with disability that can be taken advantage of and built upon across the department to improve inclusion and access post coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

This includes an ability to work more flexibly in terms of work hours, pace and location and to connect with colleagues remotely through a range of digitised working platforms and communication methods and mechanisms. For many people with disability, travelling to a physical location to work can be a significant barrier to participation in employment. Taking advantage of flexible and remote methods of working is likely to remove such barriers and increase representation and opportunities for people with disability in our workforce.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has also called for more flexible ways of delivering services, such as using online platforms and digital technology. This has increased access and removed barriers for some service users with disability being able to receive supports remotely. It has also demonstrated that traditional face-to-face service delivery is only one approach and other methods can increase access for people with disability.

### Responding to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

This plan was developed when responses to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic were being developed and implemented at the same time as it was unfolding and changing direction at a rapid pace. We recognise there may be some gaps and/or missed opportunities in our response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic as reflected in this document, however, work will continue to address these and leverage opportunities as they arise.

This plan presents a set of critical actions to meet immediate need and address gaps for both service users and staff with disability. These actions will ensure the department is responsive in the immediate crisis period in order to minimise the current disproportionate impacts on people with disability as clients and as staff. It also includes actions that seek to take advantage of and continue building on the changed working arrangements and associated benefits that have emerged for employees and service users with disability.

### Supporting broader systemic and structural change during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Given that the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people with disability are underpinned by long-standing attitudinal, structural and institutional barriers to access, inclusion and equity in society, it is critical to continue the work to contribute and effect change. In recognition of this, along with coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic specific actions, this plan contains targeted actions to improve culture, structures and practices within the department and its services.

#### Case example – delivering the Intermediary Pilot Program remotely

Amy is a 45-year-old woman with intellectual disability, post traumatic distress disorder, borderline personality disorder and schizophrenia who was the victim of sexual abuse. The sexual offending, which occurred over 30 years ago, continued for three years and the accused was Amy’s parent.

Amy was referred to the [Intermediary Pilot Program](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/justice-system/courts-and-tribunals/victorian-intermediaries-pilot-program) <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/justice-system/courts-and-tribunals/victorian-intermediaries-pilot-program>. Intermediaries are neutral officers of the court who are skilled communication specialists whose role is to help communication with the witness and to assist the witness to give evidence to police and in court.

Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Amy’s assessment was conducted virtually with the assistance of a family member who set her up on Zoom. The intermediary made a number of recommendations, including how frequently breaks should be scheduled, how to structure questions, strategies for stress release, and sign posting the topics so that Amy could follow the chronology of the offending she was being asked about.

Amy gave her evidence remotely with an intermediary and support person present. As it was during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Amy was required to wear a shield and the intermediary wore a mask. Amy gave her evidence over the day and was visibly distressed at times, needing assistance to self-regulate.

The accused was found guilty of the charges.

\*Please note names have been changed to protect privacy.

## Monitoring and accountability

Progress updates on the implementation plan will be provided through departmental communication channels to maintain momentum and to ensure a continued focus on disability inclusion. The department’s Executive Board of Management will oversee implementation and will receive regular updates including as part of the annual review process. We will promote this plan’s initiatives to share information on our achievements and the department’s annual report will report on the progress of the plan’s actions. The DJCS Enablers Network and Executive Disability Champion have also provided invaluable input into this plan and will continue to support its monitoring and implementation.

During implementation and at the conclusion of the plan, the actions related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will be reviewed for opportunities to embed new approaches and ways of working more broadly into the department’s business as usual processes. This will include working with all our operational services and corporate functions to evaluate the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic specific actions to determine:

* What were the innovations brought about by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in regard to supporting clients, service users and staff with disability and what worked well?
* What were the gaps and challenges experienced as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic related changes?
* What are the different ways of working brought about by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that could be implemented in business as usual processes and practices?
* What other initiatives or strategies, outside of this plan, were applied during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that could be adopted in providing services to and the employment of people with disability?
* What are the responses and initiatives implemented that should be elevated and promoted throughout the department, among our justice agencies and the VPS?
* How to ensure ongoing and future emergency responses are timely, tailored and considered to the needs of people with disability.

All learnings gleaned from reviewing this implementation plan will be used to inform the department’s next Disability Action Plan 2022-2025 in order to further embed and extend innovative initiatives and approaches beyond the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

This plan was developed under the pressures and changed work priorities of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which consequently impacted on the department’s ability to thoroughly engage and consult with our external stakeholders and people with disability with lived experience of the justice system. We look forward to the voices of people with disability being amplified in setting the directions of the 2022-2025 Disability Action Plan Framework.

The next Framework will also include a more comprehensive approach to monitoring and accountability. The next Framework will also be developed against a broader departmental Intersectionality Framework, to also be developed in 2021, which will provide broad priorities and outcomes for our inclusion and intersectionality reform agenda across DJCS. The DAP Framework, along with other key strategic frameworks and plans, will contribute to these outcomes.

The next Framework will also draw upon and consider work being undertaken with the DHHS on a shared outcomes approach to better support common clients and future state systems reforms which aim to identify how a range of social service agencies can work better together and smarter to improve justice, health and wellbeing outcomes for Victorians. These reforms will enhance the service system to support people with disability who may be transitioning through the justice system (for example through courts, custodial settings and the community), and aim to improve approaches to client-centred planning, assessment and information handover between service settings.

## Further information

For more information or to receive this publication in an alternative format [email the Inclusion and Intersectionality Team](mailto:inclusion&intersectionality@justice.vic.gov.au?subject=DJCS%20Disability%20action%20plan%202020-21%20implementation%20plan) <inclusion&intersectionality@justice.vic.gov.au>.

## Actions

### Action area 1: Responding to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

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| Actions | Responsibility | Status |
| Service delivery response |  |  |
| **1.1** In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, provide remote service delivery to victims of crime, including victims with disability. Remote service delivery is being provided through a range of different methods (suitable to each service/program) including via phone, online and video conferencing. | * Victim Services, Support and Reform, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Commenced |
| **1.2** Provide mobile phones, tablets and assistive technology to enable Community Correctional Services and Court Services clients with disability to comply with court orders, bail and parole conditions by means other than by face-to-face interactions with staff. | * Policy, Strategy and Service Design, Corrections and Justice Services | Commenced |
| **1.3** Fund Disability Support Officers to work in prisons to assist prisoners with disability and complex needs to understand the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and to adopt behaviours which minimise the risk of contracting and spreading coronavirus. | * Policy, Strategy and Service Design, Corrections and Justice Services | Commenced |
| **1.4** Promote staff safety by providing learning opportunities in different formats for items related to coronavirus safety (eLearn’s, documents) with input from DJCS Enablers Network. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **1.5** Support theYouth Employment Program (YEP), developed in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, by promoting entry level roles (between 6 – 12 months fixed term) to unemployed youth. There is a focus on placing people from diverse cohorts, including people with disability who are particularly disadvantaged during this period, into roles. | * Workplace Relations, People and Workplace Services | Not started |

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| **1.6** Youth Justice is working closely with the NDIA to promote information about their updated coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic response in Victoria, and the [Exceptionally Complex Support Needs Program (ECSNP)](https://www.cohealth.org.au/ndis/exceptionally-complex-support-needs-program/) <https://www.cohealth.org.au/ndis/exceptionally-complex-support-needs-program/>. The ECSN program provides assistance to Youth Justice to identify and respond to the needs of Youth Justice NDIS participants with exceptionally complex support needs. | * Youth Justice | Commenced |
| Recovery and post coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic |  |  |
| **1.7** Support staff operating from a workplace location and building readiness for the eventual return of increased staff to the workplace, with ongoing input from the DJCS Enablers Network. Building readiness activities include increased cleaning; social distancing by reducing building occupancy level; staff rostering; availability of PPE (aligned to DHHS guidelines); instructional signage and other documentation for staff; consideration of impacts of reduced contacts with surfaces e.g. on ability to read Braille. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **1.8** Support the early return of staff to the workplace for safety and/or wellbeing reasons and progressing a system to enable staff to continue to work remotely for safety and wellbeing reasons, once the workforce is gradually brought back into the workplace (in the hybrid model of working). | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **1.9** Develop coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic instructional and safety information regarding the entire process for entering the workplace, including self-health checks prior to leaving home, information regarding public transport, accessibility information and specific considerations for staff with disability. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **1.10** Reduce barriers to employment by:   * embedding a flexible hybrid work-home office model to reduce requirements to attend a specific workplace * further extending the work-hub-home model to enable workers to attend a location closer to home.   Equally these actions will increase retention in the department as an employer of choice. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services in collaboration with Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) | Commenced |
| **1.11** Ensure the DJCS Enablers Network are represented on the ‘Return to Work’ Working Groups to provide input into COVID-Safe and return to work planning and policy making, and to assist in identifying and promoting changes to both culture and practice as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic remote working experience. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |

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| **1.12** Capture the impacts of the 2019-20 bushfires and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people with disability to identify areas of improvement for the emergency management sector. Utilise intel and learnings from recent inquiries including:   * the [Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements](https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/) <https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/> * the [Inquiry into the 2019-2020 Victorian fire season](https://www.igem.vic.gov.au/vicfires-inquiry/terms-of-reference) <https://www.igem.vic.gov.au/vicfires-inquiry/terms-of-reference> by the Inspector General for Emergency Management (IGEM) * the [Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability](https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/) <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/>. | * Executive Office of the Emergency Management Commissioner, Emergency Management Victoria | Not started |
| **1.13** Identify opportunities to improve outcomes for people with disability in contact with the justice system through efforts to support social recovery in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. | * Service Delivery and Workplace Safety, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Not started |

### Action area 2: Building workforce capacity and capability

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| Actions | Responsibility | Status |
| Strategic policies, frameworks and initiatives |  |  |
| **2.1** Develop a departmental inclusion and intersectionality statement that recognises how structural and systemic barriers and disadvantages contribute to inequalities, including for people with disability and experiences of ableism. | * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Not started |
| **2.2** Map and update relevant inclusion and intersectionality policies across the department to ensure consideration of disability through an intersectional lens is embedded in approach. | * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Not started |
| **2.3** Develop a new Corrections and Justice Services Disability Framework 2020-2022 that articulates an integrated approach to supporting offenders and prisoners with disability. | * Policy, Strategy and Service Design, Corrections and Justice Services | Commenced |
| Dedicated roles to build workforce capacity |  |  |
| **2.4** Embed the new Diversity and Inclusion Advisor role across the department by promoting the role and its purpose of diversity and inclusion widely to all employees. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **2.5** Embed NDIS Justice Liaison Officers (JLOs) to act as a point of contact for the justice workforce and bring a coordinated approach to supporting NDIS participants in Victoria’s youth and adult justice settings. | * Youth Justice | Commenced |
| **2.6** Recruit an additional 3 FTE Specialist Disability Advisor positions in Youth Justice to work across youth justice custodial and community settings. Support all Youth Justice Specialist Advisors in their role. | * Youth Justice | Commenced |
| Training and professional development |  |  |
| **2.7** Review all current disability awareness training modules:   * to ensure relevancy and up to date policy, program requirements are reflected. * to identify additional learning needs and opportunities for example: * to better support staff with disability e.g. inclusive recruitment training * to better support justice clients with disability e.g. disability awareness training for Prison Officers on supporting prisoners with cognitive disability. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services in collaboration with all Groups * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Not started |
| **2.8** Lead the development of a high-quality eLearning Disability Awareness (introductory) module tailored to the needs of the Victorian public sector. The introductory module will form part of a suite of modules on disability awareness still to be determined. The module will include lived experience examples and accessibility will be built in from the start of its development, making this learning tool a best practice example.  When the module is complete it will be added to the current DJCS suite of compulsory eLearning modules for all new starters. Employees with direct reports will need to complete the module as part of the personal development plan (PDP). | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services in collaboration with Department of Education and Training, Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC), DPC and the Victorian Public Sector (VPS) Enablers Network | Commenced |
| **2.9** Deliver Youth Justice face-to-face training, including induction programs for new staff, which contains training relating to disability and supporting children and young people with disability. The training includes two separate induction programs, one each for the custody and community-based workforces. | * Youth Justice * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workforce Services | Commenced |
| **2.10** Deliver remote Foundational Family Violence Training for managers and non-managers to staff within DJCS, including training about family violence in the context of having a disability or managing mental illness. | * Family Violence and Mental Health Branch, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Complete |
| **2.11** Provide Foundational Family Violence Training for staff with disability or caring for someone with disability, offered by the Office of the Family Violence Principal Practitioner and the DJCS Enablers Network. | * Family Violence and Mental Health Branch, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Commenced |
| **2.12** Update resources on disability and inclusion on the department’s intranet including information on:   * the new Inclusion and Intersectionality Team * the Disability Action Plan Framework 2019 – 2022 * resources for Managers * resources for employees with disability include: * promotion of the DJCS Enablers Network * information that is available in accessible formats and is promoted and communicated widely. | * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workforce Services | Commenced |

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| **2.13** Continue to support the development of a whole of Victorian Government Universal Design Policy, with a focus on infrastructure projects and capital grants, to ensure that they are accessible by as many people as possible, regardless of age, ability, cultural background or any other attributes and factors that contribute to our diversity. | * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety in collaboration with Justice Infrastructure/Community Safety Building Authority | Commenced |
| **2.14** Progress initiatives to support people with disability who have lived experience of the justice system to co-design workforce capacity building initiatives including:   * workforce development resources, tools and training to improve understanding of the NDIS and the justice system * addressing gaps in understanding of the NDIS and justice system * understand, screen for and improve support to people with disability through tailored and co-designed capacity building initiatives   assist people with disability in the justice system to access and benefit from a continuity of NDIS support throughout their contact with the justice system. | * Service Delivery and Workplace Safety, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety * Youth Justice * Corrections Victoria | Commenced |

### Action area 3: Accessible communications

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| Actions | Responsibility | Status |
| **3.1** Ensure all online (internal and external) content adheres to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA standard](https://www.vic.gov.au/make-content-accessible) <https://www.vic.gov.au/make-content-accessible>. All department Divisions including specific review for Births, Deaths and Marriages and Adoption Services, Police, Fines and Crime Prevention. | * Strategic Communication, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Commenced |
| **3.2** Undertake a review of the [Fines Victoria website](https://online.fines.vic.gov.au/) <https://online.fines.vic.gov.au/> and implement changes to improve accessibility, content and functionality of the website. | * Fines and Enforcement Services, Police, Fines and Crime Prevention | Not started |
| **3.3** Develop resources and guidance on how to develop accessible communications and host accessible events. | * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion; Strategic Communication, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Not started |
| **3.4** Ensure that department communication products are available in various accessible formats:   * communication strategies to outline what products will be developed, with accessibility in mind, and how people with disability will be engaged throughout the communications campaign/strategy * sending products to Strategic Communications for review before finalising. | * Strategic Communications, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Commenced |
| **3.5** Ensure the NDIS Worker Screening application process is accessible to applicants with disability. User experience testing to include people with disability in testing of the application process and customer journey and providing a physical pathway where necessary. | * Regulatory Services, Police, Fines and Crime Prevention | Commenced |

### Action area 4: Inclusive and accessible justice system and services

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| Actions | Responsibility | Status |
| Correctional and criminal justice systems |  |  |
| **4.1** Pilot a service model for women prisoners with cognitive disability and complex needs at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) that will:   * identify best practice in custodial settings for prisoners with disability and complex needs * develop and trial a specialised disability pathway focussed on women prisoners with cognitive disability and complex needs * develop and trial training and educational modules about disability for staff at DPFC * generate lessons and insights for planning the further development of disability pathways in the Victorian men’s prison system. | * Policy, Strategy and Service Design, Corrections and Justice Services | Commenced |
| **4.2** Continue to support the [Corrections Independent Support Officers (CISO) program](https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/volunteering/corrections-independent-support-officers) <https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/volunteering/corrections-independent-support-officers> which supports people with intellectual disability during disciplinary hearings in adult prisons in Victoria, by:   * ensuring the prisoner understands their rights at a prison disciplinary hearing, * assessing whether these rights are understood and can be exercised before the hearing can commence and facilitating communication during the hearing. | * Policy, Strategy and Service Design, Corrections and Justice Services | Commenced |
| **4.3** In line with Victoria’s [Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2020-2030](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/justice-system/youth-justice/youth-justice-strategic-plan-2020-2030-investing-in-a-skilled-safe-and) <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/justice-system/youth-justice/youth-justice-strategic-plan-2020-2030-investing-in-a-skilled-safe-and> implement the following actions to support young people with disability involved in Youth Justice:   * Support the operation of the Forensic Disability Program to support young people with cognitive impairment to address their offending behaviour, including through specialist assessment, intake, referral, accommodation and services. * Employ a Youth Justice Senior Disability Adviser so young people are supported in custody to address their disability needs. This role provides information and advice to staff on disability issues and services. * Implement a Child and Adolescent Intellectual Disability Screening Questionnaire (CAIDS-Q). This will allow Youth Justice staff to identify young people with intellectual disability and refer them for clinical assessment and further support. * Maximise the benefits of the NDIS by referring young people with disability to the NDIS Complex Support Needs pathway. This will also involve piloting a specialist service response to facilitate access to the NDIS and to maximise supports. * Improve coordination and integration of NDIS processes and funded supports with the justice system. | * Youth Justice in partnership with the DJCS NDIS Disability and Justice Interface team, DHHS, the NDIA and key service delivery providers | Commenced |
| **4.4** Support Youth Justice Senior Behaviour Support Specialist and Behaviour Support Specialist roles to undertake behavioural assessments of children and young people and then develop appropriate interventions to better support and manage children and young people’s complex behaviours in custody. These roles include supporting young people with disability. | * Youth Justice | Commenced |

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| Safeguards and supports |  |  |
| **4.5** Support relevant justice agencies to implement reforms following the passage of the **Crimes (Mental Impairment and Unfitness to be Tried) Amendment Bill** 2020 (CMIA). The CMIA will improve outcomes for people with disability who have been found unfit to stand trial or not guilty because of mental impairment by making important changes to the scheme for supervision and management once a finding is made. The Bill was introduced to Parliament on 17 March 2020 and responds to the [2014 recommendations of the Victorian Law Reform Commission](http://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au/projects/crimes-mental-impairment/crimes-mental-impairment-and-unfitness-be-tried-act-1997-report) <http://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au/projects/crimes-mental-impairment/crimes-mental-impairment-and-unfitness-be-tried-act-1997-report>. | * Justice Policy and Legislation, Justice Policy and Data Reform | Not started |
| **4.6** Continue to support witnesses and victims of crime with disability to give their best evidence in a police interview or in court through the Intermediary Pilot Program. | * Victim Services, Support and Reform, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Ongoing |
| Services |  |  |
| **4.7** Develop an adoption service model that prioritises the selection of people wanting to adopt who have the attitude and capability to provide a family for children with disability. | * Regulatory Services, Police, Fines and Crime Prevention | Commenced |
| **4.8** Ensure the process, counselling and wellbeing services and/or participation in the [Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme](file://internal.vic.gov.au/DJR/HomeDirs10/CMulholl/Desktop/DJCS%20DAP/DJCS%20Disability%20action%20plan%20Framework%202019-2022/DJCS%202020-21%20implementation%20plan/Restorative%20Engagement%20and%20Redress%20Scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/redress-police-employees> by eligible participants from Victoria Police is inclusive of and accessible for people with disability. | * Police and Community Safety, Police Fines and Crime Prevention in partnership with People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **4.9** Emergency Management Victoria to share the lessons learnt from the Country Fire Authority’s Preparing Vulnerable Person Project as an example of good practice across the emergency management sector. The project includes an [online training module](https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/bushfire-safety-for-workers) <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/bushfire-safety-for-workers> developed for those working with people who are at greater risk due to disability, age or social isolation, including case managers, support workers and home nursing staff. The training will provide community organisations with advice on how to support people at risk, and assist vulnerable people living in the community to develop a bushfire safety plan. | * Executive Office of the Emergency Management Commissioner, Emergency Management Victoria | Commenced |
| **4.10** Engage with disability leaders and representative organisations including DARU (Disability Advocacy Resource Unit), the Commercial Passenger Vehicles Victoria Disability and Accessibility Forum and the DJCS Enablers Network, to gain valuable insights into the experiences of people with disability to inform more inclusive and accessible service delivery. | * Executive Office of the Emergency Management Commissioner, Emergency Management Victoria | Ongoing |

### Action area 5: Improving data on disability

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| Actions | Responsibility | Status |
| **5.1** Build on linked data analysis from common clients in DJCS and DHHS to understand service interaction across justice and social services, gaps in service usage and key points for intervention. Across the common clients’ cohorts there is over-representation of people with disability.  This initiative aims to reduce common clients contact with the criminal justice system and improve the integration of supports, including for people with disability to better respond to individual needs across multiple domains. | * Service Delivery and Workplace Safety, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety in collaboration with DHHS | Commenced |
| **5.2** Review current practices for collecting disability information from justice clients and implement improvements to:   * ensure the question and process is done in a respectful and appropriate manner * ensure clients are clear about why the question is being asked and how the information will be used * encourage more people with disability to respond to the question without fear of discrimination or repercussions. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services in collaboration with Corrections Victoria and Youth Justice | Not started |
| **5.3** Develop more robust methods of collecting information on the needs and experiences of customers of Births, Deaths and Marriages, including people with disability. Review and update our current customer surveys/feedback mechanisms and ensure they are available in accessible formats. | * Regulatory Services Police, Fines and Crime Prevention | Not started |

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| **5.4** Develop a new data collection tool for use by the Support Youth Justice Specialist Disability Advisors to collect information about the support needs and services for young people with disability across youth justice custodial and community settings. This will be useful to inform future service planning and be responsive to emerging issues and trends.  In collecting the data engagement of young people will be informed by a variety of approaches including consultation with user voice advocacy groups. | * Youth Justice | Not started |
| **5.5** Develop robust methods of collecting information about the workforce with disability to better:   * understand employee support requirements * understand employee job satisfaction and challenges * understand the experience of workplace discrimination * support opportunities for career progression and professional development * increase the confidence of staff with disability to identify.   This work will be informed by a review of our current methods for collecting disability information, consultation with the DJCS Enablers Network and an analysis of People Matters Survey data. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |

### Action area 6: Disability employment

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| Actions | Responsibility | Status |
| Flexible, safe and accessible workplaces |  |  |
| **6.1** Review People and Workplace Services policies, programs and published information to ensure that it is inclusive, accessible and considers the needs of employees with disability.  Update policy, practices and tools for flexible working arrangements, informed by feedback on working from home arrangements in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. | * Workplace Relations, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **6.2** Advocate to DPC that they engage and consult with the VPS Enablers Network to ensure accessibility is considered and embedded into the hybrid model of office-hub-home for any new suburban hubs. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Not started |
| **6.3** Align the Return to Work project to the Remote Working Transition Project led by the DPC, to ensure values and approach are consistent with whole of Victorian government approach.  Develop and implement processes, policies and tools to better enable the return to work of employees following both work and non-work related injuries and illnesses, including the implementation of workplace adjustments that facilitate an employee’s return to the workplace. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **6.4** Implement the following to improve the induction process for people with disability:   * Ensure all new employees are asked if they require any workplace adjustments before they start working in their role. * Ensure all new employees with disability are connected to the Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, People and Workplace Services. * Ensure all new employees with disability are offered a workplace buddy or person who can advise on how to access support if required. * Ensure all new starters are connected to the DJCS Enablers Network for employees with disability and their allies. * Ensure all new employees with disability are aware of how to raise employment-related issues through the Employee and Workplace Relations team and are made aware of the department’s complaints framework. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services * DJCS Enablers Network | Not started |
| **6.5** Develop a Workplace Adjustment Policy, that includes workplace adjustments specific to working remotely / from home, following changed working conditions during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. | * Employee and Workplace Relations and Workplace Services and Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| Inclusive employment practices |  |  |
| **6.6** Participate in the 2021 mentoring program for graduates with disability, from the Victorian Government graduate program: disability pathway stream, led by the VPSC. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services | Not started |

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| **6.7** Ensure equitable career pathways are promoted and available including pathways to leadership development. Include:   * assessment of existing training, career development and leadership pathways so staff with disability have the same opportunities and access as their peers * accessible formats in the delivery of training and programs * analysis of options for further targeted career development, including scoping programs in other departments and organisations. | * People Services, People and Workplace Services | Not started |
| **6.8** Work collaboratively across the department and with our agencies to promote and share:   * employee stories and inclusive work practices * VPS and DJCS Enabler events and awareness raising campaigns * significant days throughout the year for example: * World Autism Awareness Day (2 April). * Global Accessibility Awareness Day (third Thursday in May) * [AccessAbility Day](https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/people-with-disability/accessabilityday) <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/people-with-disability/accessabilityday> (November) * [International Day of People with Disability](https://www.idpwd.com.au/) <https://www.idpwd.com.au/> (3 December). | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services * DJCS Enablers Network * Executive Disability Champion * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Commenced |
| **6.9** Progress work towards achieving VPS disability employment targets (6 per cent representation by 2020 and 12 per cent by 2025) by implementing the following:   * Established an internal Disability Employment Working Group (DEWG) whose role is to develop, implement and address the action items related to ‘attracting and recruiting people with disability’ as part of **Getting to Work**. * Revise the Recruitment Policy position description templates and standard advertisement templates in conjunction with the Inclusion and Intersectionality Team. * A 12-month partnership with JobAccess (see action 6.10). * Promotional materials (imagery, Careers page, videos) to reflect diversity of our workforce and who we want to attract (including people with disability, Aboriginal people, people from a CALD background and people who identify as LGBTIQ). * Engagement with Disability Employment Service (DES) providers to promote DJCS job opportunities. * Support teams to participate in the Australian Network on Disability (AND) Stepping Into Internships program (action 6.14) * Support teams to participate in the Victorian Government graduate program: disability pathway stream (see action 6.15). | * People Services, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **6.10** Partner with [JobAccess](https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/) <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/> for 12 months to support the department to improve our attraction and recruitment processes and practices to be more inclusive of and attract more candidates with disability. Initiatives could include:   * special measures positions as outlined in the [VPSC Guide to hiring with special measures in the public sector](https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/resources/a-guide-to-hiring-with-special-measures-in-the-public-sector/) <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/resources/a-guide-to-hiring-with-special-measures-in-the-public-sector/> * wherever practicable prioritising special measures that are designated positions over those that are prioritised positions, as described in the guidelines * utilising special measures to develop career pathways, including pathways into leadership roles for people with disability * applying special measures to a diverse range of roles including those that do not necessarily benefit directly from a lived experience of disability, to create equitable and diverse pathways and opportunities for people with disability * interviewing all applicants with disability who meet the key selection criteria. | * People Services, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **6.11** Support the DJCS Enablers Network to deliver a reverse mentoring program. It would involve department employees with disability mentoring Executive staff on inclusive work practices, supporting staff with disability and how to be an effective ally. | * Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services * Executive Disability Champion | Not started |

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| Increasing employment pathways for people with disability |  |  |
| **6.12** In line with the [Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan 2019-2022](https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-emergency-management-strategic-action-plan-sap-update-4-2019-22) <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-emergency-management-strategic-action-plan-sap-update-4-2019-22> action 3.1:  Explore and develop approaches that allow different types of leaders to emerge from the evolving landscape of volunteerism, including people with disability. | * Executive Office of the Emergency Management Commissioner, Emergency Management Victoria | Commenced |
| **6.13** Continue to administer the annual [DJCS Disability Scholarships Program](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/careers/disability-scholarship-program) <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/careers/disability-scholarship-program>, with the aim of increasing the number of employed qualified people with disability in the justice portfolio and across all areas and all levels of the public service.  All recipients will be linked in with the department’s employment programs and recruitment services so that they can be kept abreast of entry level and employment pathways to the department. | * Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety | Ongoing |
| **6.14** Support teams across the department to participate in the AND [Stepping Into Internships program](https://vicgov.sharepoint.com/sites/msteams_e25875/Shared%20Documents/Inclusion%20and%20Intersectionality/Disability%20related%20initiatives/DJCS%20Disability%20action%20plan%20Framework%202019%20-%202022/Disability%20action%20plan%202020-21%20implementation%20plan/Stepping%20Into%20Internships%20program) <https://www.and.org.au/pages/stepping-into...-programs.html> to take on a university student with disability for a one-month summer internship (over the 2020/21 university break):   * Inclusion and Intersectionality Team, Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery, Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety * Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Team, Police and Community Safety, Police and Community Safety, Police Fines and Crime Prevention * Bendigo Justice Service Centre, Loddon Mallee Region, Corporate Governance and Support * Statewide Services Forensic Intervention Services, Corrections Victoria * Office of the Public Advocate * Procurement Services Corrections and Justice Services Procurement, Corporate Governance and Support * Procurement Services Purchasing Operations, Corporate Governance and Support * Learning and Development, Workplace Services Improvement, People and Workplace Services. | * People Services, People and Workplace Services in collaboration with relevant teams | Not started |
| **6.15** Support teams across the department to participate in [Victorian Government graduate program: disability pathway stream](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-government-graduate-program#program-streams) <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-government-graduate-program#program-streams>. The following teams have nominated to take on a university student with disability for a 2021 graduate placement:   * Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Team, Police and Community Safety, Police and Community Safety, Police Fines and Crime Prevention * Legal Services Branch, Consumer Affairs Victoria * Corporate Support and Transformation, Strategy and Policy, Emergency Management Victoria * Procurement Services, Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, Corporate Governance and Support * Inclusion and Intersectionality Team, Stakeholder Engagement, Intergovernmental Strategy and Inclusion, Service Delivery, Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety * Priority Projects, Justice Policy and Data Reform. | * People Services, People and Workplace Services in collaboration with relevant teams | Commenced |
| **6.16** Participate the [Victorian Public Sector Youth Employment Scheme](https://jobs.vic.gov.au/about-jobs-victoria/our-programs/youth-employment-scheme) <https://jobs.vic.gov.au/about-jobs-victoria/our-programs/youth-employment-scheme> by employing unemployed and disadvantaged young people, including young people with disability, into VPS 1 roles for 6-12 months. | * People Services, People and Workplace Services | Commenced |
| **6.17** Promote and provide employment opportunities for people with disability to work in the [Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/redress-police-employees) <https://www.vic.gov.au/redress-police-employees>, [Road Safety Camera Program](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/road-safety) <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/road-safety>, and Police Policy and Strategy teams by working with the sector and other relevant stakeholders. | * Police and Community Safety, Police Fines and Crime Prevention in partnership with People and Workplace Services | Commenced |

1. [Statement of Concern - The response to the COVID-19 pandemic for people with disability](https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/statement-concern-response-covid-19-pandemic-people-disability) <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/statement-concern-response-covid-19-pandemic-people-disability> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [Royal Commission Statement of Concern - The response to the COVID-19 pandemic for people with disability](https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/statement-concern-response-covid-19-pandemic-people-disability) <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/statement-concern-response-covid-19-pandemic-people-disability> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)