



Office of the Public Advocate

# Strategic Directions 2023-2026

Our blueprint for the future



Office of the  
Public Advocate

# Strategic Priorities 2023-2026

## 1 A culture of excellence – accessible, inclusive, collaborative, quality

- Orientate our services and systemic advocacy to optimise rights, access, independence, and wellbeing.
- Improve our services and accessibility for First Nations people and develop strategies that support culturally respectful relationships.
- Foster a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and accountability through quality assurance processes, collaboration, learnings from lived experience, feedback, and an analysis of data, trends, and themes.
- Identify, build, and nurture strategic relationships that add value to our work in driving positive outcomes for people with disability.

### Making a difference

- Lived experience, expertise and learnings inform practice and systemic advocacy.
- Enhanced cultural competency and safety improve outcomes for the people we work with.
- High-quality practice is evidenced based, and outcome focussed.
- Collaboration and co-design principles guide our human rights approach and drive positive outcomes.
- A stakeholder engagement strategy identifies collaborative opportunities to promote human rights and build inclusive practices.

## 2 Maximising our influence and impact – research, reform, advocacy

- Initiate research and projects, and pursue policy and legislative reforms informed by OPA and the voice of lived experience that promote human rights and inclusive practices.
- Identify gaps in safeguarding systems and advocate for effective ways for OPA to undertake adult safeguarding in a changing environment.
- Advocate for the least restrictive options and support people with disability to have as much control over their lives as possible.
- Support people to make their own decisions and provide information on and advocate for decision-making support for that is funded and inclusive of cultural difference and human diversity.

### Making a difference

- The people we work with and for have their voices heard in the design and delivery of services, and in system reforms.
- We influence government and policy makers by promoting policy and practice reforms that are culturally appropriate, safe, accessible, inclusive, and equitable.
- Our strong evidence base identifies service gaps and supports policy development and innovative strategies to build inclusion and address inequality.
- Our insights and reform proposals are valued by stakeholders and decision makers.

## 3 Nurturing our people – support, develop, promote wellbeing

- Foster an inclusive and accessible workplace that embraces, celebrates, and values the diversity of our staff, volunteers, and the people we work with.
- Build strong, empathetic leaders who lift the capability of their teams and foster a culture of integrity, high performance, continuous learning, and reflective practice.
- Identify skill development and support staff to take up opportunities to diversify skills and experience where possible.

### Making a difference

- Our learning and development approach enables coordination of our professional development and learning against necessary capabilities.
- Embed effective systems and processes to ensure high levels of engagement, support, wellbeing, and resilience.
- Attract and retain dynamic high-performing and values-driven team members.

## 4 A thriving organisation – sustainable, flexible, data and digitally capable

- Develop a communication and engagement strategy that encourages cross program collaboration, driven by a whole of organisation mindset.
- Strengthen our data analytics capability to ensure robust performance reporting that improve client outcomes.
- Identify digital transformation opportunities to improve business system, streamline work processes, create efficiencies, and improve linkages across OPA including with volunteers.
- Ensure that OPA's budget and resources reflect our role and functions.
- Build robust processes to understand and manage the risks inherent in our work.

### Making a difference

- Flexible working arrangements build an agile, engaged, and resilient workforce equipped to excel.
- Investment in digital tools and data analytics support improved business practices, collaboration, and information sharing.
- New ideas and new ways of working are encouraged, embraced, and enabled by innovation and technology.
- Systems and processes facilitate efficiency and sustainability, and alignment with available resources.

## Vision

A fair and inclusive society that respects and values the human rights and dignity of all people.

## Purpose

Promoting the independence and human rights of people with disability and protecting people with disability from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

## Principles

### Respect

We treat all people with dignity and respect.

### Integrity

We act honestly, transparently, fairly and with accountability to each other and to members of the community.

### Independence

As a statutory entity, we operate independently from government agencies and service providers.

### Inclusion

We strive to remove barriers to accessing our services and full participation in the community.

### Collaboration

We work collaboratively with our clients and stakeholders to improve outcomes for people with disability and their support systems.

## What OPA does

OPA is an advocate, a safeguarder, an educator and system influencer that promotes and protect human rights by:

- advocating on behalf of people with disability who are at risk of violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect
- advocating for policy, legislative and service reforms that promote and protect the human rights of people with disability
- providing a responsive and informative Advice Service and produce accessible information and community education on topics relevant to people with disability
- making significant medical decisions for people with no Medical Treatment Decision Maker
- conducting investigations at the request of VCAT and act as guardian when appointed by VCAT.

## Acknowledgement of Country

This report was written on the land of the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge and pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Traditional Custodians throughout Victoria, including Elders past and present. We also acknowledge the strength and resilience of all First Nations people whose social and emotional wellbeing continues to be negatively affected by discrimination, racism, child removal and other devastating ongoing effects of colonisation.

