



Office of the Public Advocate



Easy Read

Disability Action Plan 2019-2022





Hard words

This document uses some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word:

- the word is in **blue**
- we will write what the word means.

What is in this document?



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What this document is about



This document is written in a way that is easy to read.

It is written by the Office of the Public Advocate in Victoria.

In this document we call the Office of the Public Advocate '**OPA**'.

When you see the word 'we' it means OPA.



This document is a summary of our Disability Action Plan 2019 - 2022.

You can find this on our website:

www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au

In this document we use the word 'disability' to mean disability and mental illness.

Our Disability Action Plan is about **diversity**.

What is diversity?



Diversity is about respect for how we are all different.

We all have different:

- life experiences
- skills
- abilities
- cultural backgrounds
- knowledge.



We say diversity is about everyone feeling included.

We think it is about everyone feeling:

- valued
- respected
- heard.



Why diversity is important to us



Diversity is important to us because:

- We believe in human rights for everyone.
- We want our community to:
 - » be fair for everyone
 - » include everyone.
- If we have diversity at OPA we think we will be better at what we do.

We believe in:



- respect for everyone
- treating people kindly
- telling the truth.



We think OPA should:

- speak up
- be independent.



We want everyone we work with to feel they can speak up too.



Our diversity plans



We want to make sure we welcome and include everyone in the work that we do.

Our Disability Action Plan is about this.

We have similar plans about:



- cultural diversity
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- LGBTIQ people.

We also have a plan about treating women and men equally.

In each plan we say what we will do to:



- include everyone in what we do
- learn to do things better
- make it easier for people from diverse backgrounds to work and volunteer with us
- work together with people from diverse backgrounds.

Message from the Public Advocate



I am proud to welcome you to our Disability Action Plan 2019 - 2022.

These are some of the things we did in our last plan.



- We made it easier for everyone to be able to move around our office.
- We got better at how we communicate with people who find it hard to read or hear or speak.
- We asked people with disability to tell us how they think we can do our work better.
- We did things to make our organisation a good place to work, including for people with disability and mental illness.
- Some people with disability did work experience with us.
- We had Auslan training for our staff.



Human rights

Our Disability Action Plan helps us make sure we do things for **human rights**.

Human rights are the basic rights that all people should have, such as the freedom to say what you think and make choices about your life.

Policy

Our Disability Action Plan also helps us to do things that the Victorian Government says are important.

For example, the Government says people with disability should have more chances to get jobs.





What we will do



Include everyone in what we do



Our goals

We want to make sure that:

- all our staff and volunteers can move around our office
- all visitors can get to our reception and training room when they visit us
- people can get information from us in a way they understand
- we support people's human rights
- we help stop abuse of people with disability.

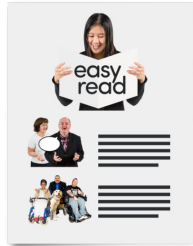


What we will do

These are some of the things we will do.

We will check if it is difficult for people in a wheelchair or who are blind to move around our office, and try to fix any problems.





Information and communication

We will make sure that people can get information from us in different ways.

For example, by phone, mail or email, on our website, or Easy English fact sheets.

We will communicate with people using the communication supports they need.

We will find out what people want

We may need to make a decision for someone because we are their guardian.



If we do this, we will try to make the decision the person wants.

We will try to do this unless the law says we can **not**. For example, because the person would get hurt.

When we **advocate** for someone, we will try to advocate for what they want, unless this means the person will get hurt.

Advocate means we speak in support of a person or with them.



Support people to make decisions

We will support the people we work with to make their own decisions as much as possible.



Learn to do things better



Our goals

We want to make sure that we:

- find out things to help us do our work better
- ask our staff and volunteers what they think
- use the information we get to keep getting better at what we do.

What we will do

These are some of the things we will do.

Ask people with disability who we work with what they think of the work we do.

Ask people close to them what they think of the work we do.





Ask our staff and volunteers to find out:

- how many staff and volunteers have a disability
- if they have the support they need at work.



Have training for our staff about human rights and disability.

Give our volunteers information about human rights in newsletters and on our website.

Have easy ways to make a complaint to us.

Send a copy of our Disability Action Plan to the Australian Human Rights Commission to put on their website.



Make it easier for people with disability to work and volunteer with us



Our goals

We want to make sure:

- we include many different types of people as staff and volunteers so that OPA is like our community
- we learn how to make it easier for people with disability to work and volunteer with us
- people with disability want to work or volunteer at OPA.

What we will do

These are some of the things we will do.

Our job ads will encourage people with disability to apply.

Our volunteer ads will encourage people with disability to apply.



We will try to tell disability groups about jobs at OPA.

We will learn the best ways to encourage people with disability to apply for jobs with us.

If someone tells us they have a disability when they apply for a job with us we will:

- try to give them the chance for an interview if they have the skills for the job
- make sure they have any necessary supports at the interview that they ask for
- after the interview talk to them about how the interview went if they want to know.

When possible, we will support our staff and volunteers who have disability with what they need at work. For example, this may be changes to how they do their work or how their desk is set up.



We will make sure some people with disability have the chance to do unpaid work experience with us.



We will pay people with disability who are guest speakers at our events if they are not already paid by another group.

We will learn from other groups that employ people with **cognitive** disability.

Cognitive disability means a disability such as intellectual disability or acquired brain injury (ABI).

We will think about what jobs at OPA can be good for people with cognitive disability.



We will try to use businesses that give work to people with disability when we can. For example, when we order food.

Work together with people with disability



Our goals

When we tell people about OPA events we will also tell people to let us know if they need extra help.



We will work together with other groups to help people with disability.

What we will do

These are some of the things we will do.

We will let people know about supports we can organise at our community education sessions. For example, interpreters and attendant carers.



We will try to make things better in the community for people with disability. For example, by asking for a law to be changed.



We will find out about other groups that are trying to make things better in the community for people with disability. We will think about ways we can work with them.

When we meet with people with disability, we will make sure they have the support they need to meet with us and tell us their ideas.

We will ask for feedback from people with disability about our Disability Action Plan. This will help us do things better.

We will have a group at OPA to:

- make sure we do the things we say we will do
- help us make our next Disability Action Plan.





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