

VICTORIA POLICE



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Disability Action Plan 2025-2030



The Disability Pride Flag

Disability pride is a global movement that has its origins in disability advocacy against ableism and institutionalisation. It is about accepting and honouring every person's uniqueness and treating disability as a normal part of human diversity, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Disability Pride Flag captures the broad spectrum of different experiences of disability. The black field represents mourning for ableist violence experienced by people with disability, while each of the five colours represents the diversity within disability and experience (physical disabilities, neurodiversity, invisible and undiagnosed disabilities, emotional and psychiatric disabilities, and sensory disabilities). The stripes are parallel to show solidarity across disabilities and standing together.

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Message from the Chief Commissioner

I am excited to launch the Victoria Police Disability Action Plan 2025-2030 (the Plan). This plan builds on the many achievements made through successive previous Victoria Police plans and continues to guide our work on reducing barriers and improving our services for people with disability.



The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disability (the Royal Commission), recommended that police services ‘collaborate with people with disability in the co-design, implementation, and evaluation of strategies to improve police responses to people with disability’.

To prepare this plan, we spoke to almost 300 people, including people with disability, carers, families, advocates, and disability organisations through interviews and surveys. We asked you to tell us what you think the priorities should be to support improving police responses to people with disability.

From these conversations we know that you want us to:

- improve police understanding of disability
- improve the way police communicate with and about people with disability
- ensure our services are accessible
- show that we are an inclusive organisation through our employment practices.

Victoria Police’s vision is a safe Victoria, where everyone is safe and feels safe. This plan sets out how we will achieve this vision for people with disability:

Victoria Police strives to be an inclusive, accessible, and disability confident organisation that supports the safety and human rights of people with disability.

We know that we have a lot of work ahead of us to achieve this objective and that this work will go beyond the life of this plan and its actions. We will continue our work in partnership with the Victoria Police Disability Portfolio Reference Group and most importantly, we will continue to listen to and learn from people with disability.

Mike Bush CNZM
Chief Commissioner, Victoria Police

Message from the Disability Portfolio Reference Group

The Disability Portfolio Reference Group (DPRG) aims to enhance interactions and engagement between Victoria Police, the disability community, and the broader Victorian community. The DPRG brings stakeholder, community, and lived experience perspectives to the review and development of Victoria Police policies, processes, and initiatives.

We work together with the disability community to ensure everyone has equal access to safety, and dignity. This must continue to be a vital part of Victoria Police's commitment to accessibility and inclusion.

Over the life of the *Accessibility Action Plan 2021–2023*, DPRG members provided valuable input and guidance around key actions. This included supporting Victoria Police's Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) program. Individual DRPG members also took part in programs and initiatives to increase the awareness and understanding of disability among senior Victoria Police officers and new recruits.

A refresh of DPRG membership in 2023 saw increased representation of people with lived experience and a number of organisations joined us for the first time. Along with community members with lived experience and Victoria Police employees, the following organisations make up the DPRG:

- Amaze
- Blind Citizens Australia
- Brain Injury Australia
- Different Journeys
- First People's Disability Network
- Inclusive Rainbow Voices
- Office of the Public Advocate
- Spectrum Intersections
- Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability
- Victoria Police Enablers Network
- Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service
- Women with Disabilities Victoria
- Yellow Ladybugs

We are indebted to all members of the DPRG. We acknowledge the significance and impact when people with a disability share their lived experiences to create a more inclusive, accessible, and responsive organisation.

We look forward to working together over the next five years to deliver on the commitments outlined in this plan.

Victoria Police Disability Portfolio Reference Group (DPRG)



Image Description: Victoria Police Disability Portfolio Reference Group members, including Community Co-Chair Suzy Goldsmith.

Back left to right: Natale Cutri, Chris Templin, Superintendent Andrew Markakis APM, Victorian Public Advocate Dan Stubbs, Community Co-Chair Suzy Goldsmith.

Front left to right: Michelle Wilcox, Rochelle Tootell, Michele Semmens.

Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Victorians

Victoria Police respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the country throughout Victoria. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present and continue to recognise and embrace the fact that Aboriginal People are connected to the oldest, continuous culture and history.

Acknowledgement of Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a way of describing overlapping forms of discrimination or disadvantage based on attributes such as age, disability, sexuality, ethnicity, Aboriginality, and religion. This plan seeks to respond meaningfully to intersecting experiences, and not just to look at disability in isolation of the various diverse communities who form part of the broader disability community.

The social model of disability

This plan uses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) definition of disability. The CRPD describes people with disability as people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory differences. When interacting with inaccessible communities and environments, it hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This plan does not focus on any singular experience of disability, however throughout the implementation of the goals and actions we will speak to numerous and specific types of disability and lived experience.

Language used in the Plan

In line with Inclusive Victoria: State disability plan 2022–2027 (Inclusive Victoria), the plan uses person-first language. Person-first language puts the person before their disability, for example, person with disability. Person-first language emphasises a person's right to an identity beyond their disability.

We also know that many people with disability prefer to use identity-first language. This puts a person's disability identity before the person. For example, 'disabled person'. In line with the social model of disability, identity-first language emphasises that it is society that is disabling. The Victorian autism plan: 2023 refresh, was guided by the many autistic and neurodivergent Victorians who said they had a strong preference for identity-first language. For this reason, this plan follows the Victorian plan in using identity-first language when referring to autistic people.

About the Plan

In developing this plan, we considered the policy landscape, including Victorian and Commonwealth law and policies, and the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission. The criminal justice system was an important area of enquiry for the Royal Commission, and this plan considers the outcomes and recommendations closely. For example, what must be done to ensure people with disability have equal and fair access to police services.

This plan performs several functions. Firstly, it fulfils the requirement under s 38 of the *Disability Act 2006* (Vic) to have in place a disability action plan for the purpose of:

- reducing barriers to accessibility
- reducing barriers to employment
- promoting inclusion
- changing community attitudes.

In addition, this plan:

- aligns with our other legal obligations and strategic priorities
- outlines how we will work with people with disability to achieve our vision and objective
- acknowledges the overrepresentation of people with disability at all stages of the criminal justice process, including factors that may result in an increased risk of offending and recidivism
- proactively promotes partnerships with the community to reduce overrepresentation through awareness and education

Inclusive Victoria, the state disability plan's outcomes framework, sets out six systemic areas of reform that seek to make inclusion business as usual for government and government agencies. These reforms are reflected in this plan, including co-designing with people with disability, Aboriginal self-determination, intersectional approaches, accessible communications and universal design, disability confident and inclusive workforces, and effective data and outcomes reporting.

Victoria Police Enablers Network

The Victoria Police Enablers Network is a group of over 100 Victoria Police employees with disability, or who are carers or allies of people with disability. Enablers Network members promote the voice of lived experience in their various workplaces across Victoria Police and advocate for Victoria Police employees with disability and for carers. They help our organisation to learn about and understand how to be a better and more attractive employer for people with disability.

The Enablers Network reminds Victoria Police of our responsibility to the principle of 'nothing about us without us.' Its members are fearless in challenging the organisation where needed to achieve more accessible and inclusive workplace practices and facilities.

The work of the Enablers Network is performed in addition to their usual duties. For this reason, they do not own specific actions for the delivery of the DAP. Through their representation on the DPRG and their promotion throughout each year of a range of awareness raising activities, they are critical partners in the success of the DAP.

The DAP is an important demonstration of Victoria Police's commitment to the rights of people with disability to enjoy equal rights. Victoria Police appreciates the dedication of these employees and their vision for an inclusive, accessible and disability confident organisation.



Our existing commitments

There are a number of activities that are foundational to the accessibility and inclusiveness of our organisation that are now embedded in our business-as-usual work. For this reason, they are not captured as distinct new actions in the plan. These include:

- online accessibility principles embedded into web content development
- universal design, and design for dignity principles embedded into building and facilities planning
- regular participation in disability community events
- use of Independent Third Persons and Auslan interpreters
- celebrating dates of significance relevant to the disability community.

Work already underway

Victoria Police has made considerable progress in the accessibility of our website over the life of the previous plan. We apply accessibility principles and a digital-first approach to all new public facing website tools, content development and publishing requests.

The Victoria Police website aims to meet Level AA of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 where possible.

The Find my local police station tool is available on the Victoria Police website. It includes the contact details and location of any police station in Victoria. A key function of the tool is that it includes the accessibility features of a station in or near your area.

The accessibility support information on the Victoria Police website includes a disability community safety hub, Disability Liaison Officer page, Easy English guides, and a Communication assistance page.

Disability Liaison Officers

Victoria Police launched the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) program in April 2024, as we continued to undertake goals set out in previous Accessibility Action Plans. The launch of the DLO program supports the outcomes of the Disability Royal Commission. The DLO program seeks to reduce barriers and strengthen disability community confidence in police. DLOs work to build the disability confidence of their colleagues and provide support to people with disability in the community to make our services more accessible.

DLOs are in every Police Service Area in Victoria, and in specialist areas including Transit Safety Division and State Highway Patrol.

Undertaken in addition to police core duties, the DLO role has strong links to frontline police and provides a broader leadership and champion role. DLOs are supported in their role by the Disability Portfolio at Victoria Police.

Disability Liaison Officers in action



Image Description:

Victoria Police DLO logo. DLOs often wear the logo on their uniform as a badge. The badge features the disability pride flag.



Image Description: DLOs in uniform standing with person using a wheelchair at a community fundraising event.



Image Description: DLO in uniform giving a child in a school uniform a high-five during a primary school visit.

Where the Plan fits

This plan is aligned with our obligations under international, national, state legal frameworks, and external and internal strategies (Figure 1).

Figure 1: International, national, state and local context of the Victoria Police Disability Action Plan.



International

United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)



National

Australia's Disability Strategy (2021-2031)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

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



State

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Disability Act 2006

Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan 2022–2027



Victoria Police

Victoria Police Disability Action Plan 2025–2030

Victoria Police Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2023-2030

In 2023, Victoria Police launched its Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2023–2030, the aim of which is to support our employees to reach their full potential without discrimination or barriers. We also have Equal, Safe and Strong: Victoria Police Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2030. We refer to these as Strategic Frameworks.

The Frameworks are underpinned by the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025–2027 (GEDI) which articulates Victoria Police’s compliance with the *Disability Act 2006*, to reduce barriers to people with disability obtaining and maintaining employment.

The GEDI drives work towards implementing the goals articulated in the Frameworks.

The Frameworks reaffirm the Victoria Police commitment to creating a workplace that is safe and inclusive of all our people.

This plan is aligned with the Frameworks and the GEDI with shared objectives focused on safety and inclusion for both the community and our workforce. (Figure 2).

Figure two: Victoria Police strategic context of the Victoria Police Disability Action Plan.



How we developed the Plan

We developed this plan in consultation with people with disability, community organisations, and the DPRG.

We asked people across Victoria to tell us what Victoria Police needs to do to improve our services to people with disability.

These conversations started in early 2024 and over four-months we:

- undertook over forty one-on-one consultations with a range of people
- ran a public survey on the Engage Victoria website, receiving 181 responses
- commissioned a targeted consultation by Amaze, with the autism community, which included a survey and interviews involving a combined total of 64 people.

You can see the full list of organisations that contributed on page 19. A summary of the Consultation Report is available on the [Engage Victoria](#) website.

Four key themes emerged from the consultation activities:

- Education
- Communication
- Accessibility
- Inclusion

These four themes set the foundation for the development of the goals and actions in this plan.

In conjunction with the DPRG we also undertook a Lessons Learned Review of our previous plan, the *Accessibility Action Plan 2021-2023*, ensuring we were learning from and building on experience.

We worked with the DPRG when developing this plan including its vision, goals, monitoring and accountability. DPRG members took part in, and in some cases ran their own, consultation activities.

This plan is our blueprint for continuing to become a more inclusive, accessible, and disability confident organisation.

Victoria Police Disability Action Plan 2025-2030: goals and actions

Objective:

Victoria Police strives to be an inclusive, accessible, and disability confident organisation that supports the safety and human rights of people with disability.

DAP 2025-2030 Action	Inclusive Victoria State disability 2022-2027 systemic reform alignment	A Safe Victoria, Victoria Police strategy alignment
Goal One: Victoria Police members are disability confident		
<p>1.1. Work with people with disability to co-design and develop education and training resources for police that improves workforce understanding of disability. This includes general resources, in addition to content specific to neurodiversity and acquired brain injury.</p>	<p>Co-design with people with disability</p> <p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Principles: Prevention mindset</p> <p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p>
<p>1.2. Increase engagement with people with disability to build trust and confidence in their interactions with police.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Build trust and confidence</p>
<p>1.3. Embed accessibility considerations into the Education Design Process to ensure consideration is given to including disability content in training scenarios.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p>
<p>1.4. Develop collaboration and information sharing arrangements with relevant safeguarding bodies. This will include frontline capability uplift to support the safety of people with disability using disability services.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Operating Model: Community first</p> <p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p>

<p>1.5. Rollout and promotion of the updated Voluntary Disclosure Process.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Principles: Prevention mindset</p> <p>Our Principles: Intelligence informed</p>
<p>Goal Two: Victoria Police services are accessible</p>		
<p>2.1. Work with people with disability to identify accessibility gaps in police services and information.</p>	<p>Accessible communication and universal design</p> <p>Co-design with people with disability</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Build trust and confidence</p> <p>Our Priorities: Reduce crime and harm</p>
<p>2.2. Continue to maintain Police Station Locator tool data to enable accessible public facing information.</p>	<p>Accessible communication and universal design</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Build trust and confidence</p>
<p>Goal Three: Victoria Police members are proactive when supporting people with disability and they have the right skills and resources</p>		
<p>3.1. Ensure disability awareness training and education within the Police Foundation Training Program remains current.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p> <p>Our Principles: Leadership at every level</p>
<p>3.2. Promote education and training resources to employees working on public transport networks to increase awareness and knowledge of disability and accessibility supports.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p> <p>Accessible communication and universal design</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p> <p>Our Principles: Leadership at every level</p>
<p>3.3. Provide and promote communication resources and supports to all 24-hour police stations to reduce communication barriers between police and people with disability.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Build trust and confidence</p> <p>Our Priorities: Enable our People</p>

<p>3.4. Strengthen the governance of the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) program to ensure longevity, sustainability, outcomes, and increased proactive community engagement activities.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Build trust and confidence</p> <p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p> <p>Our Principles: Leadership at every level</p> <p>Our Principles: Victim Focus</p>
<p>3.5. Technical support will be provided on the implementation of the Disability Action Plan.</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p> <p>Our Principles: Intelligence informed</p>
<p>Goal Four: Victoria Police is an inclusive and accessible employer</p>		
<p>4.1. Deliver all actions and commitments in the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2027 (GEDI).</p>	<p>Disability confident and inclusive workforces</p>	<p>Our Priorities: Enable our people</p>

How will we know the Plan is working

We will be evaluating success of this plan by using an outcomes framework. We will know the actions are impactful, as we will measure the outcomes each action is linked to. We will create and maintain an outcomes framework that will tell us what success looks like.

The outcomes framework structure will be set out like this:

Example Action	Example Outcome	Example Measure	Example Indicator
<p>1.2. Increase engagement with people with disability to build trust and confidence in their interactions with police.</p>	<p>People with disability can access exceptional police services when and where they need them</p>	<p>Reducing barriers to accessing police services</p>	<p>Proportion of people with disability who report they have found it hard to access police services (Victoria Police Disability Action Plan Consultation Survey)</p>

Disability Action Plan Committee

The Disability Action Plan (DAP) Committee is made up of employees across all Victoria Police regions, departments, and commands. The DAP Committee supports the delivery of the goals within the plan, in addition to providing a strategic governance structure to ensure accountability. DAP Committee representatives will provide Executive Director or Assistant Commissioner level endorsed updates against actions they own within bi-annual reporting mechanisms.

Reporting

We will report on the progress of the plan every six months to the Victoria Police Executive Leadership Board, DPRG, and to the DAP Committee. We will report outcomes of the plan annually in the Victoria Police Annual Report.

Progress from this plan will inform our contribution to whole of Government progress reports on the implementation of Inclusive Victoria, State Disability Plan.

Acknowledgement

Victoria Police is grateful to the many Victoria Police and community allies, groups, and organisations that support and share our vision and objectives and have contributed to the successful development of this plan. We would particularly like to acknowledge the work of the Law Enforcement Torch Run Victoria. The Law Enforcement Torch Run Victoria is an organisation that includes many Victoria Police employees. Through a partnership with Special Olympics Australia, they champion acceptance and inclusion for athletes with disability.



List of contributors

We would like to acknowledge the support of the Disability Portfolio Reference Group. The individuals and organisations that make up the DPRG help us build a strong connection to the disability community. The DPRG reflects the lived experience of people with disability and their support networks. Their willingness to share their experience is critical to us becoming more inclusive and accessible.

Thank you to the Victorian community for taking part in the Community Consultation via the Engage Victoria platform.

Victoria Police would also like to thank individuals from the following organisations who took the time to share their thoughts and experiences with us through attending one-on-one consultations.

Amaze	Department of Premier and Cabinet
Aspergers Victoria	- Accessible Communication
Australian Community Support Organisation	Department of Transport
Brain Injury Australia	Different Journeys
Blind Citizens Australia	Expression Australia
Carers Victoria	Family Safety Victoria
Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare	Leadership Plus
Centre for Non-Violence	National Ethnic Disability Alliance
City of Monash	NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
Disability Advocacy Resource Unit	Office of the Public Advocate
Deaf Victoria	Office for Disability
Dementia Australia	Queer Space
Department of Families Fairness and Housing - East Division Community Partnership	Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre
Department of Families Fairness and Housing - Forensic Disability Services	Soundfair
Department of Families Fairness and Housing - West (Barwon) Community Partnerships	Turning Point
Department of Justice and Community Safety - Office of the Victorian Senior Practitioner	Victoria Police Aboriginal Portfolio Reference Group
Department of Justice and Community Safety - Intermediaries	Victoria Police Enablers Network
Department of Justice and Community Safety - NDIS, Disability and Justice Interface	Victoria Police Multicultural Portfolio Reference Group
	Victoria Police Senior Victorians Portfolio Reference Group
	Victoria Police e-Referral (VPeR) Portfolio Reference Group
	Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability
	Victorian Disability Advisory Council
	Yellow Ladybugs



Image Description: Dan Stubbs, Victorian Public Advocate with Champ the therapy dog at the 2025 Office of the Public Advocate Awards. Champ has been generously provided to Victoria Police by K9 Support.

Glossary

Term/abbreviation	What is means in the plan
AAP	Accessibility Action Plan
CPRD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
DAP	Disability Action Plan
DLO	Disability Liaison Officer
DPRG	Disability Portfolio Reference Group
GEDI	Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
Inclusive Victoria	Inclusive Victoria State Action Plan 2022-2027
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
Disability Royal Commission	The Royas Commission into the Abuse, Violence, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
VPeR	Victoria Police e-Referrals

Glossary

Term/ abbreviation	What is means in the plan
Accessibility	The extent to which people with disability can access something like an office, worksite or public area
Co-design	The process of involving people with disability in designing, delivering and evaluating a policy, program, product or service
Discrimination	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, or disability
Identity-first language	Identity-first language puts a person’s disability identity before the person. For example, ‘disabled person’
Intersectionality	A way of describing overlapping forms of discrimination or disadvantage based on attributes such as age, disability, sexuality, ethnicity, Aboriginality, and religion
Person-first language	Person-first language puts the person before their disability, for example, person with disability
Systemic reform	These are areas of focus with Inclusive Victoria that help the Victorian Government work differently to deliver inclusion and access and uphold rights
The Disability Act 2006	Legislation that provides a whole-of-Victorian-government and community response to the rights and needs of people with disability
Universal Design	Making spaces, policies and programs that are inclusive and accessible so they can be used independently by everyone
Objectives	What we hope will happen if the actions in this plan do what they are meant to do



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