

Summary of Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan – midway report 2022–2024

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Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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ISBN 978-1-76130-736-2 (online/PDF/Word)

Available at [Inclusive Victoria state disability plan: midway report 2022-2024](https://www.vic.gov.au/state-disability-plan-midway-report) https://www.vic.gov.au/state-disability-plan-midway-report

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# About the midway report

**Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan 2022–2026** is a 4-year plan. It covers the whole Victorian Government.

It sets out what the Victorian Government will do to improve the lives of people with disability. It aims to create an inclusive and accessible community.

In **Inclusive Victoria**, we said we would review our progress after 2 years.

This document summarises our achievements from 2022 to 2024.

## Progress on actions

Inclusive Victoria included a total of 175 actions under 4 outcome pillars.

| Pillar | Number of actions |
| --- | --- |
| Inclusive communities | 31 actions |
| Health, housing and wellbeing | 48 actions |
| Fairness and safety | 49 actions |
| Opportunity and pride | 47 actions |

The midway report shows that of these 175 actions:

* we have completed 28 actions
* we are on track to complete a further 139 by 2026
* we still need to progress 8 actions.

The midway report also includes 11 new actions.

We will release a final report on **Inclusive Victoria** in 2026.

## Disability reform context

Governments across Australia are working to reform the disability sector.

This includes responding to the recommendations of the:

* Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
* Independent Review into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

## Refresh of the outcomes framework

We are also reviewing the outcomes framework for the state disability plan.

Outcomes are the goals that people with disability want to achieve.

The outcomes framework sets out how we will tell if we are meeting these goals.

It uses data to show how our work is improving the lives of people with disability.

We first developed an outcomes framework under the previous state disability plan.

The midway report also looks at the refreshed outcomes framework.

This shows us how our work is changing the lives of people with disability. It includes both positive achievements and setbacks.

# Progress of actions by pillar

## Pillar 1: Inclusive Communities – 31 actions

* 4 actions completed
* 26 actions are on track
* 1 action yet to progress

### Community attitudes – 5 actions

We worked with people with disability to design campaigns. These campaigns aim to change people’s ideas about disability.

### Transport – 8 actions

Department of Transport employed a Chief Accessibility Advocate.

The department is expanding the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program so wheelchair accessible transport is available to more people with disability.

It is also planning new accessible trams and tram stops.

### Digital inclusion – 3 actions

### We are making sure people with disability have access to good digital networks. This includes people living in regional areas.

### Assistance animals – 2 actions

We are working with other states and territories to develop national guidelines. These guidelines will ensure Australia has a consistent approach to assistance animals.

### Sport and recreation – 3 actions

Sport and Recreation Victoria supported people with disability to get involved in sport. This included programs for women with disability.

### Parks and tourism – 10 actions

Parks Victoria designed nature-based programs and infrastructure with people with disability.

Visit Victoria is working with people with disability. It aims to make tourism more accessible.

## Pillar 2: Health, housing and wellbeing – 48 actions

* 10 actions completed
* 32 actions on track
* 6 actions yet to progress

### Health – 12 actions

Hospital and health services are working with people with disability and the sector. This work aims to improve health outcomes for people with disability.

### Mental health – 3 actions

We established Victoria’s Mental Health System Diverse Community Working Group.

We also provided 3 years of funding for mental health interface programs. These programs work with consumers, mental health inpatient services and the NDIS.

### Housing – 14 actions

New social housing developments now incorporate best practice universal design principles.

This means houses and apartments will meet high standards. These include the Liveable Housing Design, Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) Standard.

Since December 2022, we have upgraded and improved specialist disability accommodation properties. This includes 450 government-owned properties. These properties provide homes for 1,800 people with disability.

### Supporting a high-quality NDIS – 11 actions

We are working with the Commonwealth, states and territories to support the NDIS.

Some people with disability are not eligible for the NDIS. We will continue to fund programs and supports for these people.

### Children and families – 8 actions

We improved access to therapeutic supports for young people in residential care.

We also improved health assessments and management plans for young people in residential care. This was part of the statewide rollout of the Pathway to Good Health program.

## Pillar 3: Fairness and safety – 49 actions

* 10 actions completed
* 38 actions on track
* 1 action yet to progress

### Safety in emergencies – 5 actions

Emergency Recovery Victoria worked with people with disability, their families and experts. This work made sure we include people with disability when we plan for emergencies.

### Disability advocacy – 6 actions

We are designing the **Victorian Disability Advocacy Program outcomes framework**. We are doing this with agencies from the disability advocacy sector.

### Preventing abuse and neglect – 9 actions

The Victorian Government introduced new laws that came into effect on 1 July 2024. These laws protect people with disability from harm and neglect.

### Family and sexual violence – 8 actions

The family and sexual violence sector worked with people with disability to make sure their workforce, programs and supports are better for people with disability.

The sector is also improving accommodation and housing. This will support people with disability who need help because of family violence.

### Justice system – 19 actions

The justice system delivered programs for people with disability.

This includes programs to help people with disability when they talk to the police or go to court.

### Right to expression of sexuality and gender identity – 2 actions

We established an LGBTIQA+ Disability Inclusion Expert Advisory Group. This group co-designs and develops policies with people with disability.

It aims to ensure people with disability can connect and live well. It includes people living in supported accommodation.

## Pillar 4: Opportunity and pride – 47 actions

* 4 actions completed
* 43 actions on track

### Education – 17 actions

We are helping teachers better support students with disability. This includes programs that boost teachers’ confidence when working with students with disability.

We did this work together with people with disability and peak agencies.

We are also implementing universal design approaches. These will improve education, wellbeing and participation for students with disability.

The Disability Inclusion program provides a new model to support students with disability. The model uses strengths-based funding and support. We started rolling out the program in 2021. We will finish in 2025.

Schools use Disability Inclusion funding to recruit and train staff. This funding also buys and upgrades resources.

In the jobs, skills and training sector, we have:

* provided $36 million for The Gordon’s Centre for Excellence for Disability Inclusion to support people with disability in the TAFE network
* the Hard-to-Reach program which provides skills and training to help people with disabilities get a job
* included courses such as Auslan in the Skills First Training Needs list.

### Employment and economic participation – 12 actions

We developed job programs and campaigns with people with disability. This work aims to attract people with disability into jobs within government.

### Voice and leadership – 10 actions

We are working with the disability sector to develop leadership programs. These programs will help young people with disability to take on leadership roles.

We are also training people with disability to be Democracy Ambassadors. Democracy Ambassadors talk to schools and community groups about voting in elections.

### Creative industries – 4 actions

We have a plan to support artists with disability.

We have also designed the **Creative space design guides.** These guides tell people how to design and build accessible creative spaces.

### Pride and recognition – 4 actions

We use new rules when we ask for nominations for awards for people with disability. These rules are disability friendly and best practice.

# Systemic reforms

We are making positive changes to policies, programs and services. We want these changes to be part of bigger processes and systems across the government.

These systemic reforms will support **Inclusive Victoria**’s goal. They will build a fairer and more inclusive community for people with disability.

The 6 systemic reforms are:

1. **Co-design with people with disability.** We work with people with disability when we design policies, programs and services.
2. **Aboriginal self-determination.** Aboriginal people have a say in decisions that affect them. They are free pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
3. **Intersectional approaches.** People can face discrimination and disadvantage for more than one reason. This can include disability, gender or cultural background, for example. These overlapping challenges make life even harder for some people with disability. We work to address these forms of disadvantage to make things fairer for everyone.
4. **Accessible communication and universal design.** We are developing whole-of-government strategies and approaches to:

* meet the communication needs of people with disability
* make spaces, policies and programs that are inclusive and accessible.

1. **Disability confident and inclusive workforce.** We are making the workforce more diverse. We are also building capability around inclusive service delivery.
2. **Effective data and outcomes reporting.** We are making it easier to collect and report information. This will help us create better policies and programs.

## Overview of progress against the systemic reforms

### Co-design with people with disability

Co-design is when people with disability help us create policy, systems and processes.

Several departments have committees and networks of people with lived experience. These groups share their knowledge and experiences. This helps us create better programs.

We use co-design in disability employment. We use it in inclusive sports and recreation. Co-design has also helped increased the accessibility of outdoor areas.

### Aboriginal self-determination

Sport and Recreation Victoria developed a pilot program. It involves First Peoples with disability in policy and program design.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing developed jobs and skills campaigns. These campaigns aim to attract First Peoples with disability. The department also uses scholarship programs.

The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions developed *First Peoples First*. This 4-year strategy promotes cultural equity.

### Intersectional approaches

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing established an advisory group. This group is the LGBTIQA+ disability inclusion expert advisory group. The group co-designs inclusive policies. It also provides advice to inform government decisions.

The department also invested in programs in rural and regional Victoria. These programs improve education and employment outcomes for young people.

The Department of Government Services undertook research in digital inclusion. This work identified vulnerable populations. It will guide future policy.

The Department of Health worked with women’s health organisations. It invested in health promotion activities for women with disability.

### Accessible communication and universal design

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing ran grant programs. These provide grants for building and upgrading accessible infrastructure. This included the Changing Places and Universal Design Grant rounds.

From July 2021 to June 2025, the department provided funding for 2 senior roles. These roles are responsible for accessible communication. One role is in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The other is in Emergency Management Victoria.

### Disability-confident and inclusive workforce

The Victorian Public Sector Commission ran workforce programs. These aimed to build a disability-confident and inclusive public sector.

This included a mentoring program for public sector employees with disability.

It also included a mentoring program for emerging leaders with disability. This was part of the Leading Together program. It supports a Neurodiverse Confident Services panel.

### Effective data and outcomes reporting

We collect information as part of the National Disability Data Asset. This national project brings together information from different government agencies. It helps us understand the differences between Australians with disability and without disability.

Victoria Police collects data on the Independent Third Person Program. This will improve how the program supports people with disabilities during police interviews.

The Department of Education has a new data project. This project collects data on children in kindergarten who have developmental concerns.

The Victorian Public Sector Commission collects data. This includes data about people with disability employed in the Victorian public service. In 2023, 8.5% of the Victorian public service said they have a disability.

# **State disability plan outcomes framework**

We engaged Melbourne Disability Institute (MDI) to review the outcomes framework.

The outcomes framework measures progress towards our outcomes. The first framework was part of the previous state disability plan.

The outcomes framework consists of outcomes, indicators and measures:

* Outcomes are goals that people with disability want to achieve. For example, this might include good physical health.
* Indicators assess the positive change we want to see for each outcome. For example, ‘people with disability report improved physical health’.
* Measures use data to see whether the indicators have changed.

### Refreshed outcomes framework

MDI found a strong overlap between the outcomes for the previous plan and the current plan.

However, there are too many indicators and measures.

MDI worked with the Victorian Disability Advisory Council to simplify the outcomes framework.

They selected 19 headline indicators and 28 associated measures.

### Midway outcomes report

MDI produced a midway outcomes report. This shows the results of the outcomes framework using public data.

The outcomes report looks at progress for people with disability. It also examines the gap between people with disability and people without disability.

The results show improved outcomes for people with disability in some areas. This includes the number of people with disability studying for a qualification. It also includes job satisfaction.

There is still a gap between people with disability and people without disability. However, this gap has narrowed.

The results also show where outcomes for people with disability have not improved. This includes areas such as food insecurity.

For example, in 2018 people with disability were 3.2 times more likely to go without meals because of a lack of money. This increased to 4.3 times more likely in 2022.

We will continue to work with people with disability and Victorian government departments. We want to get better at measuring our progress to improve the lives of people with disability.