

Disability Employment Plan 2019 - 2022

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Introduction

The Department is pleased to present the Disability Employment Plan (the Plan) for its Victorian Public Service workforce.

This Plan signals the Department’s commitment to boosting employment opportunities and career experiences for people with disability. It includes a range of actions that will set stronger foundations through policy, procedures and processes that will remove barriers and ensure increased inclusion across our corporate and school workplaces. In addition it includes specific actions within corporate workplaces that aim to enhance opportunities and experiences, and trial approaches that can be considered for scaling up across all workplaces in the future.

Although the Department has a long history of supporting employees with disability, it recognises that there is more that it can do. This Plan sets out:

- actions the Department will do together with other departments to implement the Victorian Public Sector Disability Employment Action Plan 2018-2025– [Getting to Work](#)
- additional actions the Department will take to boost employment opportunities and experiences within the Department
- a plan to set us on the right path to achieving the employment targets set by the Victorian economic participation plan for people with disability 2018-2020 – [Every opportunity](#)

Context

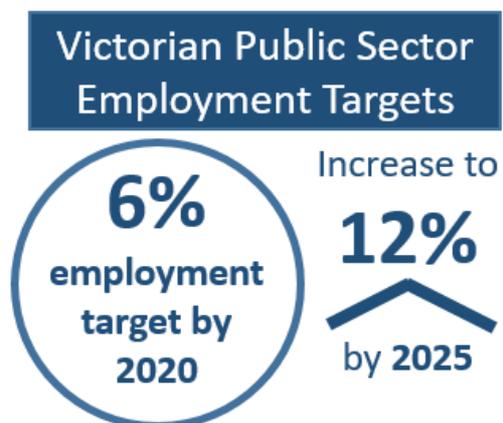
Every Opportunity, the Victorian economic participation plan that emerged from the State Disability Plan commits to specifically bring about change so that people with disability in Victoria have more opportunity to contribute to the Victorian economy.

People with disability can and want to work, yet they face barriers and discrimination, which leaves them significantly underrepresented in the workplace. This means the Victorian economy – including the Victorian government - misses out on the talent and experience that people with disability bring to the workforce.

As well as attracting new employees to public service roles, the Department wants to ensure that our existing employees with disability are able to be engaged and experience opportunities to perform at their best and reach their potential.

Every Opportunity sets public service employment targets to boost the employment opportunities for people with disability, with the Victorian Government to lead the way. The targets for the Victorian government departments and Victoria Police are to boost the representation of employees with disability to six per cent by 2020 and 12 per cent by 2025.

The Department is committed to supporting the achievement of these employment targets and has been working with its government colleagues and the Victorian Public Sector Commission to develop the Public Sector Disability Employment Action Plan, called *Getting to Work*. This outlines specific actions that will be taken at a whole-of-government level initially focusing on boosting employment of people with disability in the Victorian public service (VPS).



The Plan complements the whole-of-government actions with additional actions to address Departments specific employment opportunities and to respond to its specific employee needs. To meet the VPS employment targets, the Department will need to increase the numbers of VPS employees with disability by 82 by 2020, and then increase by a further 225 by 2025. Currently the Department’s ability to capture information about our employees with disability is limited by system and cultural barriers.

The initiatives outlined in this Plan aim to address systemic and cultural barriers, including attitudinal and environmental factors, and build employee confidence to ensure they feel safe to share information about

their disability information and that specific actions to reduce barriers mean that all staff are supported to perform at their best.

The Department's Disability Employment Plan forms a part of the Department's VPS Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy's annual work plan. This assists the Department in creating safe and inclusive workplaces, one of the objectives of the Investing in our People Strategy. This strategic connection is presented in the figure below.

Percentage of DET respondents who identified as having a disability in the 2018 People Matter Survey compared to the broader Victorian Public Sector and the Victorian Labour Force.

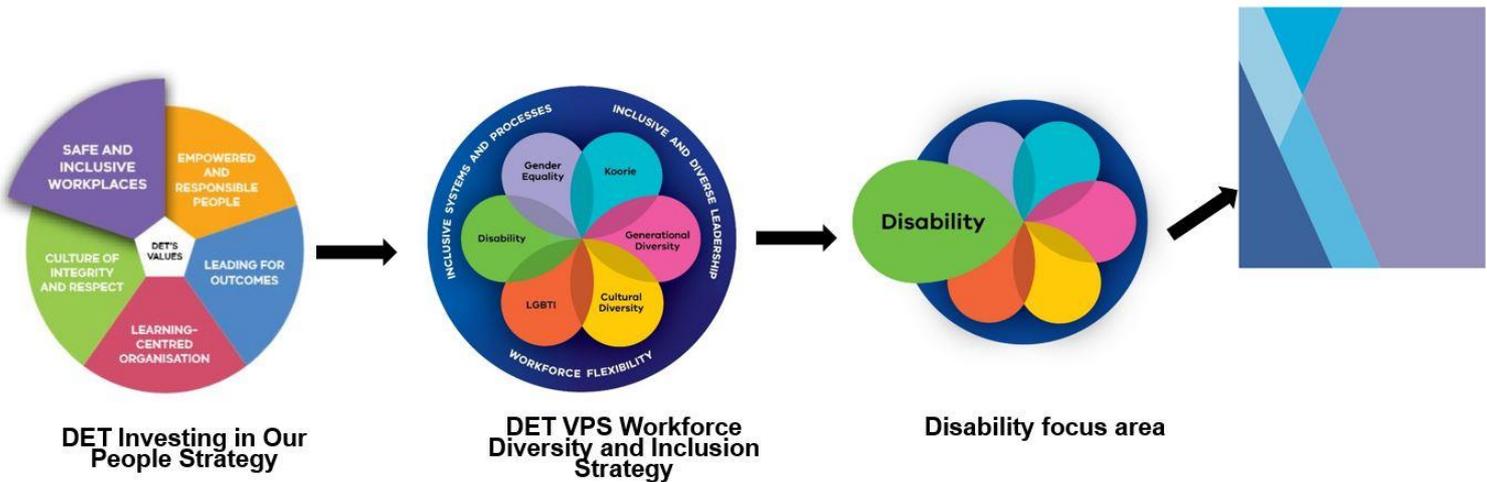
DET	VICTORIAN PUBLIC SECTOR	VICTORIAN LABOUR FORCE
3%	3%	5.7%

The strategic connection

Whole-of-government strategies



Department strategies



Our vision

The purpose of this Plan is to clearly set out the work that will be undertaken to improve the overall representation and meaningful employment of employees with disability across the Department's corporate workforces, across all VPS classification levels (including executive levels), work groups and locations. The Department has a role and a responsibility to encourage and provide employment opportunities for people with disability, and build awareness that our work will benefit from diverse contributions and perspectives. Our focus on this contributes to Victoria being a fairer place and a society that values diversity of all kinds. The Plan will support all levels of the Department to address barriers, reduce stigma and promote positive messages through its action.

This Plan is not just about improving workforce representation—to measure the proportion of employees who share disability information to meet targets—it is also about inclusion. Fostering inclusion means that employees with disability feel valued and have a sense of belonging, are treated fairly, are respected and receive the same opportunities for employment and advancement. As a result of the actions in this Plan, people with disability will:

- feel confident and safe to speak up, make workplace adjustment requests, feel trusted and have trust in the organisation
- encounter fewer barriers that they need to overcome, whether this be in the physical work environment, barriers with systems and processes, or barriers related to attitudes and behaviours. All individuals' uniqueness will be appreciated and will be valued and integral to all teams
- be able to ask for what they need and be able to work in the way that best suits them to build a satisfying career using the breadth of their skills, knowledge and experience.
- see people with disability represented at all levels, our systems and work environments will be easily adaptable for different approaches to work and will encourage innovation and creativity
- witness their colleagues learning about disability and become more confident, thereby reducing stigmas and stereotypes. The Department will use more inclusive language and value all abilities.

Roadmap to reaching our vision

The roadmap identifies the actions specific to the Department, including actions that we are committed to in **Getting to Work**. It highlights the need to sequence actions over time to ensure change is cascaded, allowing a strong foundation to be built, and for change to be effectively embedded and sustainable.

Our Objectives

1. Create a workplace culture that is disability confident and inclusive
2. Attract, recruit, retain and support people with disability
3. Ensure policies and procedures are inclusive
4. Build a strong evidence base to track progress and inform change

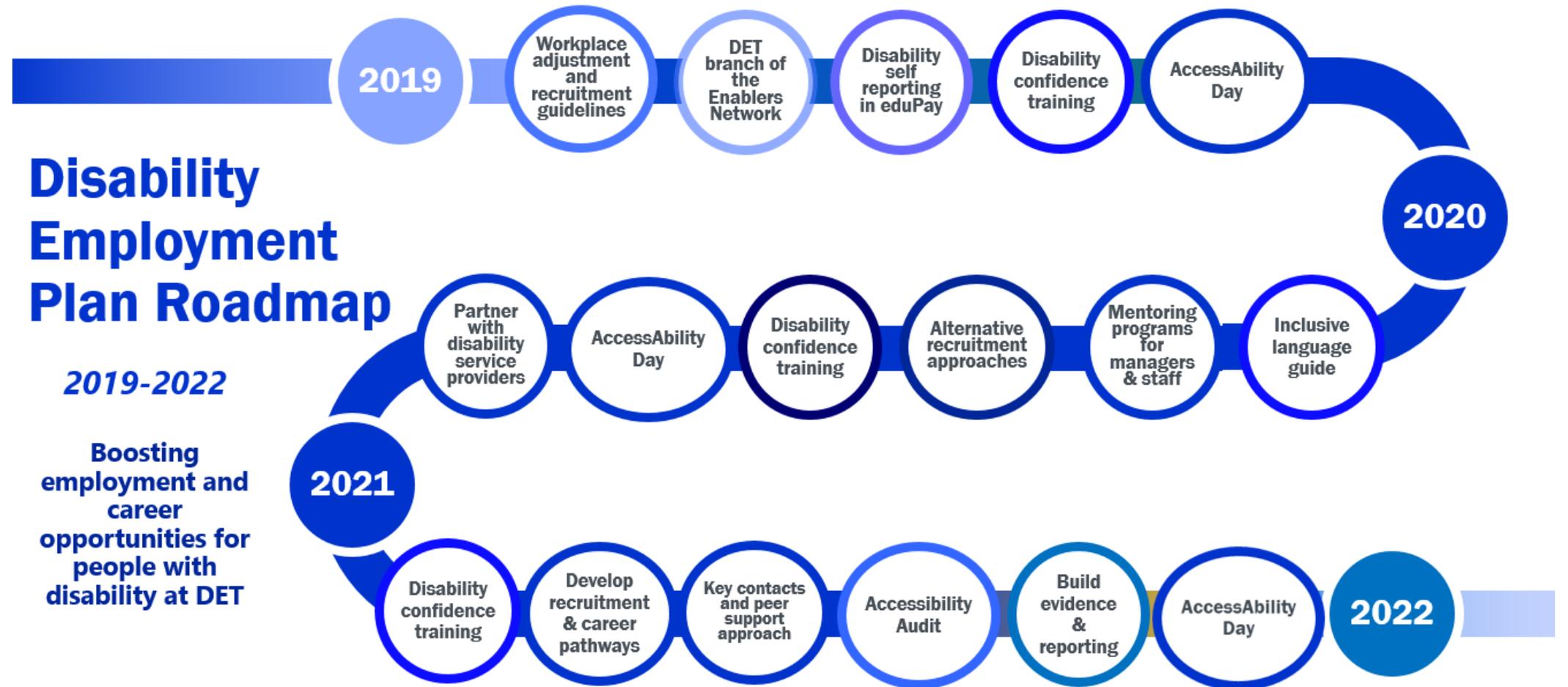
To ensure change is sustainable, work to meet these objectives will be sequenced across the life of the Plan.

This will help build strong foundations, enhanced capabilities and behaviors, improved practices and effectively embed the changes to ensure sustainability.

Disability Employment Plan Roadmap

2019-2022

Boosting employment and career opportunities for people with disability at DET



OBJECTIVE 1: CREATE A WORKPLACE CULTURE THAT IS DISABILITY CONFIDENT AND INCLUSIVE

A **disability confident** organisation is an organisation that puts policies into practice to ensure people with disability are included. Managers in a disability confident organisation know it is important to their business to employ people with disability. They have plans to ensure a diverse workplace.

Managers and staff in a **disability confident** organisation understand disability. They have identified ways to address barriers to employment, performance, and promotion for people with disability. (APSC)¹

Becoming more disability confident includes organisational plans to remove barriers to employment and career development for people with disability, provision of flexible work arrangements and processes for workplace adjustments. As a result our workplaces will be supportive, positive and inclusive environments for employees with disability, and will be free from disability discrimination and barriers.

The Department is committed to our employees feeling valued and included and will actively promote the achievements of people with disability across our organisation.

No	Actions	Getting to work Action	When
1.1	Improve disability confidence by rolling out disability awareness training. This will include targeted sessions for people managers and executives	Action 7	By Dec 2019
1.2	Develop and share resources for all staff on how to implement inclusive practices to reduce barriers for employees with disability	Actions 6 and 9	By Jun 2020
1.3	Develop and support the DET branch of the VPS Enablers Network	Action 8	By Aug 2019
1.4	Work with the DET Enablers Network to implement a peer support approach for employees with disability	Action 8	Jun 2021
1.5	Develop the approach and implement key contacts who can guide and advise managers and individuals on disability employment related matters including workplace adjustments	Action 3	Dec 2021
1.6	Implement the Department's actions under the Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter		Ongoing
1.7	Promote inclusive behaviors and challenge negative stereotypes by sharing lived experience stories through Department communication channels	Actions 5 and 14	Annually
1.8	Promote the Department's accessibility guidelines		By Dec 2019

Measures for success

- Year on year increase in the perception that the Department is inclusive for people with disability in the People Matter Survey
- DET Branch of the Enablers Network established

¹ <https://www.apsc.gov.au/tips-disability-confident-recruitment>

OBJECTIVE 2: ATTRACT, RECRUIT, RETAIN AND SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

The Department is committed to increasing the representation of people with disability in our workforce. Using a range of employment pathways and services will help us achieve this. We will do better to support employees with disability to reach their potential and have meaningful careers and retain them. This will equip hiring managers with the right information to make inclusive decisions and enable the reduction in barriers for new employees so that they are supported to build a career at the Department.

No	Actions	Getting to work Action	When
2.1	Develop and implement an inclusive recruitment checklist for hiring managers	Action 7	Aug 2019
2.2	Explore and scope a partnership with disability employment service providers to review recruitment models for candidates who require alternative recruitment process	Action 12	Jan 2020
2.3	Engage/partner with an external agency to increase the diversity of the candidate pool for DET roles	Action 12	By Jun 2020
2.4	Work with the VPSC and other government departments to scope new recruitment models for candidates who require alternative methods of assessment (for example RecruitAbility, fast track to interview, work experience, role matching)	Action 11	By Jun 2020
2.5	Ensure our Employee Assistance Program provider is disability confident	Action 21	By Dec 2020
2.6	Provide a mentoring program for managers of people with disability through the Department's mentoring approach and explore mentoring options for employees with disability with the DET branch of the Enablers Network	Action 18	By Dec 2020
2.7	Work with Victorian Public Sector Commission to investigate other employment program options including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Government Graduate Program Youth Employment Scheme (YES) to promote entry level roles Stepping into and RISE programs 	Actions 15 and 16	By Jan 2021
2.8	Implement career pathways for people with disability through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> career development opportunities leadership development and progression to senior roles 	Action 17	By Dec 2021
2.9	Participate in AccessAbility Day	Action 11	November each year

Measures for success

- Increase the number of employees identifying that they have a disability in the People Matter Survey by at least 1.5 per cent per year
- Improvement in the People Matter Survey results on the perception of disability is not a barrier to success at DET

OBJECTIVE 3: ENSURE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE INCLUSIVE

Getting the foundations right is an important first step. These actions ensure that guidance to employees about inclusive practices for people with disability are current and practical and we can maximise opportunities. This includes providing resources and information in a variety of forms that address the situations that teams, managers and employees encounter to help them navigate these and implement good practices.

No	Actions	Getting to work Action	When
3.1	Refresh and release the DET workplace adjustment guidelines	Action 10	By Aug 2019
3.2	Review and update standardised information about supporting employees with disability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in job advertisements • in position descriptions • offer position descriptions in accessible formats 	Action 10	By Aug 2019
3.3	Review and refresh the disability related fields in the new starters and recruitment request forms	Action 10	By Dec 2019
3.4	Work with the Victorian Public Sector Commission to pilot the workplace adjustments passport	Action 19	Dec 2020
3.5	Review and refresh current recruitment and selection policies to ensure disability inclusive practices	Action 10	By Dec 2019
3.6	Develop inclusive language in the workplace guide and promote its use in policies and procedures	Action 5	Jun 2020
3.7	Develop guidance about inclusive and accessible approaches for all Department communications	Action 5	Dec 2020
3.8	Include information in the Corporate Accommodation and Facilities policies and guidelines about disability inclusive environments to build out barriers for people with disability		Jan 2021
3.9	Implement the Social Procurement Framework to promote employment of people with disability		2019 - 2020

Measures for success

- Release of the refreshed workplace adjustment guidelines and other HR forms and policies.
- Pilot of Workplace Adjustment passport

OBJECTIVE 4: BUILD A STRONG EVIDENCE BASE TO TRACK PROGRESS AND INFORM CHANGE

Understanding the data that is available, and continuously improving the data systems that assist the Department to capture and report on progress, are important factors in identifying where actions are working and where more actions are needed.

Reporting on disability employment, recruitment and retention performance is important to ensure that we are responding where barriers or lack of inclusion are identified as issues and to track the Department's progress against the employment targets. Improving the information about why data is collected and who would have access to it is critical in increasing reporting. Strong evidence will drive actions to continuously improving our workplace culture, practices and removing barriers for employees with disability.

No	Actions	Getting to work Action	When
4.1	Develop and implement an option in eduPay for employees to self-select as a person with disability	Action 1	By Sept 2019
4.2	Utilise available data to understand more about workplace adjustments		By Jun 2020
4.3	Report on the proportion of employees with disability through the annual workforce collection	Action 1	By Jul 2020
4.4	Monitor and report the delivery of this Plan's actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DET's leadership through the Investing in Our People Strategy reporting framework• The Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Working Group• The DET Branch of the Enablers Network	Action 4	Bi-annually
4.5	Conduct an accessibility audit for all DET (or leased) buildings, facilities and equipment to reduce accessibility barriers		By Jun 2022
4.6	Use the audit results to inform the enhancement of facilities based on universal design principles		By Dec 2022

Measures for success

- Implement the option for employees to self-select as a person with disability in eduPay
- Increase the number of employees agreeing that 'Disability is not a barrier to success' in the People Matter Survey

Contact us

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To find out more go to search HRWeb - [Diversity and Inclusion](#).