

# Supplementary consultation paper for state disability plan 2021-2025

New themes from 2020

## Introduction

On **International Day of People with Disability** on 3 December 2019, the Victorian Government released a consultation paper to help make the next state disability plan. The consultation paper talks about some ideas for the next plan and asks some questions to find out how we can make the plan better.

Work on the new plan was paused in March 2020 to allow government and communities to focus on the health and wellbeing of people with disability due to Coronavirus (COVID-19). Work on the new plan restarted on 3 December 2020, on **International Day of People with Disability**.

This supplementary consultation paper talks about what has changed since the original paper was released and shows what we will do to write the new plan.

## About this paper

This short paper does three things.

- 1) It talks about some key areas of policy focus arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) health emergency.
- 2) It confirms that the broad topics previously flagged for consultation remain relevant but need to be considered as part of a “building back better” approach in the next plan.
- 3) It talks about some of the ways that we will engage better with people with disability, building on lessons learned from the health emergency.

## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

### 1. What have we learnt?

Throughout the Coronavirus (COVID-19) response, we have received advice from people with disability on what needs to be done better now and in the future. This advice has been received through:

- the Victorian Disability Advisory Council
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) focused taskforces and reference groups
- advocacy from organisations and individuals.

Some of the key issues that people with disability have told us about are:

- accessible and timely public health and emergency communications
- safe and accessible services, including health and disability services
- access to food and essential supplies
- impacts on economic participation and employment opportunities
- increased isolation and disconnection.

## 2. Focus areas for the Victorian Disability Advisory Council

The Victorian Disability Advisory Council has undertaken extensive work to identify a set of priority areas as Victoria moves towards a recovery period. The Council's priority areas are:

- engagement and social connection among people with disability
- embedding co-design and universal design into infrastructure projects
- optimising use of new Disability Liaison Officer positions in health services
- inclusion of people with disability in emergency and disaster responses
- employment of people with disability.

These priorities confirm and complement priorities that we have identified through other channels.

## 3. We want to hear from you about Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The advice received from disability advocates and groups, including the Victorian Disability Advisory Council, is that the next state disability plan needs to have a focus on recovery from Coronavirus (COVID-19).

In line with this advice, the next plan will have a focus on recovery, as well as inclusive processes for emergency planning and response.

We have added a new consultation topic around people's experience during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) health emergency.

We want to hear from you to help us gain an understanding of the many impacts of the health emergency on people with disability and insight into how improvements can be made.

### Consultation questions

You can respond to the following questions by visiting the [Topic 7: Responding to COVID-19](https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/topic-7-responding-covid-19) page on the Victorian state disability plan website <<https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/topic-7-responding-covid-19>>.

1. What are some of the most important issues arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic for people with disability that we should be thinking about in the next plan?
2. What actions do you think government should be taking to address these issues?
3. What steps should we take to ensure we are better prepared for any future emergencies?
4. What else needs to happen to support people with disability through the Coronavirus (COVID-19) recovery?

## Previous consultation work

On International Day of People with Disability in 2019, the Victorian Government released a consultation paper to inform work on the next state disability plan. Prior to consultation pausing, we held two metropolitan and one regional forum and continued to receive written submissions and responses to key questions on the state disability plan website.

The themes arising from the consultation remain relevant, and all insights gathered through previous consultation will be factored into our work.

However, it is important to acknowledge the changed context in which we will now use these insights.

You can still have your say on any of the previous consultation topics by visiting the [Victorian State disability plan 2021-2024 consultation](https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/victorian-state-disability-plan-2021-2024-consultation) webpage <<https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/victorian-state-disability-plan-2021-2024-consultation>>.

# What happens next?

Work on the next state disability plan was paused for 12 months due to Coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that the new plan will now be released on **International Day of People with Disability** on 3 December 2021 and will cover the period from 2021 to 2025. The current plan, **Absolutely Everyone: State Disability Plan 2017-2020**, will remain in place whilst development of the new plan is underway.

To develop the new plan, we will work closely with a range of reference, advisory and advocacy groups made up of people with disability. Most importantly, we want to hear from you about ways the Victorian Government can improve the lives of people with disability during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) recovery to ensure we can build back better.

## We want to hear from you

There are a few different ways you can have your say:

- make a written, video, or audio-recording submission on the [Victorian State disability plan 2021-2024 consultation](https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/victorian-state-disability-plan-2021-2024-consultation) webpage <<https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/victorian-state-disability-plan-2021-2024-consultation>>.
- email the [Office for Disability](mailto:ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <[ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au)>
- phone the Office for Disability on 1300 880 043 (you can use the National Relay Service 13 36 77)

We will also be holding a number of public forums so you can tell us about your ideas for making Victoria a more inclusive place. The forums will focus on different topics like education, housing, transport, employment and health and wellbeing. The forums will be held online which will allow us to continue to draw on the benefits from using remote meeting platforms and allow us to reach and bring together people from across Victoria.

Keep an eye on the [Victorian state disability plan](https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/) website for updates on forum dates and topics <<https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/>>.

For more information or to sign up for more information call 1300 880 043 (you can use the National Relay Service 13 36 77) or contact us via email [Office for Disability](mailto:ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <[ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au)>.

## Consultation activity and timeline

| Method  | Timeframe                    |
|---|------------------------------|
| Online discussion page with updated Coronavirus (COVID-19) consultation topic | 3 December 2020 - April 2021 |
| Online submissions with updated Coronavirus (COVID-19) consultation topic     | 3 December 2020 - April 2021 |
| Facilitated online public forums  | February 2021 - April 2021   |
| Engagement with underserviced* groups by community partners (details to come) | February 2021 - May 2021     |

\*underserviced can mean people with disability who miss out on services because of their ethnicity, location, disability type, gender identity and sexuality.

To receive this document in another format, phone 1300 880 043, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email [email Office for Disability](mailto:ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <ofd@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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Available at [Victorian state disability plan website](https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/victorian-state-disability-plan-2021-2024-consultation) <https://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/victorian-state-disability-plan-2021-2024-consultation>