



The facts:

June 2021

Registration information for disability workers

Voluntary registration of disability workers commences on 1 July 2021. Registration aims to increase safety across the entire disability community and enable registered disability workers to demonstrate the safety and quality of the services they provide.

Registration forms part of the Victorian Government's "zero tolerance" approach to abuse of people with disability.

The Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria (the Board) is responsible for registering disability workers and for setting the standards for registration.

Why is being a registered disability worker important?

Registration aims to increase trust and confidence in the Victorian disability sector. By registering, disability workers can show employers they are safe, skilled and professional.

It will be simpler to qualify for registration during the first year to allow existing disability workers with the relevant skills and experience to be able to register.

The Disability Service Safeguards Act 2018 (the Act) requires applicants for registration to show that they have the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes for safe practice to be registered as a disability worker by the Board.

Registration enables disability workers to be recognised as members of a professional, safe and respected sector.

Types of registration

Disability support worker

Registered disability support workers are disability workers in direct support or supervisory roles. They must either hold a certificate III or higher qualification in disability or a relevant field, or have completed training that is equivalent to a certificate III in disability, or have two years of professional experience.

Disability practitioner

Registered disability practitioners are disability workers with advanced skills, experience and qualifications. They must hold a relevant tertiary qualification issued by an Australian university or another institution with registration/authorisation to deliver higher education in a professional discipline that supports people with a disability, such as allied health, teaching or social work. Where required for practise they must maintain their registration with the relevant professional body, along with any other requirements such as continuing professional development.

Visit vdwc.vic.gov.au
Call 1800 497 132

Registration requirements

The requirements to qualify for registration are different for disability support workers and disability practitioners.

How to qualify for registration as a disability support worker

Three pathways are available to applicants to qualify for registration if they apply for registration before 30 September 2022. These are the:

- qualification pathway
- training pathway or
- professional experience pathway.

To qualify, applicants only need to meet the requirements of **one** of the pathways.

Qualification pathway

An applicant for registration as a disability support worker will meet the requirement to hold a qualification if they hold a certificate III or higher qualification in disability or other relevant disciplines. Qualifications in other disciplines will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Training pathway

An applicant for registration as a disability support worker will meet the requirement for training if they have successfully completed significant training in disability work. This may include employer-provided training or professional training that together aligns to the outcomes of the certificate III in disability. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Professional experience pathway

An applicant for general registration as a disability support worker will meet the requirement for professional experience if they have completed two years of professional experience. This means at least 1,440 hours of professional work as a disability support worker delivered across at least 96 weeks between 30 September 2012 and 30 September 2022.

Professional competence

All applicants, no matter which pathway they qualify under, must also demonstrate professional competence.

How to qualify as a disability practitioner

An applicant for registration as a disability practitioner will meet the requirement for a qualification if they:

- hold a tertiary level qualification in disability, allied health, teaching or social work **and**
- provide a statement of their experience working with people with disability **and**
- provide evidence of their registration with a relevant professional body and any other requirements such as continuing professional development, where required to practise.

Qualifications in other disciplines will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Professional competence

All applicants must also demonstrate professional competence.

Suitability for registration

All applicants will be assessed to determine if they may be unsuitable for registration. The Board will consider the following:

Any impairment that affects the applicant's capacity to practise safely

An impairment does not mean that an applicant will be found unsuitable for registration. The Board will consider how an impairment affects the applicant's capacity to practice safely, and what conditions may be necessary to ensure safe practice.

Criminal history

A criminal history check will be undertaken for all applicants for registration. Having a criminal history does not mean that an applicant will be found unsuitable to hold registration.

The Board has set a registration standard to inform how criminal histories will be assessed. The registration standard sets out that the Board will assess an applicant's criminal history in a manner consistent with the criteria used for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Worker Screening Check (NDIS Check).

Competency in English

To be registered, disability workers must be competent to speak or communicate in English.

The Board has set a registration standard to inform how English language competence will be assessed. As part of the application for registration, all applicants are required to make a declaration about their communication in English.

For further information on the suitability assessment please visit vdwc.vic.gov.au

Additional registration standards

The Board has set a registration standard relating to continuing professional development to commence from 1 October 2022. From 1 October 2022, registered disability workers will need to complete a minimum of 10 hours of continuing professional development each year.

The Board can establish additional registration standards for future registration periods.

How long is registration valid?

Registration is valid for 12 months. Each registration year will start on 1 October and end 30 September in the following year. Workers can apply to renew their registration each year.

Registration fees

For the first registration year (1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022) there is no registration fee.

Professional indemnity insurance

As part of applying for registration, individuals will need to advise if they have Public Indemnity Insurance. However it is not a mandatory requirement in the first year of registration.

Steps to register

Applications can be made online at www.vdwc.vic.gov.au

To register, applicants need to complete a webform to:

1. prove their identity
2. agree to a national police check
3. provide personal details and upload or provide relevant documents.

If needed, assistance is available to help you to complete the online application. If you are unable to complete the online application with assistance, a hard copy application form will be available.

Information and evidence to support an application is required including:

- personal information including all legal names used and previous addresses
- how an applicant qualifies for registration – either by providing copies of qualifications or other evidence of training and/or professional experience
- meeting the requirements for being suitable for registration.

Applicants may be asked to provide further evidence, or their application may be refused.

Help build a safer, stronger, disability sector



The Disability Worker Register

All registered disability workers will be listed on the public register of Victorian disability workers that will be available at: www.vdwc.vic.gov.au

About the Victorian Disability Worker Commission

The Victorian Disability Worker Commission is an independent body established to better protect people with disability and build a stronger, safer disability sector. It is responsible for the Disability Service Safeguards Code of Conduct, establishing the minimum expectations for all workers in Victoria supporting people with disability, and the complaints service. It can accept complaints and notifications, with powers to investigate and ban workers who put people's safety at risk.

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