



Hon Anthony Carbines MP

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers
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BAC-BR-11146

Ms Melanie Eagle
Chair, Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria
Level 30, 570 Bourke Street
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Dear Ms Eagle 

STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR THE DISABILITY WORKER REGISTRATION BOARD OF VICTORIA

MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE FOR THE DISABILITY WORKER REGISTRATION BOARD OF VICTORIA

I am pleased to provide you with my expectations for the Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria (the Board) to guide its business planning.

Legislative framework

As Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers, I am responsible for the administration of the *Disability Service Safeguards Act 2018* (the Act) and this guidance should be read in the context of the objectives, obligations and functions outlined in this Act under which the Board operates.

The Board works in partnership with the Victorian Disability Worker Commission (the Commission) and the Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner (the Commissioner). I have issued a separate Statement of Expectations for the Commission and the Commissioner related to their statutory obligations regarding unregistered disability workers.

Below are my expectations for the Board in regulating registered disability workers.

Regulatory practice

Regulators must operate within a framework that enables them to maximise efficiency and effectiveness. I expect the Board to develop a risk-based and proportionate regulatory approach that prevents or minimises the risk of harm to persons with a disability. I expect the Board to apply appropriate regulatory tools, ranging from education and guidance through to compliance and enforcement, to support a safer, stronger disability sector.

Key elements of good regulatory practice include:

- Timeliness – collection of data to establish baseline timeliness measures for key functions and processes such as registrations, complaints and notifications.

- Risk-based regulation – development of an overarching regulatory approach that incorporates data-driven, risk-based and proportionate regulatory practices.
- Compliance-related assistance – ensuring timely and effective information is provided to disability service providers and registered disability workers to assist them to comply with obligations, such as registration standards and requirements to notify misconduct.

Emerging risks and priorities

Strengthening collaborations and engagement with other regulators and agencies

The regulation of registered disability workers and disability students introduces new, voluntary, obligations to the disability services workforce. I expect the Board to work effectively and collaboratively with State and Commonwealth government departments, peer agencies and the disability services workforce to streamline information-sharing and administrative processes, prevent unnecessary duplication and minimise regulatory burden.

Promoting the uptake of registration

The Government launched its ‘Work that matters’ campaign in August 2021 to address Victoria’s critical shortage of disability workers. As the sector grows, it is essential that disability workers have the right knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to deliver high-quality, person-centred support. The voluntary registration scheme promotes these goals by setting registration and accreditation standards that lift the knowledge and capability of the workforce and professionalise the sector. I expect the Board to work with the Government, the disability sector and wider community to promote widespread uptake of registration.

This may be achieved by:

- engaging with and educating disability workers and disability service providers on the benefits of registration and accreditation, such as professionalising the industry and increasing employment opportunities for disability workers
- engaging with Victorian Government entities (government entities) on supporting the registration of disability workers directly employed by the government entities or employed by disability services funded by the government entities.

Collating and analysing data

I expect the Board to analyse and report on data from complaints, notifications and investigations of registered disability workers to inform the continuous development of disability worker registration in Victoria.

The Government’s objectives are to:

- build the evidence base to better understand the drivers of job attraction for disability workers, satisfaction, and retention across the sector
- improve sector attractiveness and creating the potential for a fulsome career
- to identify data gaps and coordinate the collection of consistent data across government entities and other agencies. This will also support more robust forecasts for sector supply and demand, to enable workforce planning and inform government decision-making and investment.

I expect the Board to support the achievement of these objectives in accordance with their statutory role and functions, working with the disability sector and wider community.

Maintaining and promoting a public register of registered disability workers

In addition to increasing workforce capability, the registration scheme also supports choice for disability services users by providing public access to a register of registered disability workers. I expect the Board, with support from the Commission, to maintain and promote the register of registered disability workers to enable informed choice for service users and to give service providers assurance when employing disability workers.

I expect the Board, with the support of the Commission, to:

- keep the public register of registered workers in a manner that is accessible, accurate and up to date
- publicise the register to the community, persons with a disability and disability service providers and provide guidance on how the register may be used.

Promoting complaints and notifications process

The complaints and notifications provisions under the Act foster continuous improvement of service delivery in the disability sector, ensuring safe, high-quality support for disability service users. I expect the Board to work with the Commission to implement efficient, accessible mechanisms for dealing with complaints and notifications about registered disability workers, supported by communication and engagement with service users and providers to actively promote these channels so that:

- people with disability can easily access and navigate the complaints channels and are supported to actively participate in the complaints resolution process
- disability service providers are aware of their mandatory notification obligations
- registered disability workers understand the complaints and notifications processes, are treated with procedural fairness, and are advised of their rights to independent review of outcome decisions.

Reporting

I expect that this Statement of Expectations will be published on the Commission's website as soon as practicable.

I request that the Board incorporate these expectations into its business plan and provide me with an indicative timeframe of when it expects to meet these expectations. The business plan should also include appropriate milestones to review the content of this letter and to advise me when it needs to be updated or renewed.

I further request the Board, in conjunction with the Department, review these expectations in this letter as part of their annual reporting obligations and advise me if there are any refinements they would recommend.

I look forward to seeing the Board continuing its work towards achieving best practice in regulating disability workers.

Yours sincerely



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