

Registration information for employers of disability workers

August 2023

Registration of disability workers 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 is responsible for assessing skills, experience and suitability for registration and registering disability workers that meet set standards for registration.

How will registration benefit disability employers?

By choosing a registered worker, employers can save time, money and paperwork knowing the assessments are done to ensure they meet set standards for disability work.

The Commission undertakes and pays for applicant police checks and registration is currently free.

The checks conducted as part of the registration process mean registered workers are ready to start with employers to help them meet workforce demands.

Employing registered disability workers enhances the reputation of employers, showing a commitment to an independently assessed quality workforce.

By employing registered workers it can support an organisation's risk and operational management strategies.

Registered workers have undergone additional checks to the NDIS Worker Screening Check by also assessing a person's skills and experience and setting continuous professional development standards.

Choosing a registered disability worker provides confidence to employers that they are getting a safe, quality worker that is deemed suitable to hold registration by the Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria.

By supporting registration and encouraging workers to register, employers support increased confidence in the crucial role of registered disability workers.

Employers can become an employer of choice by demonstrating they value an excellent workforce that supports the needs of people with disability and their families.

Employers can easily check whether a worker is registered by accessing the online disability worker register at vdwc.vic.gov.au.



Look for the registered disability worker tick of confidence

Who can register?

A disability worker is defined by the *Disability Service Safeguards Act 2018* (the Act) as a person who provides a disability service to a person with disability.

Supervisors and managers of a person or people who provide a disability service are also disability workers.

Volunteers are **not** considered to be disability workers for the purposes of the Act unless they are providing services on behalf of an organisation or agency.

Family members of a person with disability are **not** considered to be disability workers for the purposes of the Act unless they are paid for the services they provide.

Various occupations and roles can be a disability worker under the Act. Being a disability worker is not dependent on funding source, whether the service is provided by a person who works for a disability provider, an organisation or is self-employed.

For more information on determining who is a disability worker, please visit vdwc.vic.gov.au/about-disability-workers.

What do workers need to register?

There are three registration standards that applicants must meet in order to become registered and continue to meet if they wish to maintain their registration. These are:

1. Competency in English

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

2. Criminal history

Applicants will be asked if they have plead or been found guilty of, been charged with or convicted of any offence(s) in Victoria or elsewhere. A criminal history check will be done during the application assessment.

3. Continuing professional development

All registered workers must complete 10 hours of continuing professional development during the registration year and provide details of these hours when they apply to renew their registration.

For more information on registration standards please visit vdwc.vic.gov.au/registration-standards.

How can employers help their workforce to get registered?

Information from an employer is crucial for a registration application. Regardless of applying with a qualification or professional experience, all applicants must provide evidence of some experience providing a disability service. Important information from an employer that assists with registration applications can include:

- Statements of service
- Payment slips or summaries
- Letters from employers
- Satisfactory performance review

It is important that this evidence outlines the nature of the role performed, the types of duties undertaken, the hours worked and the date range. Providing this information to workers helps to ensure a more streamlined application process.

Costs

Registration is currently free. In addition to no registration fee, the Commission covers the cost of the police check required to apply for registration.

The disability worker register

All registered disability workers are listed on the public register of Victorian disability workers available at the Victorian Disability Worker Commission website vdwc.vic.gov.au.

Prohibited registered workers

The prohibited worker register records details about workers who have had their registration suspended or cancelled, or registered workers who have prohibition orders against them. A prohibited worker is unable to lawfully practice as a disability worker or must meet certain conditions in order to practice.

Prohibited unregistered workers

A list of prohibited unregistered disability workers is available at vdwc.vic.gov.au/prohibition-orders.

The Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner can make a prohibition order against an unregistered worker if satisfied that it is necessary to avoid a serious risk to the life, health, safety or welfare of a person or the health, safety or welfare of the public. You can sign up for alerts to prohibition orders at vdwc.vic.gov.au/prohibition-order-updates.

Divisions of registration and eligibility



Registered Victorian disability support worker

Registered disability support workers are disability workers in direct support or supervisory roles.

Qualification(s)

To qualify based on qualification(s) you must have:

- a Certificate III or higher in Individual Support, Disability or a related field, **and**
- relevant work experience providing disability services (may include placement hours completed as part of a relevant qualification), **or**
- training as a disability worker equivalent to Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability), **and**
- relevant work experience providing disability services.

The Board will consider qualifications in disciplines such as community services, counselling, youth work, psychology, childcare, education and health on a case-by-case basis as to how these support people with disability.

Work experience

To qualify based on professional experience you must have:

- at least 1,440 hours of relevant work experience providing disability services over at least 2 years in the past 10 years.

Combination of qualifications and relevant experience

To qualify based on qualifications and relevant experience you must have:

- a qualification in community services, health or a related field that is relevant to the worker's experience providing disability services, **and**
- at least 120 hours of relevant work experience providing disability services.



Registered Victorian disability practitioner

Registered disability practitioners are disability workers with advanced skills, experience and qualifications.

Qualification(s)

To qualify based on qualification(s) you must have:

- a relevant tertiary qualification* at Diploma level or higher in a professional discipline that supports people with disability, such as allied health or social work, **and**
- relevant work experience providing disability services as a disability practitioner **and**
- professional registration (if required to practice the profession in which they are qualified).

*or equivalent training where training rather than a tertiary qualification was required to gain professional registration to practice the profession.

Professional experience

To qualify based on professional experience you must have:

- professional registration (if required to practice), **and**
- at least 1,440 hours of relevant specialist, professional experience providing disability services as a disability practitioner over at least 2 years in the past 10 years.

Combination of qualifications and relevant experience

To qualify based on qualifications and relevant experience you must have:

- a qualification in a professional discipline that supports people with disability that is relevant to the worker's specialist experience providing disability services as a disability practitioner, **and**
- at least 120 hours of relevant professional experience providing disability services as a disability practitioner.

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