



October eNewsletter

In this month's edition:

- [Message from the Acting Commissioner](#)
- [More free Code of Conduct webinars for disability workers](#)
- [Proud to be UNBOUND 2026 award sponsor](#)
- [Changes to the Working with Children Check](#)
- [Sector news](#)
- [Sector events](#)

Message from the Acting Commissioner

Welcome to the October issue of our eNewsletter.

The Commission and Disability Worker Registration Board recently welcomed the appointment of David Simmonds as the Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner.

Mr Simmonds is an experienced accessibility and inclusion leader with over a decade of focused work in disability policy, transport accessibility reform, and advocacy for people with disability and low vision – both across government and not-for-profit settings. He also brings lived experience of disability.

He will commence in the role as Commissioner on Monday 19 October. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated staff at the Commission and the Board for their support over the past 11 months while I was Acting Commissioner.

Please [see the news story on our website](#) which features the [Victorian Government media release](#) and the [Commission's media release](#) for more information.

We are now coming to the end of the registration renewal period for 2026-27. Thank you to everyone who has renewed their disability worker registration, it shows a real commitment to continually increasing safety and quality for people with disability in Victoria.

We recently released the [Commission and Board Corporate Plan 2026-27](#) which outlines our key priorities and projects. We look forward to working with our stakeholders and the wider disability community to deliver on this plan. Together, we will continue to uphold the rights of people with disability and drive safer, higher quality services delivered by a skilled and valued workforce that places people with disability first.

Finally, make sure you register for our next Code of Conduct webinar series, kicking off on 26 November and open to all disability workers in Victoria. Read on below to find out more and sign-up.

Kate Maddern, Acting Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner

Code of Conduct webinars for disability workers

Understand your responsibilities to provide safe, quality services and boost your skills



We are hosting more free webinars for all disability workers on the Disability Service Safeguards Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct sets out how disability workers must provide safe, quality services to people with disability - no matter who funds the services. All disability workers must comply with the Code of Conduct.

Our webinars will help disability workers understand how to apply the Code in their everyday work. We are hosting four webinars on the dates and topics listed below and you only need to register once to access all the webinars.

- 26 November 2026, 10am - Act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with applicable laws and conventions (Element 1).

- 23 February 2027, 10am - Respect the privacy of people with disability (Element 2).
- 28 April 2027, 10am - Act with integrity, honesty, and transparency (Element 4).
- 25 May 2027, 10am - Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct (Element 7).

Our free webinar series is a great opportunity to [learn more about the Code of Conduct](#) and the legal requirements for disability workers. Registered disability workers can count their attendance at the webinars towards their continuing professional development requirements. If you missed our previous webinar recordings on the Code or would like to watch them again, [visit our website](#).

[Sign me up!](#)



Proud to be **UNBOUND 2026**
award sponsor

We are proud to sponsor the 'UNBOUND 2026' awards!

This initiative celebrates the creativity, originality, and diversity of local artists with disability living across Benalla, Wangaratta, and surrounding rural areas.

Submissions are open until 13 November. Shortlisted submissions will be invited to exhibit at the Benalla Visitor Information Centre from 3 December 2026 to 28 January 2027. The major award winner will receive \$650, with further prizes for other awards.

For more information and to submit, [visit the UNBOUND 2026 website](#).

Changes to the Working with Children Check

Victoria is reforming the Working with Children (WWC) Check to strengthen the child-safeguarding system.

If your organisation or disability workers engage with children, please be aware of these new legal requirements launching 19 October 2026:

- The Working with Children (WWC) Connect online service will be introduced. It will record the connection between organisations and individuals, and the workers and volunteers they engage in child-related work, and help organisations and sole traders meet the new legal requirement to notify the Social Services Regulator (SSR) about these employees and volunteers.
- Mandatory online child safety training will become part of the WWC Check application and renewal process.

[For more information, visit Changes to the Working with Children Check.](#)

Sector news

People With Disabilities Australia launches the Community Attitudes project

People with Disabilities Australia (PWDA) has launched a national awareness and education program to promote the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people with disability in workplaces and communities.

[The Community Attitudes project](#) responds to PWDA's 2025 national survey of LGBTQIA+ people with disability, which highlighted widespread experiences of exclusion and discrimination.

The project features e-learning modules, webinars, accessible resources and a creative storytelling competition for LGBTQIA+ people with disability. The first module, [Rights, Self-Advocacy and Speaking Up](#), is available now to help individuals understand their rights, request adjustments, and take action against discrimination.

To learn more, [visit the PWDA Community Attitudes Project site.](#)

Sector events

Explore these free events across the disability sector:

Try Before You Ride 2026

- Date and time: Thursday, 15 October, 10:30 am to 2 pm
- Location: Southern Cross Station, Melbourne
- About: Learn about and familiarise yourself with accessibility features on public transport
- For more info, [visit the Try Before You Ride 2026 event page.](#)

Melbourne Disability Connection Expo

- Date and time: Friday, 16 October to Saturday, 17 October, 10 am to 4 pm
- Location: Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) South Wharf, VIC
- About: Victoria's largest free expo for people with disability, families and carers. See hundreds of service providers over two huge days.
- For more info, [visit the Melbourne Disability Connection Expo event page.](#)

The Other Film Festival Program Launch 2026

- Date and time: Wednesday, 28 October 2026, 4 pm to 6 pm
- Location: Swinburne Studio, ACMI, Fed Square, Flinders St, Melbourne
- About: Join The Other Film Festival and Arts Access Victoria for the launch of their 2026 creative program. Enjoy a selection of two local short films from this year's TOFF program at the launch.
- For more info and to RSVP, [visit the Arts Access Victoria website.](#)

Have an event you'd like us to promote? Send us an email at info@vdwc.vic.gov.au

Keep in touch

If our e-newsletter was forwarded to you and you'd like to subscribe please go to: vdwc.vic.gov.au/subscribe

If you have any questions or comments, please get in touch via our website [Contact us](#) page, send an email to info@vdwc.vic.gov.au or call us on 1800 497 132.

For more information visit vdwc.vic.gov.au