November 2026 Newsletter



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Message from the Commissioner

Welcome to the November issue of our eNewsletter.

I recently commenced as Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner and I'm looking forward to meeting and speaking with you across the sector in coming weeks and hear first-hand how we can best work with you to strengthen confidence in Victoria's disability service system.

I am proud to lead the Victorian Disability Worker Commission as it continues its commitment to strengthening safeguards for people with disability across Victoria.

Greater accessibility and participation for people with disability across all parts of life is something I am incredibly passionate about, and a quality disability workforce plays a huge part in that.

A bit about me: I am 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. I also have lived experience of disability.

Watch my video on our website to find out more.

Looking forward to working together to build a safer, stronger disability sector.

David Simmonds, Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner

Commissioner issues highest number of Prohibition Orders for 2025-26

Between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, the Commissioner issued 12 Prohibition Orders to unregistered disability workers, representing a 140% increase on the same period last year.

The Commissioner can issue prohibition orders to stop unregistered disability workers from practising if it's necessary to avoid a serious risk to the life, health, safety or welfare of people with disability or the broader public. These orders can stop disability workers from practising or limit them to work only under specific conditions. Prohibition orders are public to support public safety and are published on the Commission's website.

In this period we also had an 82% increase in investigations into worker conduct and a 16% increase in enquiries to the Commission. We can take a range of actions if there are concerns about a disability worker's behaviour or conduct, including providing education, conciliation, settling by agreement or conducting an investigation.

For more information head to our website to see the Commission and Board's Annual Report 2025-26, or the shorter summary At a Glance.



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!



Following the success of our Continuing Professional Development event earlier this year, we're hosting another free Continuing Professional Development event in March 2027!

This event is for registered disability workers and those that have applied for registration – so there is no better time to become registered! It is a free event to:

- Boost your knowledge and skills as a registered disability worker
- Count the learning towards your Continuing Professional Development requirements

Registered workers and registration applicants will receive a direct invitation to the event when it launches, including information about the program.

Become a registered worker today to have access to Continuing Professional Development opportunities like this and more! Visit [Disability worker registration | Victorian Disability Worker Commission].

UNBOUND
SHOWCASING ARTISTS WITH DISABILITY

Proud to be **UNBOUND 2026** award sponsor

The Victorian Disability Worker Commission is headed to Benalla as proud sponsors of the UNBOUND 2026 awards!

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

Submissions for hanging artworks 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.

Come and say hello!

We will be at the Benalla Visitor Information Centre for the award ceremony on Thursday 10 December. Please stop by to view the beautiful artwork, chat with our team, and learn more about how we support a safer disability sector.

For more information and to submit your artwork, visit the UNBOUND 2026 website.



We're excited to be exhibiting at the Melbourne Disability Expo 2026!

The expo is an accessible, free event featuring hundreds of products and services, community groups, inspiring presentations, workshops, and inclusive entertainment for all ages.

Come and have a chat with us to learn how we're contributing to a stronger,

safer sector. We'll also have information on disability worker registration, the Code of Conduct, and the complaints process.

- Date: Friday 20 & Saturday 21 November
- Time: 9am–3pm
- Location: Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

For more information and to register, visit the Melbourne Disability Expo webpage.

Out and About

It was a big month of getting out and about for the Commission last month!

VDWC staff headed to Warrnambool to host a stall at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd (VACSAL) Senior Football and Netball Carnival It was a fantastic opportunity to connect with the Victorian Aboriginal community and chat face-to-face during such an exciting event.

While in the region, we also met with local disability service providers, local council, carers, and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs). Hearing directly from regional communities ensures the Commission can continue providing strong safeguards that support people with disability across Victoria.

During October, we also presented at the VALID North, East and West Self-advocacy network meetings about how the Commission can help resolve concerns with disability worker conduct. These sessions were a great opportunity to hear directly from people with disability, in their safe space. We are grateful for the wonderful engagement from attendees at these sessions.





Image 1: VDWC staff at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd (VACSAL) Senior Football and Netball Carnival. Image 2: VDWC staff and attendees during a workshop at the VALID self advocacy network meetings.

Keep in touch

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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

Our mailing address is:
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The Victorian Disability Worker Commission acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

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