



## Update from the Commissioner

Welcome to our September newsletter.

There has been a huge amount happening across the disability sector recently and keeping up to date with recent developments can be challenging. This edition of our newsletter contains some important regulatory and safeguarding updates.

We at the Commission, like all in the sector and wider community, are awaiting the final report from the Disability Royal Commission and look forward to providing you with more information and feedback once that report is released. If you were interested in reading our earlier submission to the Royal Commission you can find that [here](#).

If you are part of an organisation that would like to learn more about our work, particularly in light of recent regulatory changes or findings from the Royal Commission, please contact us to arrange an online or in-person information session at [education@vdbc.vic.gov.au](mailto:education@vdbc.vic.gov.au)

We are looking forward to partnering with Amaze to deliver an important information session. Amaze is the peak body for autistic people and their supporters in Victoria. Stay tuned to our website and social media for details.

**New disability worker registration video**



**The safe choice.** Become a registered disability worker and show people that quality, safety and experience matter.

The Victorian Disability Worker Commission is pleased to share with you our new video about disability worker registration.

Meet Paul. Paul is kicking goals and loving life. He is independent, and his disability support worker helps him to achieve that independence. We want to see more stories like Paul's. A story about quality services, confidence and safety.

This is why registering as a disability worker is so important.

We want disability workers to be 'the safe choice' by choosing to register and committing as a professional in the sector.

We want people with disability, their families and carers to be able to make 'the safe choice' by choosing a registered disability worker for their support.

We all need to work together to make a safer, stronger disability sector. Learn more at

[vdwc.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-registration](http://vdwc.vic.gov.au/disability-worker-registration)



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## Who we regulate

### Keeping children safe in schools

You may have heard of changes to who is covered by our regulations. These changes mean that teachers and principals registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), including early childhood teachers, who provide teaching services in a school setting are not covered by the Disability Worker Regulation Scheme. This includes teachers in specialist schools.

The Commission **does** regulate disability workers who are providing services in the education sector, for example education support officers or integration aides. The Commission can take complaints about these workers if there is an issue with their service delivery. Employers of these workers are also obliged to advise the Commission of any [notifiable conduct](#).

Registered teachers and principals will continue to be accountable to the Victorian Institute of Teaching and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, and their own codes of conduct.

The Board and the Commission continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the VIT, the Department of Education and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority to promote the protection of Victorian students with disability.

## News and updates

### Stronger safeguards at national level

We welcome the recent news of the Federal Government's plan to implement a uniform code of conduct and set of standards for the Australian disability workforce. The Federal Government has introduced the Disability Services and Inclusion Bill 2023, which seeks to:

- repeal the *Disability Services Act 1986*
- provide a legislative framework for the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with Disability, and

- introduce a code of conduct and compliance standards.

A code of conduct and standards are important safeguards that have applied to Victoria's disability workforce under the Disability Worker Regulation Scheme since its commencement in 2020. Like the Disability Worker Regulation Scheme, the Bill seeks to improve the quality of disability services and promote the safety of people with disability. These reforms would provide protections to people receiving disability services under the NDIS as well as under other funding arrangements, which are currently unregulated.

In Victoria, the Disability Service Safeguards Code of Conduct has been a key measure to providing safeguards and protections for people receiving disability services, and provides an avenue for complaints and improvement of quality and safety across the sector.

The Commission will continue to monitor the progress of the Bill with interest as a potential avenue for greater safeguards and protections for all Australians with disability.

## Subscribe to new prohibition orders

The Commissioner is able to issue prohibition orders to avoid a serious risk to the life, health, safety or welfare of a person with disability or of the public. In some cases, the disability worker may only be able to practise if certain conditions are met.

Commissioner Dan Stubbs has prohibited 9 disability workers from working anywhere in the sector in the last three months. You can [sign up](#) to receive direct email alerts when there is an update to the public prohibition orders page of the Commission website. For more information visit [vdbc.vic.gov.au/prohibition-orders](https://vdbc.vic.gov.au/prohibition-orders).

## Education and engagement

Our team can conduct information sessions on the work of the Commission both in-person and virtually, and tailor the material to the needs of your organisation. If you are interested in finding out more or arranging a session, please reach out to [education@vdbc.vic.gov.au](mailto:education@vdbc.vic.gov.au)

## Keep in touch

If our e-newsletter was forwarded to you and you'd like to

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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](mailto:info@vdwc.vic.gov.au) or call us on 1800 497 132.

For more information visit [vdwc.vic.gov.au](https://vdwc.vic.gov.au)