**Disability:IN Global Directory**

**Australia**

**Disability Definition**

Disability, in relation to a person, means:

(a) total or partial loss of the person’s bodily or mental functions; or  
(b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or  
(c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or  
(d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or  
(e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body; or  
(f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or  
(g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person’s thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour; and includes a disability that:  
(h) presently exists; or  
(i) previously existed but no longer exists; or  
(j) may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or  
(k) is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

Source: [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00125)

**Legislation**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone with disability. The Australian Human Rights Commission summarises the DDA in its brief guide to the Disability Discrimination Act.

Privacy Act of 1998 identifies when and how employers may inquire in regards to applicant and employee disability status.

The National Disability Strategy (NDS) is the principal national strategic plan, agreed by all Australian governments, to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

**Employer Requirements**

If you are aware of an employee’s disability, legally you must provide what is regarded ‘reasonable adjustment’ to accommodate the needs of your employee. If an employee discloses a disability, you are required to keep all information about the disability confidential. In order to share information about an employee’s disability with others in your organisation, you must get written consent from the employee.

Disability status information can be collected during the Application stage, after the offer has been made and after employment commences, assuming employee has been given notice of the data collection which is compliant with the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) and only if completion of the data field is optional.

Privacy Requirements: If an employee discloses a disability, you are required to keep all information about the disability confidential. In order to share information about an employee’s disability with others in your organisation, you must get written consent from the employee. Data should be retained and used in accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth).”

The Australian Network on Disability published a [Sharing and Monitoring Disability Information in the Workplace Guide.](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/bca/pages/4095/attachments/original/1527659473/Information_Sharing__Monitoring_PDF.pdf?1527659473)

**Accessibility Requirements**

The Australian Human Rights Commission has several Standards and Guidelines under the Disability Discrimination Act relating to:

Access to Premises  
Education  
Public Transport  
World Wide Web  
Insurance  
The Australian Education Disability Clearing House also has a good list of the obligations under the Disability Standards for Education with links to some key resources.

The Australian Government is also incorporating accessibility requirements into its ICT purchasing as described in the Digital Sourcing Consider First Policy.

**Cultural Norms**

Disability discrimination accounts for the highest volume of complaints across the board according to the Australian Human Rights Commission. Source: Disability discrimination at top of Commission complaints data.

Many people described their lives as a constant struggle—for support, for resources, for basic necessities, for recognition. Over and over participants made the comment that it should not require such extraordinary effort to live an ordinary life. Source: SHUT OUT: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia (Australian Government Department of Social Services).

People with intellectual disabilities particularly struggle for meaningful engagement with the community. Source: SHUT OUT: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia (Australian Government Department of Social Services)

**Insights**

Over 4 million people in Australia have some form of disability according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ 2015 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. That’s 1 in 5 people.

People aged between 15 and 64 years with disability have both lower participation in the workforce (53%) and higher unemployment rates (9.4%) than people without disability (83% and 4.9% respectively).

**Supplier Diversity**

Certification is in place for women-owned business enterprises (WeConnect).

Certification is in place for LGBT-owned enterprises (NGLCC Network: Gay and Lesbian Organization of Business and Enterprise (GLOBE)

**Talent Sourcing Resources**

The responsibility for Disability Employment Services sits within the federal government’s Department of Social Services. Services are provided nationally through contracted arrangements with Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). They are both private and not-for-profit organisations. The providers source talent for employers.

Disability Employment Australia is the peak industry body representing Australia’s Disability Employment Service providers.

The Diversity Council Australia is the independent not-for-profit peak body leading diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

The Australian Network on Disability (AND) is a national, membership based, for-purpose organisation that supports organisations to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of business. AND also operates an Internship and Mentorship Programs as employment pipelines.

**Additional Resources**

Disabled People’s Organisations Australia (DPO Australia) is an alliance of four national Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) in Australia and promotes and advances the human rights and freedoms of all people with disability in Australia.

Inclusion Australia brings together groups across Australia who are connected to people with intellectual disability. One major focus is employment.

Scope is a not-for-profit organization that exists to support people with physical, intellectual and multiple disabilities achieve their goals in life, our mission is to enable each person to live as an empowered and equal citizen.

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is Australia’s largest autism-specific service provider, with one of the biggest autism-specific school programs in the world. A not-for-profit organization, we work in partnership with people of all ages on the autism spectrum, and their families to deliver evidence-informed solutions that are person-centered, family-focused and customer driven.

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia’s peak communications consumer organization representing individuals, small businesses and not-for-profit groups as consumers of communications products and services. ACCAN focuses on goods and services encompassed by the converged areas of telecommunications, broadcasting, the internet and online services, including both current and emerging technologies.

**References**

[Disabled People’s Organisations Australia](https://dpoa.org.au/) (DPO Australia) is an alliance of four national Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) in Australia and promotes and advances the human rights and freedoms of all people with disability in Australia.

[Inclusion Australia](https://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/) brings together groups across Australia who are connected to people with intellectual disability. One major focus is employment.

[Scope](https://www.scopeaust.org.au/?utm_source=sem&utm_medium=google_grants&utm_campaign=brand&utm_term=disability&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiAx_GqBhBQEiwAlDNAZpFUNKAXBM-c8uWowIUQKh_kRukcZekJ_fXB9hPZJgylSZdF-yoT_xoCzSsQAvD_BwE) is a not-for-profit organization that exists to support people with physical, intellectual and multiple disabilities achieve their goals in life, our mission is to enable each person to live as an empowered and equal citizen.

[Autism Spectrum Australia](https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/?gclid=CjwKCAiAx_GqBhBQEiwAlDNAZn8d-SIMZxHVlFBZMdeuPQDFc6K8QnUbg1cOw3IU4SjwHuhcO3QOsxoClLoQAvD_BwE) (Aspect) is Australia’s largest autism-specific service provider, with one of the biggest autism-specific school programs in the world. A not-for-profit organization, we work in partnership with people of all ages on the autism spectrum, and their families to deliver evidence-informed solutions that are person-centered, family-focused and customer driven.

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**NGOs**

[APM/Employable Me – APM provides job-specific training and the opportunity to meet local employers](https://apm.net.au/)

[Australian Network on Disability](https://and.org.au/) – Works closely with businesses and government on projects that shape the future of access and inclusion and diversity in Australia

[GradWISE](https://wiseemployment.com.au/gradwise-graduate-jobs/) – GradWISE helps students with disabilities find jobs. They also provide students information on employers with disability graduate programs

[Spinal Chord Injuries Australia](https://scia.org.au/) – The EmployAbility program supports people with physical disabilities prepare for and engage in meaningful work. Specialized recruitment service places job ready candidates into suitable roles with employer partners

[Vision Australia](https://www.visionaustralia.org/) – specialist in recruiting, training, and placing people who are blind or have low vision

[With You With Me](https://withyouwithme.com/) – Candidates are matched to technology jobs. Helps candidates (ex-military, defense, veteran, neurodiverse,) learn new skills and become job ready in under 100 hours [Interact Australia – More than a recruiting company, Interact Australia offers end-to-end workforce solutions including job placement, skills training, and career coaching to ensure and support the success and growth of both the candidate with a disability and employer](https://www.interact.com.au/)