



**Royal Commission**  
into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation  
of People with Disability

---

# A guide to the *Final report*

**Disability Royal Commission**

**Easy Read version**



**September 2023**

## How to use this guide



The Disability Royal Commission  
(the Royal Commission) wrote this guide.

When you see the word 'we', it means  
the Royal Commission.



We wrote this guide in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



We wrote some important words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 31.



This guide is a **summary** of a brochure.

A summary only includes the most important ideas.



You can ask for help to read this guide.

A friend, family member or support person may  
be able to help you.



In this guide we talk about things that might upset some people.



Lifeline is a service for people at risk of suicide.

This is when someone ends their own life.



You can call Lifeline any time.

**13 11 14**



You can use Lifeline's online chat to talk to someone.

**[www.lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat](http://www.lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat)**

## Acknowledgement of Country



We recognise First Nations peoples as the traditional owners of the land we live on – Australia.



They were the first people to live on and use the:

- land
- waters.

## What's in this guide?

About the Royal Commission	5
The <i>Final report</i>	7
Summary and Vision for an inclusive Australia	8
Volume 1: Voices of people with disability	10
Volume 2: About the Royal Commission	11
Volume 3: Different experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation	12
Volume 4: The rights of people with disability	15
Volume 5: Guiding government plans	17
Volume 6: Using accessible services and better decision-making	19
Volume 7: Inclusive education, employment and housing	21
Volume 8: Criminal justice and people with disability	23
Volume 9: First Nations people with disability	24
Volume 10: Disability services	25
Volume 11: Improving ways to manage and report a problem	27
Volume 12: Beyond the Royal Commission	29
Word list	31
Support for you	38
Contact us	39

## About the Royal Commission



A **royal commission** is how the government looks into a big problem.



It helps us find out:

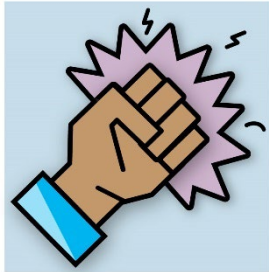
- what went wrong
- what we need to improve.



The Australian Government ran the Royal Commission from:

- April 2019
- to
- September 2023.

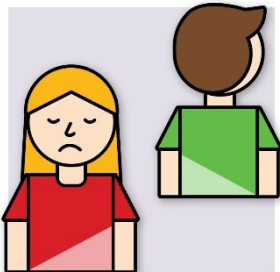
This Royal Commission was about how people with disability experience:



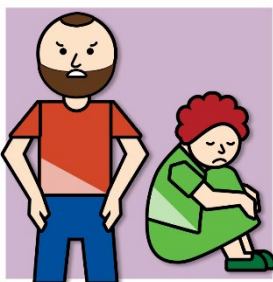
- **violence** – when someone hurts you physically



- **abuse** – when someone treats you badly



- **neglect** – when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you



- **exploitation** – when someone takes advantage of you.

## The *Final report*



This guide is about our *Final report*.



We wrote the *Final report* when the Royal Commission ended.



It explains:

- what we learned from the Royal Commission
- what we **recommend**.

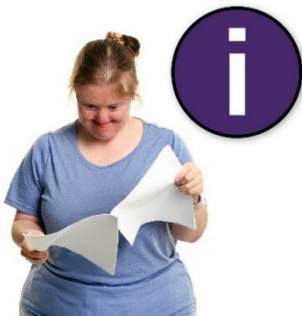


When we recommend something, we share an idea about how to make things better for people with disability.



Our *Final report* has 12 parts.

We call them 'volumes'.



This guide explains what information you can find in each volume.

## Summary and Vision for an inclusive Australia



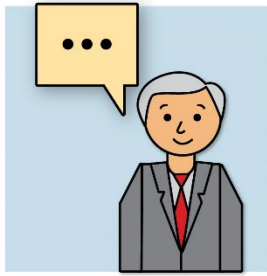
When something is **inclusive**, everyone:

- can take part
- feels like they belong.



Our Summary and Vision for an inclusive Australia explains what our *Final report* is about.



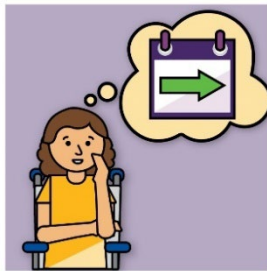


It includes a message from the Honourable Ronald Sackville.



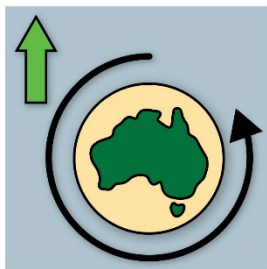
He was the Chair of the Royal Commission.

This means he was the leader of the Royal Commission.



It also includes the **visions** of many people in the community.

Visions are ideas about how people want things to be in the future.



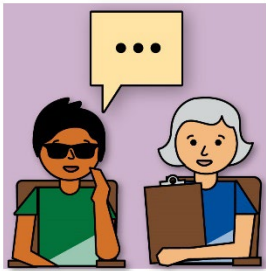
People told us Australia should be more inclusive.



We recommend **222** ways to make Australia more inclusive.

And keep people with disability safe.

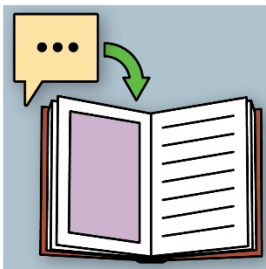
## Volume 1: Voices of people with disability



Volume 1 is about the stories people with disability told us.



We heard from many people about what happened to them.

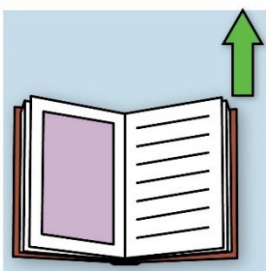


We used what they shared to create **narratives**.



A narrative is a story that explains:

- what happened to someone
- their experiences.



Volume 1 includes more than **1,500** narratives.

## Volume 2: About the Royal Commission



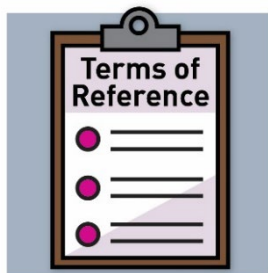
Volume 2 is about how we started the Royal Commission.



It's also about the people who worked on the Royal Commission.

Including the **Commissioners**.

The Commissioners are the people who were in charge of the Royal Commission.



Volume 2 explains the **Terms of Reference**.



The Terms of Reference is a list of things the Royal Commission looked into.

Volume 2 is also about how we collected:



- information



- **evidence.**

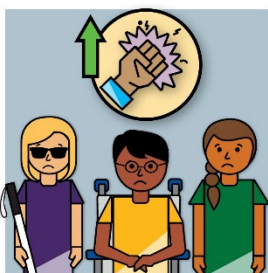
When people give evidence, they tell us about their experiences.

### **Volume 3: Different experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation**

Volume 3 explains how people with disability experience different types of:

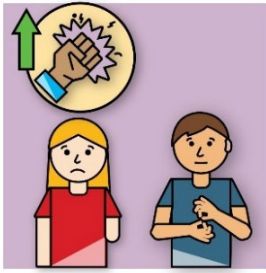


- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.



People with disability experience more violence than other people in Australia.

And they experience it more often.



Some people with disability experience more violence than other people with disability.

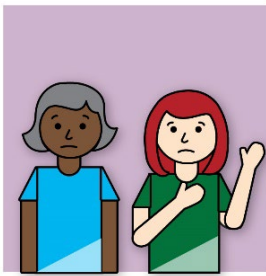
For example:



- First Nations people with disability



- young women with disability

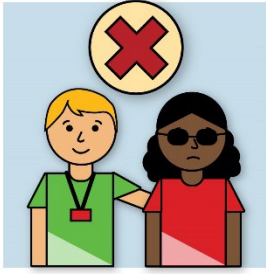


- women with **intellectual disability**.

An intellectual disability affects how you:



- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do things on your own.



We heard how many people with disability don't get the support they need to live their lives.



Sometimes people with disability die when they could have lived longer.

This can be because of neglect.

## Volume 4: The rights of people with disability

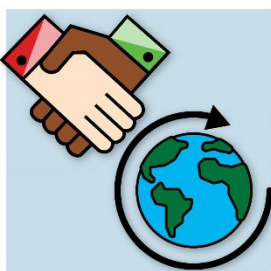


Volume 4 is about the **rights** of people with disability.



Rights are rules that say you can choose how you live your own life.

And they explain how other people must treat you.



The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability* is an agreement between different countries.

In this guide we call it the **CRPD**.



The CRPD explains how people with disability have the same rights as everybody else.



This means Australia must have laws that protect the rights of people with disability.



Volume 4 explains how the laws in Australia don't do enough to protect the rights of people with disability.



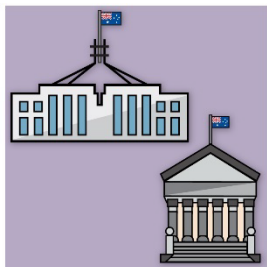
In Volume 4 we recommend the Australian Government create a new law called the Disability Rights Act.

In this guide we call it the Act.



The Act should clearly explain the rights of people with disability.

And how each government should protect them.

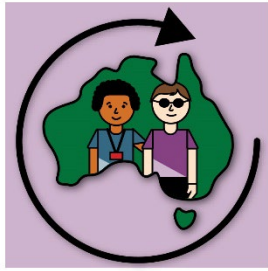


This includes:

- the Australian Government
- state and territory governments.



## Volume 5: Guiding government plans



Volume 5 is about what governments can do to support people with disability around Australia.



Governments use disability strategies to make life better for people with disability.

Disability strategies tell us about:



- what governments should do to improve life for people with disability



- what each government needs to do.



Governments need leaders who will make sure disability strategies are working.



We recommend the Australian Government create a new National Disability Commission.



The National Disability Commission should check if life for people with disability gets:

- better
- worse.

## Volume 6: Using accessible services and better decision-making

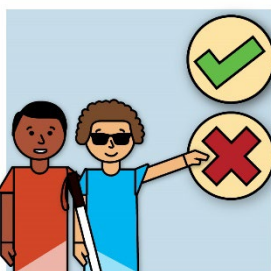


Volume 6 is about how to support the **autonomy** of people with disability.



Autonomy is a person's right to:

- make decisions
- control their own life
- choose what they want.



We recommend changing things so people with disability can:

- make decisions about their lives
- get support to make decisions.



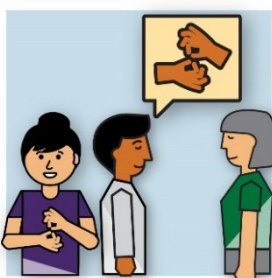
This includes improving **accessible**:

- information
- communication.



When information is accessible, it is easy to:

- find and use
- understand.

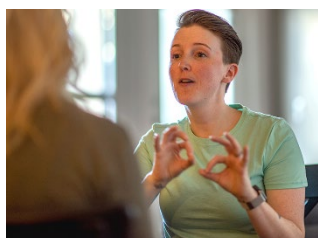


It also includes making sure there are enough Auslan **interpreters**.



Interpreters are people who:

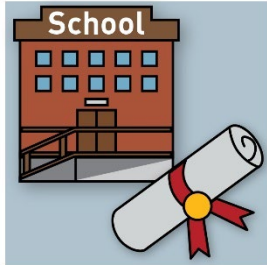
- use your language
- help you understand what someone is saying.



Governments should also make sure Auslan interpreters have the right skills.

## Volume 7: Inclusive education, employment and housing

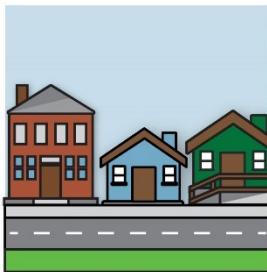
Volume 7 is about how to support people with disability in:



- education – like school, university and TAFE



- **employment**



- housing.



Employment means you:

- have a job
- go to work
- get paid.



But there are many **barriers** for people with disability.



A barrier is something that stops you from doing something you:

- need to do
- want to do.



The Commissioners agree that some big things need to change.



In volume 7 we recommend ways to make education, employment and housing more inclusive.

## Volume 8: Criminal justice and people with disability



Volume 8 is about people with disability in the criminal **justice system**.

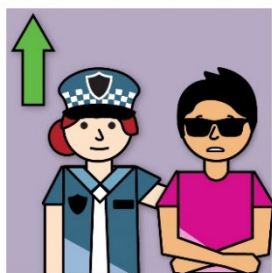
The justice system includes:



- police
- the courts
- the law
- prisons.



We recommend the justice system improve the way it finds out whether a person has a disability. And improves the way it protects their rights.



We also recommend the justice system do more to support people with disability when they are the victim of a crime.



This includes providing different ways for people with disability to report crimes to police.

## Volume 9: First Nations people with disability

Volume 9 is about how First Nations people with disability experience:



- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.



There are some barriers that only affect First Nations people with disability.

Or affect First Nations people with disability in different ways than other people.



For example, there are not enough disability service **providers** that understand what First Nations communities need.

Providers support people by delivering a service.



There are also issues with the way the National Disability Insurance Scheme supports people far away from cities and towns.





Because of this, it can be hard for some First Nations communities to get disability support.

This is a type of neglect.



Volume 9 explains what governments should do to make services better for First Nations people with disability.

## Volume 10: Disability services

Volume 10 is about how providers often fail to keep people with disability safe from:



- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.



And how some providers don't do enough to support people with disability after these experiences.



This can happen with all disability services.

But it happens a lot in **supported accommodation**.



Supported accommodation is a type of housing that is designed for people with disability who need support.



Providers must have strong **policies** about how to keep people with disability safe.

Providers support people by delivering a service.



And how to respond when people with disability have these experiences.



This includes supporting people with disability to:

- speak up about issues that affect them
- get help to speak up for themselves.

## Volume 11: Improving ways to manage and report a problem

Volume 11 is about making sure governments can find out when people with disability experience:



- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.



This includes making sure people with disability can make a **complaint**.

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that:

- something has gone wrong
- someone has treated you badly.



The ways people make a complaint should be:

- safe
- easy to use.



There needs to be better ways to:

- report a problem
- find out about a problem.



All state and territory governments need to have a Community Visitors Scheme.

This is a type of program where Community Visitors:

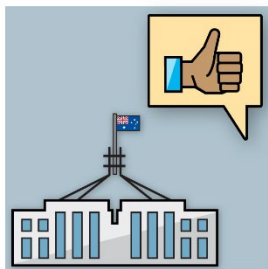


- check that people with disability are safe when they use services



- help people with complaints.

## Volume 12: Beyond the Royal Commission



Volume 12 explains what each government needs to do about what we recommend.



This includes:

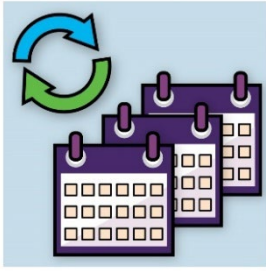
- the Australian Government
- state and territory governments.



Governments need to tell the community if they will do what we recommend.



If they don't agree with some things, they need to explain why.



It will take time for things to change.

So it's important that governments keep working with people with disability.



The Disability Reform Ministerial Council (DRMC) should be in charge of supporting governments to do what we recommend in the *Final report*.



The DRMC is a group of **ministers** from around Australia who make policies better for people with disability.



A minister leads an area of government.



Volume 12 also explains when governments should share reports about how they are doing what we recommend.

## Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this report mean.



### **Abuse**

Abuse is when someone treats you badly.



### **Accessible**

When information is accessible, it is easy to:

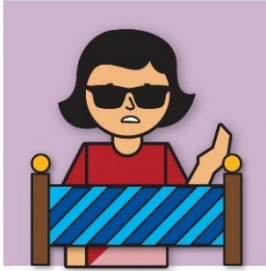
- find and use
- understand.



### **Autonomy**

Autonomy is a person's right to:

- make decisions
- control their own life
- choose what they want.



## Barrier

A barrier is something that stops you from doing something you:

- need to do
- want to do.



## Commissioner

The Commissioners are the people who were in charge of the Royal Commission.



## Complaint

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that:

- something has gone wrong
- someone has treated you badly.



## CRPD

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability* is an agreement between different countries.

We call it the CRPD.

It explains how people with disability have the same rights as everybody else.



## Employment



Employment means you:

- have a job
- go to work
- get paid.



## Evidence

When people give evidence, they tell us about their experiences.



## Exploitation

Exploitation is when someone takes advantage of you.



## Inclusive

When something is inclusive, everyone:

- can take part
- feels like they belong.

## Intellectual disability



An intellectual disability affects how you:

- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do things on your own.

## Interpreters



Interpreters are people who:

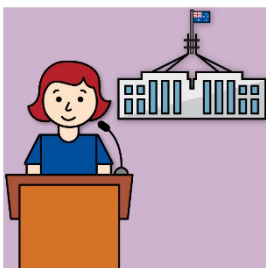
- use your language
- help you understand what someone is saying.

## Justice system



The justice system includes:

- police
- the courts
- the law
- prisons.



## Minister

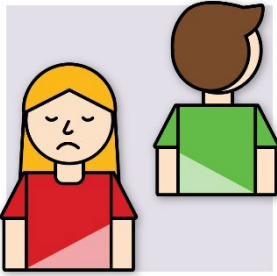
A minister leads an area of government.



## Narrative

A narrative is a story that explains:

- what happened to someone
- their experiences.



## Neglect

Neglect is when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you.



## Policies

Policies are:

- government plans for how to do things
- where rules come from.



## Providers

Providers support people by delivering a service.



## Recommend

When we recommend something, we share an idea about how to make things better for people with disability.





## Rights

Rights are rules that say you can choose how you live your own life.

And they explain how other people must treat you.

## Royal commission

A royal commission is how the government looks into a big problem.

It helps us find out:

- what went wrong
- what we need to improve.



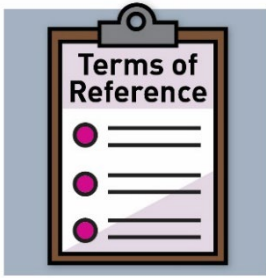
## Summary

A summary only includes the most important ideas.



## Supported accommodation

Supported accommodation is a type of housing that is designed for people with disability who need support.



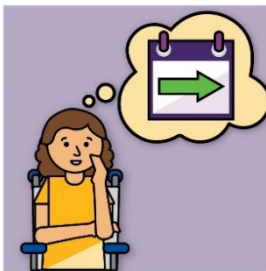
## **Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference is a list of things the Royal Commission looked into.



## **Violence**

Violence is when someone hurts you physically.



## **Visions**

Visions are ideas about how people want things to be in the future.

## Support for you



Blue Knot Foundation offers free **counselling support** to anyone who needs it.



Counselling support is when you:

- talk to someone about how you think and feel
- talk about ways to help you feel better.



You can call Blue Knot Foundation.

**1800 421 468**



They are open every day.



You can send Blue Knot Foundation an email.

**[helpline@blueknot.org.au](mailto:helpline@blueknot.org.au)**

## Contact us



Australian Government  
Attorney-General's Department

The Disability Royal Commission has ended.

If you have questions, you can contact the Attorney-General's Department.



You can call them.

**(02) 6141 6666**



Or you can use the form on their website.

**[www.ag.gov.au/about-us/connect-us/contact-us](http://www.ag.gov.au/about-us/connect-us/contact-us)**



You can also contact them to make a complaint.

## Support to contact the Attorney-General's Department



You can call the National Relay Service.

**133 677**



You can visit the Access Hub website to find the right service for you.

**[www.accesshub.gov.au/services](http://www.accesshub.gov.au/services)**



If you speak a language other than English, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

**1800 131 450**





**Royal Commission**  
into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and  
Exploitation of People with Disability