

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

The Disability Royal Commission investigates the experiences of people with disability in Australia to prevent and better protect people from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

One area that has been a focus is people with disabilities' experiences with **Employment**.

The Commission has identified a range of **barriers** to people with disability **getting into and staying in employment**. The Commission grouped these barriers into four areas:

- Attitudinal
- Physical and environmental
- Organisational
- Structural

The full list of barriers identified is below. If you identify with *any* of these and feel you have an experience that may be helpful for the Commission to understand the issues, the impact or how things need to change please contact one of our advocates on 02 9869 0866 and we can support you to engage with the Disability Royal Commission. Or go to

<https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/>

Attitudinal barriers

- an assumption that people with disability are not capable of working or do not want to work
- lack of access to job opportunities arising from informal networks
- discriminatory attitudes and behaviours when seeking a job and during recruitment processes
- concerns for both employers and people with disability about disclosing disability in the workplace
- discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in the workplace
- employers incorrectly assuming that hiring people with disability will be costly, burdensome, less productive and risky which may result in overlooking a person's skills

- negative health impacts including lack of motivation or confidence resulting from the experience of being excluded from opportunities to work.

Physical and environmental barriers

- physically inaccessible buildings and workplaces
- environments that do not support the inclusion of people with various psychosocial, cognitive or episodic disability
- environments that do not support accessible means of communication
- lack of availability of jobs, particularly for people living outside of urban centres
- lack of affordable and accessible housing and transport to be able to travel to work
- inaccessible technology, design, websites or communications.

Organisational barriers

preparing for work

- difficulty in accessing skills training and education, and a lack of support to engage with and complete qualifications
- lack of access to part-time work or work experience
- a lack of or inappropriate assistance in becoming job-ready; that is finding, securing and maintaining employment
- poorly trained, inefficient job service providers, placing people in any job with no regard to the jobseeker's skills, qualifications and interests.

applying for jobs and recruitment processes

- job advertisements and role descriptions that are inaccessible

during employment

- employers lacking knowledge, skills, leadership, and resources to support people with disability
- employers refusing to provide flexible work arrangements or reasonable adjustments or accommodations during recruitment
- the lack of career progression, accessible learning and development opportunities, or access to challenging and meaningful work.

Structural Barriers

- lack of access to adequate income required to meet essential living standards and participate in finding and keeping a job
- the lack of access to employment related advocacy services
- structural issues in the operation of the Disability Employment Service program
- lack of coherence and connections between government programs designed to help people with disability into employment, including complexity and variance around eligibility requirements
- the potential reduction or loss of the Disability Support Pension as a result of employment or increased hours of work
- the overly complex and confusing rules around participation requirements and mutual obligations associated with income support
- the gap in support for people who do not qualify under the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- the pathways and transitions from education to open employment
- Job Capacity Assessments that emphasise impairment and weakness
- the legal protection for people with disability who experience discrimination in the workplace.

The full details of this list can be found in the transcript of Day 6 of Public Hearing 9 which can be found here <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/transcript-day-6-public-hearing-9-brisbane> . The video of the whole Public Hearing can also be found on the website.

What is working well?

The Royal Commission has also been told to look at examples of **best practice and innovative models**. If you know something that works or has worked (anywhere in the world), if you know a great model that needs to be used in more places or more often, the Commission would love to hear from you.

If you think more needs to be said then don't hesitate to contact us on **02 9869 0866** or visit our website <https://www.family-advocacy.com/royal-commission/> .

Or go to the Disability Royal Commission's website <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/>