



Disability
Justice
Australia Inc.

The Broadcaster

OUR VISION

To be the leading provider of advocacy and support services for people with disabilities.

Our Contact Details:
Office: 03 94740077
or 1800 808 126

Email: info@dja.org.au



Welcome to our December 2024 Newsletter

Disability Justice Australia is closed over the holiday period while staff, volunteers and Board members enjoy a well-deserved rest.

Office Closed Below	Leave a voice message or send an email
Tuesday 4.00pm 24 December 2024 To 4.00pm Wednesday 01 January 2025	Tel: 03 9474 0077 Email: info@dja.org.au
Office Re-opens Below	Call the Office or send an email
Thursday 02 January 2025	Tel: 03 9474 0077 Email: info@dja.org.au

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our Members, volunteers, Newsletter readers, families and friends. Please stay safe and well.

If you don't celebrate Christmas, the Board and staff all wish you and your family and friends a safe and happy holiday period.



CENTRELINK OFFICE CLOSURES



CentreLink are closed over the Christmas and New Year public holidays on the following dates:

- Wednesday 25 December 2024
- Thursday 26 December 2024
- Friday 27 December 2024
- Wednesday 1 January 2025

Reporting and payment dates have changed for these pensions:

- A Families payment
- ABSTUDY
- Age pension
- Assistance for isolated children
- Carer allowance
- Carer payment
- Disability support pension
- Double orphan pension.
- Parenting payment

Self-service is still available using your online myGov account if you have an obligation to report.

This link below shows the new payment dates over the Christmas and New Year public holiday period.

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/public-holiday-reporting-and-payment-dates?context=64107#accordion3>



Disability Gateway

Connecting you to information and services

www.disabilitygateway.gov.au

Tel: 1800 643 787
Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm

The Disability Gateway helps people with disability, their families and carers find the information, services and support they need in Australia. We recommend this to all our members and supporters.

You can watch some videos here that tell you how the Disability Gateway can help you.

<https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/video-welcome>

Victorian COVID-19 Report Update



The number of people in hospital with COVID-19 has decreased since the 17 December 2024 from 160 to 151 per day on average.

These are the steps you can take to help protect yourself from COVID-19 if you and/or your family members are at risk.

1. Stay at home if you are unwell with symptoms of cold or flu. Speak to your GP, if your symptoms get worse
2. Test if you have symptoms - take a rapid antigen test (RAT).
3. If you test positive and are eligible for antivirals, take them as soon as possible.
4. You should stay at home until you have no symptoms. Avoid group settings outside your family for 7 days.

5. Get vaccinated: stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccine to help protect you from becoming very sick.
6. Get a booster if you are over 75 and haven't had one for 6 months.
7. Boosters are free and are available from your GP or local pharmacy.
8. Wear a mask, especially if you have symptoms or are visiting others to protect you and others from the virus.
9. Let fresh air in by opening windows and doors when you can – it reduces the spread of the virus. Meet outside when possible.
10. Take antivirals to stop you from getting so sick that you need to go to hospital. See your GP for more information about getting antivirals. You must take these within 5 days of developing symptoms - the sooner the better.

VOLUNTEER RESEARCH OFFICER REQUIRED

We are looking for a volunteer who is a member of the disability community and has good research skills to:

1. Work with Systems Development Project Officer to expand our membership across Australia through networking and social media. We currently have members in every state and territory, but we want more. Membership is free and details are available on our website at <https://dja.org.au/membership/>
2. Develop and maintain a government and philanthropic grant database of opportunities that enable us to expand our advocacy services outside of Victoria and work with the CEO and Systems Development Project Officer to prepare and lodge grant applications.
3. Work with our Systems Development Project Officer to research the data needed to help establish a Social Enterprise which trains and certifies providers needing and wanting to make their services accessible to people with disabilities.

If you have skills in this area and would like to be part of the DJA Team, receive free training and professional development, have your own work station and desk at the DJA Office, and help spread our message across Australia then please provide a copy of your current CV to Simone Young (Administration Officer) in the DJA office at info@dja.org.au.

Alternatively, call 03 9474 0077 to express your interest and leave your contact details for follow-up by the CEO Trevor Caroll.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT



Funding for 2025

We are funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS) until the 30 June 2025 for:

- Disability Advocacy (Individual, Legal and Systemic), and
- NDIS Appeals Support to lodge applications to overturn decisions by the NDIA in the new Administrative Review Tribunal (ART). See <https://www.art.gov.au/applying-review/national-disability-insurance-scheme>.

However, with the loss of the Disability Royal Commission funding we have 64 less hours per week of funding for Disability Advocates with legal backgrounds and experience at the 01 January 2025.

NDIS APPEALS

We provide support to Participants in the Melbourne Metropolitan area which covers over 3.6 million people.

We can help Participants who want to appeal a decision by the National Disability Insurance Agency to the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART)
Our Waiting list for this is closed temporarily until further notice whilst we recruit some Disability Advocates for the new year.

DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Our disability advocacy service is funded under the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP).



Our Waiting List for NDAP advocacy re-opens on the 02 January 2025 - but not for any NDIS Appeals matters outside the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART). For example, if you have been rejected as a NDIS Participant and need help to appeal this decision internally with the NDIA, then we will help you find another service that can support you.

We provide Individual and Legal Advocacy (70%) and Systemic Advocacy (30%) support to people who live in metropolitan Melbourne and have:

1. Disability which is permanent or likely to be permanent; and
2. A substantially reduced capacity for:
 - Communication (writing, typing or speaking) **OR**
 - Learning **OR**
 - Mobility; and
3. A need for ongoing support services

See the list of advocacy issues we can help you with at:

<https://dja.org.au/dja-home-page/legal-advocacy/>.

OUR NEW BOARD FOR 2024-2025

The Board held our 2023-24 Annual General Meeting (AGM) online on the 20 November 2024 and the following members now make up the Board:

President: Richard Beardmore (he/him) **Vice President:** Ben Corcoran (he/him)

Secretary: Simon Young (he/him) **Treasurer:** Sirani McNeill (she/her)

Board Members: Jim Preketes, Paul Creswick and two others who are due to complete their formal Inductions before the next Board Meeting (22 January 2025).

All contact with the Board must be done via the President at president@dja.org.au.

Please call the DJA Office on 03 9474 0077 if the matter is urgent you have difficulty contacting the President.



OUR REVISED NATIONAL CONSTITUTION

This came into effect in September 2021 and a copy is available on our website: <https://dja.org.au/membership/our-constitution/#constitution>.

We can legally operate as a national cross disability organisation and retain our charitable status with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) and the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC).

Our Objectives are

- (a) To provide a range of services that are responsive to the needs of people with disabilities and their families.
- (b) To promote and protect the human rights of people with disabilities; and
- (c) To provide advocacy and support services to facilitate and support the achievement of the above objectives.



The revised Constitution was passed by a record of **87.1%** of all members present and eligible to vote at a Special General Meeting on the 23 September 2021.

SUBMISSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

We made many submissions and presentations on behalf of clients and members in the 2023-24 Financial year. Here are just some of them:

- DSS on disability discrimination issues relating to communication and the inadequate use of the National Relay Service
- Joint Submission with the Australia Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) on the Response to the NDIS Review Report Recommendations.
- Joint Submission with AFDO and the National Inclusive Transport Advocacy Network (NITAN) on the Aviation Green Paper and accessibility by people with disabilities
- Joint Submission with AFDO on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No. 1) Bill 2024 [Provisions]
- DSS on funding for the National Centre for Disability Advocacy
- DSS on the 17th Conference of States Parties in New York
- The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services about the UN Secretariat and COSP17 and accessibility of the COSP opening ceremony
- DFAT and DSS on the misuse of Australian funding to the International Disability Alliance (IDA) by the former Executive Director
- World Councillors of Disabled People's International - unified constitution.
- G3ICT's Digital Accessibility Policy, Guidelines, and Standards Harmonization (DASH) Work Group on the United Nations Global Digital Compact (GDC) at Microsoft UN office in New York
- The League for Persons with Disabilities, R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024 Study Visit to Australia on the international work undertaken by AFDO.
- DSS on inaccessible URLs on its website

NEW DJA MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

We have members in all states and territories and have been inviting all to renew or join under one of the following new categories which were introduced with our Revised Constitution.

FULL MEMBERSHIP: This is for people with disability over 18 who have a vote at any DJA meeting and can nominate for election to the Board.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: This is for a parent, carer, informal support person, or guardian over 18 of a person with a Disability (of any age) where the person with the Disability you support does not have Full Membership of Disability Justice Australia themselves. They have a vote at any DJA meeting and may be invited to join the Board

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP: This is for any organisation or its representative that is not eligible for Full Membership. There are two types: Charitable and Corporate. They are not entitled to vote at DJA meetings.



You can go online at <https://dja.org.au/membership/> and complete the Membership Application or call the Office on 03 94740077 and a Membership Application Form can be sent to you or you can ask for help to lodge your application.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Receive our free newsletter “The Broadcaster”.
- Get regular updates of items of interest to members with disabilities.
- Full and Individual Members can vote and are eligible to be a Board member.
- Children and older people with disability who cannot be a member of DJA in their own right can be represented by a parent, carer, support person or Guardian who may be invited to join the Board.
- All members get invited DJA events and functions.
- We will be setting up some support groups for members who share the same interests.
- We want to invite more members to train as volunteers.
- We have business plans under development which could lead to employment for some of our members in our new Social Enterprises.
- We have re-designed our website to make it easy for you to keep up to date with what we are doing.
- Future members will receive a personalised membership card which will give them access to membership benefits on our website.
- Full members may get travel subsidies to attend DJA events.

MEMBERSHIPS

DJA is also a financial member of the following organisations:

- Philanthropy Australia
- Amplify Alliance Australia (formerly Jobs Australia)
- Our Community
- Pro Bono Australia
- Ethical Jobs
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)

STAFF LIST FOR 2025.

Trevor Carroll	Chief Executive Officer
Deidre Griffiths	Disability Advocate & Acting CEO
Kate McGrath	Disability Advocate
Recruiting	Disability Advocates 2 x 20 hours per week to the 30/06/25
Simone Young	Administration Officer, and Personal Assistant to the CEO
Darrell Harding	Finance Officer
Simon Young	Systems Development Project Officer

