

Employment Framework Toolkit for People with a Disability

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Introduction

The ACT Public Service Employment Framework for People with a Disability aims to ensure that people with a disability are able to access and achieve sustainable employment opportunities in the ACT Public Service.

This toolkit has been developed as a resource for current and prospective staff members, and it is designed to provide managers and supervisors with knowledge and information about the resources available to support workplace diversity across the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS).

Options to access this information

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues accessible to as many people as possible.

This toolkit is available in alternative formats. DHCS is also continuing to work with people with intellectual or learning disabilities to improve how the information in this toolkit can be made more accessible to meet their personal needs.

- If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format - such as large print or audio - please telephone (02) 6205 0619
- If English is not your first language and you require the translating and interpreting service- please telephone 131 450.
- If you are deaf or hearing impaired and require the TTY typewriter service- please telephone (02) 6205 0888.

Why have the toolkit?

The Employment Framework toolkit is designed to provide specific information about the process of gaining employment within DHCS as well as provide managers with knowledge about the resources available to them to employ and support staff with a disability.

It is intended that the toolkit will help demystify disability in the workplace and become an example for other ACT Government Departments to promote workplace diversity.

How does the toolkit work?

The Employment Framework toolkit has been developed in consultation with people with disabilities, staff and managers within the Department. It is a web-based resource targeted at managers, potential employees and DHCS staff.

The toolkit has been designed to provide answers to any questions relating to the employment of a person with a disability in an easily accessible format. It can also be used as a reference point for contacting relevant people about the Department's employment processes.

What information does it contain?

For managers: The toolkit contains up to date information on the process of employing a person with a disability. This includes information about different types of disabilities, simple solutions to the possibilities of workplace modifications and any on-going support that staff may require.

For those seeking employment: The toolkit contains information on the recruitment process used by the Department, how the Department advertises its vacancies and what types of jobs are available. It also covers an employee's rights to disclose their disability and a list of relevant employment agencies.

For staff: The toolkit will help broaden understanding of different types of disabilities by providing detailed definitions and facts about disabilities and the workplace.

Information about disability

Legal definition

The 1991 ACT Discrimination Act provides the legal definition of a disability and covers all the different ways people can experience disability. According to the ACT Discrimination Act, a disability, in relation to a person, means:

- (a) total or partial loss of a bodily function; or
- (b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- (c) malfunction of a part of the body; or
- (d) malformation or disfigurement of a part of the body; or
- (e) the presence in the body of organisms that cause or are capable of causing disease; or
- (f) an illness or condition which impairs a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or which results in disturbed behaviour; or
- (g) an intellectual disability or developmental delay.

Of the approximate 17% of people in the ACT who identify as having a disability, there are varying degrees of disability being experienced in the community. (ABS, Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 1998.)

- 5.4% (16,000 people) experience a profound or severe disability;
- 2.7% (8,400 people) experience a moderate disability; and
- 13,100 (4.2%) experience a mild disability.

The more profound or severe a person's degree of disability, the more it potentially minimizes their independence. It is the degree of disability that determines whether a person always or sometimes requires personal help or supervision to carry out the functions of normal daily living. A disability can affect a person's ability to get about independently, and their capacity to communicate or interact with others.

Workplace diversity within the Department

The 1998 national survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers identified that people with disabilities make up approximately 17% of our population in the ACT. This potentially equates to a significant proportion of the Department's prospective employees being people who experience disability in one form or another. DHCS values staff for their individuality and the personal experiences and skills they bring to the workplace. The Department views workplace diversity as an important contributor to our operations and assists us to support the people we serve. We actively support our staff members with disabilities through initiatives that align to the whole-of-government Public Service Employment Framework for People with a Disability. The Department recognises that people are our greatest asset.

Australian and overseas studies have found that people with a disability generally have the same range of skills and abilities as people without a disability and can work successfully in a wide range of jobs and industries.

For many people, their disability has virtually no effect on their ability to perform a variety of work. In other cases, small adjustments in the work environment can make many jobs suitable for job seekers with a disability.

Employer studies found that employing staff with a disability meant:

- No increases in workers' compensation costs or lost time for injuries;
- 95% of staff with disabilities rated average or better in safety;
- 93% were average or above in job stability;
- 91% rated average or above in job attendance; and
- 79% were average or above in job attendance and most required no adjustments.

(Information courtesy of "Employ Able" <http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au/disabil/employ/>)

Types of disability

This section addresses the common misconceptions about disability and provides managers, supervisors and staff members with information about how to support people with different types of disability in the workplace. Different people experience their disabilities in different ways with some requiring more support than others. The following categories of disability are to be used as a guide only for how to support a person with a disability.

The golden rule is to consult with the person with a disability to assess the level of assistance they require.

Physical Disability

It is a common misconception that a person with a physical disability also has an impairment of other functions, such as intellect or learning ability. In most cases this is not true.

When a person with a physical disability joins a work team, it may be appropriate for an expert to speak with the team about aspects of disability, or issues relating to that person's specific disability. In some instances the person with a disability may be happy to speak to the whole team about their disability and answer any questions.

If you as a manager would like more information to prepare you and your team to support a new employee with a physical disability, then you can speak to:

A representative of a support organisation, for example, [Spinal Cord Injuries Australia](#) (formerly the Australian Quadriplegic Association) or the [Cerebral Palsy Association](#);
The person's case manager or job support officer from a specialist Disability Employment Agency.
The Department's Disability Employment Support Officer.

It is good practice for the manager to consult initially with the person with the disability. The person has probably had many years of experience managing their disability, so draw on their expertise as much as possible.

In the beginning, there may be a period of settling in where the person and their team strike a balance between too much assistance or not enough assistance. Most of these issues relate to accessibility of doors, toilets, equipment, beverage facilities and so on.

Learning or Intellectual Disability

DHCS is continuing to work with people with intellectual or learning disabilities to improve how the information in this toolkit can be made more accessible to meet their personal needs.

People with intellectual disabilities have experienced damage to the central nervous system. This damage affects the way in which they learn academic material but does not necessarily affect their ability to learn and develop life, work and social skills. Three percent of the population are considered to have an intellectual disability.

Employees with a learning or intellectual disability will have needs that will vary from individual to individual. Support each employee as an individual and assume that the employee can learn.

If you as a manager would like more information to prepare you and your team to support a new employee with an intellectual disability, then you can speak to:

A representative of a support organisation, for example, the [National Council for Intellectual Disability](#);

The person's case manager or job support officer from a specialist Disability Employment Agency.

The Department's Disability Employment Support Officer.

Remember, it is good practice to consult initially with the person with the disability to determine their preferred way of talking to the team about their disability and how they would like to be supported in the workplace.

In the beginning, there may be a period of settling in where the person and their team strike a balance between too much assistance and not enough assistance. The golden rule is to consult with the person with a disability or their caseworker regarding what level of assistance they require.

Where possible, seek mentors within a group that can provide learning, support and encouragement to the individual.

Psychiatric Disability

Around 20% of the adult population will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives. People with a psychiatric disability may suffer from a variety of mental illnesses including depression, anxiety, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Most will seem no different to anyone else. Psychiatric disability should not be confused with intellectual disability.

Like anyone starting a new job, there may be some anxiety. For the new employee who has a psychiatric disability, concerns about previous job failures, becoming ill again and anxiety about being accepted by co-workers can make the start of a job a particularly stressful time. In addition, people with a mental illness, as well as their families, professionals and the public, have been conditioned to view any sign of anxiety as an exacerbation of the illness, and this can add to the work related anxieties experienced by an employee who has a psychiatric disability.

It is highly recommended that when a new employee commences work, managers begin by privately discussing with the worker the option of being 'open' regarding their illness. It is the employee's right not to disclose their mental illness. It is a personal decision of the individual whether they disclose, or discuss aspects of their illness.

There may be times when hospitalisation is unavoidable for short periods. Flexibility and support at this time is important and a period of rest and re-establishment is needed. Medication may cause side effects and time is needed to adjust to any changes in dosage.

Supportive co-workers can assist by focusing on the abilities and shared interests of the person with a mental illness instead of the differences and possible idiosyncrasies. Providing support for learning new tasks may help alleviate a panic response that might otherwise lead to quitting a job prematurely out of fear of inadequacy or relapse.

If you as a manager would like more information to prepare you and your team to support a new employee with a psychiatric disability, then you can speak to:

A representative of a support organisation, for example, the [Mental Health Foundation ACT](#);

The person's case manager or job support officer from a specialist Disability Employment Agency.

The Department's Disability Employment Support Officer.

Remember, it is good practice to consult initially with the person with the disability to determine their preferred way of talking to the team about their disability and how they would like to be supported in the workplace.

Visual Impairment

Two in every thousand people have vision impairment. Most people with vision impairment have some vision. However, what one person can see is usually very different from what another person can see and may range from blurred vision, reduced depth and distance perception, sensitivity to glare, tunnel vision to poor night vision. There are very few people who are totally blind.

This means many people with a sight disability may appear to be totally blind on first meeting but later display limited sight. This can be confusing and difficult to understand initially for an interview panel or co-workers.

People with vision impairment may require mobility aids, a cane, a dog or sonic glasses to travel independently to the workplace. At the workplace they will be able to independently fulfil most work tasks but may need technical aids and assistance devices, such as a talking computer and a tape recorder to give them additional assistance. Supporting an employee with aids and assistance on this type is consistent with the principle of reasonable adjustment.

If you as a manager would like more information to prepare you and your team to support a new employee with a visual impairment, then you can speak to:

- A representative of a support organisation, for example, the [Vision Information Line](#);
- The person's case manager or job support officer from a specialist Disability Employment Agency.
- The Department's Disability Employment Support Officer.

Remember, it is good practice to consult initially with the person with the disability to determine their preferred way of talking to the team about their disability and how they would like to be supported in the workplace.

Hearing Impairment

One in ten people have hearing difficulties. Deafness is sometimes referred to as the "hidden disability" as it is not always obvious. People who are deaf can be either profoundly deaf or have a hearing impairment.

People who have hearing difficulties can fulfil most positions in the workplace. Sometimes they may require hearing aids, sign language interpreters and telephone typewriters (TTY's).

Certain workplaces may provide specific challenges for managers to ensure they are acceptable working environments for people with severe hearing loss, for example, where warning sirens are used. It would be rare, however, if these challenges were insurmountable. It may simply require a different approach to existing systems. People with severe hearing loss will know what situation suits them best.

When working with a person who is deaf or hearing impaired, there are a few things co-workers can do to make communication easier, for example:

- Always look and speak directly to the person who is deaf or hearing impaired;
- Don't address questions to their interpreter or other work colleagues;
- Identify your topic at the beginning of what you say, this allows the person to anticipate words that may be used;
- Politely attract the person's attention before speaking to them otherwise they may not realise that you are talking to them. A wave or tap on the arm is acceptable;
- Make sure the person who is deaf or hearing impaired can see your face clearly. Many people who are deaf or hearing impaired lip-read to help themselves understand what is being said, so that they can see your lips movements more clearly. Don't obstruct their view of your lips (for example, by chewing) as this can distort the message;
- Accents sometimes throw people with hearing loss, they may need some extra time to adjust to new lip movements. Be aware that you may need to repeat words, but try to rephrase the sentence to trigger new sounds;

- Be prepared to move to a quieter location and avoid talking while you are walking away; and
- It is better to communicate in some way than to totally ignore the person.

If you as a manager would like more information to prepare you and your team to support a new employee with a hearing impairment, then you can speak to:

A representative of a support organisation, for example, the [Australian Communication Exchange](#);

The person's case manager or job support officer from a specialist Disability Employment Agency.

The Department's Disability Employment Support Officer.

Remember, it is good practice to consult initially with the person with the disability to determine their preferred way of talking to the team about their disability and how they would like to be supported in the workplace.

Speech Impediment

As you become familiar with a person's speech impediment, you will develop a better understanding of what the person is saying. Time and patience are therefore important.

When communication is not understood:

- Paraphrase or repeat back to the person what you understand (or assume) they have communicated, this demonstrates that you are listening; and
- Encourage the employee to re-phrase their communication. If a second attempt is unsuccessful, ask the employee to write down, either using pen and paper or a computer terminal, what they are trying to communicate (especially if the communication is important or urgent).

If you as a manager would like more information to prepare you and your team to support a new employee with a speech impediment, then you can speak to the Department's Disability Employment Support Officer.

Remember, it is good practice to consult initially with the person with the disability to determine their preferred way of talking to the team about their disability and how they would like to be supported in the workplace.

Medical Conditions or 'hidden disabilities'

Most people with a 'hidden disability' have either a very good idea of what, if any, implications may arise from their disability (for example, avoiding physical exertions if they have a heart condition) or they can quickly identify problems once they start a job.

General information about the implications of a disability is often available from specialist employment agencies.

Listed below are some of the issues which should be addressed in consultation with an employee with a disability or, with their permission, the employment support service:

- Flexibility with work hours;
- Health and safety;
- Education of co-workers, provided that the person is happy to disclose that they have a medical condition; and
- Confidentiality issues.

Remember, it is good practice to consult initially with the person with the disability to determine their preferred way of talking to the team about their disability and how they would like to be supported in the workplace. (Information courtesy of “Employ Able” <http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au/disabil/resource/>)

Advice for managers

Employing a person with a disability follows the same processes as when recruiting generally. The following information will assist you in anticipating your responsibilities as a panel member and manager if a person with a disability applies for an advertised position.

Advertising

All vacant positions within the ACTPS are now advertised on the [Disability Works Australia website](#). This will include permanent, short term and long term vacancies. Canberra’s Disability Employment Agencies access this website to match suitable clients to positions advertised and encourage their application.

In addition to the DWA website, people with a disability can and do respond to the full range of advertising options the Department utilises:

- DHCS website
- Gazette or press advertisements
- Temporary Register
- Staff Bulletin

NB. The phrase “person with a disability” is to be used when referring orally or in writing to an individual with a disability. He or she is a person first with any disability being secondary.

Short-listing

When applications are received, if a person has chosen to disclose they have a disability a tick-box exists on the Job Application Cover Sheet that asks applicants if they have a disability. Applicants are also requested to identify what special requirements maybe required for the interview.

If an applicant has identified as having a disability, but has not indicated they need special requirements for the interview, your responsibility as Chairperson and panel member is to treat the application as any other. However, it is appropriate for the Chairperson to confirm with all short-listed applicants if they have special requirements for the interview.

Short-listed applicants who have requested a special requirement to attend an interview **MUST** be contacted to clarify their requirements for the interview. Where necessary, It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to review the interview location to ensure it is accessible and appropriate for all applicants. For advice contact the Injury Prevention and Management Unit.

Information regarding specific disabilities can be found at the Information about disability section of this website.

It should be noted that applicants often choose not to disclose their disability within their application, preferring to discuss their disability at interview or in some cases not at all. In this case your responsibility is to treat the application as any other, ie. the applicant’s disclosure of a disability is their choice. For more information regarding disclosure please visit '[Choosing your path](#)' website.

Interviewing

Interviews conducted by DHCS should involve a set of predetermined questions asked of all applicants to ensure a competitive selection process. Additional questions asked outside of the predetermined questions should not be counted in the assessment of the applicant. However, it is appropriate to ask clarifying questions to determine if and how a person is to meet the inherent requirements of a position.

As panel members it is important to presume that a person with a disability can meet the inherent requirements of the position prior to interview and attitudes/tone of voice/body language etc should reflect your positive attitude.

If a person has chosen to disclose their disability at interview, it is the responsibility of the panel members to respect and support open discussion within the interview to determine what, if any, workplace/position modifications will be required to assist the person to meet the inherent requirements of the position. Clarifying questions that may support the panel in determining these requirements are as follows:

- Do you feel you would have difficulty in performing any of the duties outlined in the Duty Statement?
- Can you highlight any changes to the position that the Department would need to make to enable you to perform to the best of your ability?
- Are you aware of any adjustments that might need to be made in the workplace, for example any equipment that may need to be provided?

A person's disability should not exclude an applicant unless the disability affects the person's ability to complete the core tasks of the position. The core requirements of the position are usually the duties identified on the Duty Statement. However, it is not how duties are conducted that should be assessed it's whether they can be fulfilled. For example a person with a physical disability may require an amended workstation to produce written correspondence, a person who has an intellectual disability may require labels to file, a person with dyslexia may prefer to provide customer service assistance via phone rather than email and so on.

It is not equitable for a person with a disability to be excluded on the basis of the panel's perception of how they or the workplace will "cope". Language or statements such as:

The position is too stressful; we need someone who can do the job now; the team may not be supportive; and/or the workplace modifications would be expensive, could be viewed as discriminatory.

Assessment should be based on the applicant's ability to respond to the selection criteria and perform the duties of the position.

Selection

After applications, interviews and referee reports have been assessed, applicants should be ranked and a Selection Report produced by the Chairperson outlining the panel's conclusions. The report is then signed off by the Program Director and sent to Human Resources for processing.

It is the right of all applicants to receive feedback on their application upon request and the responsibility of the Chairperson to provide the feedback. It is recommended that the Individual Assessment Report be provided to applicants if requesting feedback.

After selection

As the manager employing a person with a disability your responsibilities are primarily the same as for any other new employee, including;

- Introducing the new employee to co-workers;
- Observing the reaction of co-workers to the new employee and resolve any tensions that may arise;

- Being available for consultation;
- Providing clear instructions on job requirements;
- Working out new divisions of workload if this is required;
- Ensuring the employee is familiar with the immediate working environment - location of kitchens, toilets, emergency exits etc;
- Familiarising co-workers with the employee's disability (only if necessary and with his/her permission); and
- Advising fire wardens about the location of staff with disabilities and ensure appropriate evacuation procedures are developed eg. visual and aural alarms.

If the new employee requires a workplace modification then preparation of the workplace should be completed prior to the new employee starting. It is recommended that the new employee, manager, Case Worker (if applicable) and a representative of the Injury and Prevention Unit coordinate the workplace modification process.

Where appropriate, the manager may choose to arrange a meeting with the new employee, Case Worker and/or Disability Employment Support Officer to discuss induction prior to commencement. This may include:

- Disclosure to colleagues
- Management Plan
- Work expectations
- Concerns and perceptions

Please contact the Disability Employment Support Officer if you have any queries regarding the commencement of a person with a disability.

On-going support and supervision of a person with a disability

As a manager, your responsibility for a person with a disability is the same as for any other staff member. Staff with a disability should be encouraged to develop their skills through providing access to appropriate development opportunities.

Your expectations of a person's ability to perform tasks will affect the way a person delivers those tasks, so it is important to set realistic but challenging expectations. Expectations should be captured and monitored through the Work Performance Plan.

Work Performance Plans should be created for all staff outlining your's and the employee's expectation for the position. The Work Performance Plan should be the tool in which positive and negative feedback is based.

How to employ a person with a disability on temporary contract – Up to three months

With the introduction of [Standard 2, Part 11 of the Public Sector Management Standard 2005](#) people with a disability can be employed through Disability Works Australia (DWA) on temporary contract. The service DWA offer is an effective & efficient method of filling short-term vacancies. Managers can use the following procedures to access the pool of assessed and diverse range of clients on DWA's temporary register.

- Management review the Duty Statement of the vacant position to ascertain if details regarding hours, duties, criteria etc are accurate. This will assist managers to consider possible variations to the position eg is job share or part time hours possible etc.

- The manager contacts [Disability Works Australia](#) to discuss the requirements of the position.
- DWA will present resumes directly to the manager for their review (the manager should allow at least two working days for DWA to present the resumes).
- The Manager contacts DWA to arrange informal interviews with selected applicants.
- A panel of at least two DHCS officers interview the DWA applicants. While not essential it is best practise to record the panels impressions and give reason for selection (for the record of the panel and to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants).
- The manager contacts DWA with feedback from the interviews and if a successful applicant has been found discuss start dates, position/workplace modifications etc.
- The manager completes a Staff Requisition Form and the form is sent to the Recruitment Officer of Human Resources for processing. Where a new position number has to be created the manager will also be required to complete and submit an Establishment Variation Form to the Recruitment Officer.
- A New Starter kit will be sent out to the successful applicant, which will include a police check form and contract. Please note, that temporary employees cannot commence with the Department until a favourable police check has been returned by the AFP and the Contract signed & returned by the employee.
- Disability Works Australia and the Disability Employment Agencies do not provide a Payroll service. It is preferred that all temporary employees be signed to DHCS for payroll purposes, otherwise a private recruitment agency such as SOS Recruitment or Smalls will need to be used to Payroll new starters.

For information regarding your responsibilities as a manager post selection please refer to After Selection found in this document.

Temporary (over 6 months) & Permanent Recruitment

The [ACTPS Employment Framework for People with a Disability](#) outlines a new modified merit recruitment process that will operate in partnership with Disability Works Australia. Further information regarding this process will be available once supporting legislation has been enacted.

Contacts

Remove all references to Disability Employment support officer

Your Injury Prevention and Management Unit

Injury Prevention and Management Unit
Level 1, 10 Rudd St, Canberra City
Phone: (02) 620

Recruitment

Shared Services

Advice for applicants

General employment advice

Where does DHCS advertise their vacant positions?

All permanent positions are advertised in the ACT Government Gazette and on the [DHCS Website](#). The majority of permanent positions and long term temporary positions are advertised in newspapers such as Saturday's The Canberra Times, the Koori Mail and The Australian.

[Disability Works Australia](#) (DWA), a disability recruitment coordination service, has been contracted by the ACT Government to work with Disability Employment Services across the ACT to encourage and support applications from people with a disability. All ACT Public service positions are now being advertised on the DWA website.

How do I apply for permanent and long-term temporary positions within DHCS?

Once you have seen or been advised of an advertised position you believe is a good fit for your skills and experience, you will need to formally apply for the position as follows:

- Contact the advertised Contact Officer or visit the [DHCS website](#) to obtain the Application Package, which will consist of an [Application Cover Sheet](#), Duty Statement and the Selection Criteria ([Disability Works Australia](#) or your specialist Disability Employment Agency can also provide you with these documents).
- Your response to the Selection Criteria is essentially the part of your application that is assessed during the short-listing process, so it is important to spend the time to get it right.
- Address the Selection Criteria using a separate heading for each of the criteria. Your response should demonstrate the skills, knowledge and experience that is applicable to the position.
- Applications should be typed or neatly handwritten.
- All applicants are required to have a knowledge and understanding of the Department's Customer Service Standards, which can be downloaded from the Internet.
- If you require additional support or special arrangements for the interview please add the details of your requirements in the space provided on the Job Application Cover Sheet.
- Applications should be received by the Recruitment Officer, by the closing date specified on the job advertisement, unless the Chairperson has approved an extension.

- Please note that receipt of your application will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

What happens to my application?

Once the closing date for an advertised position is reached, all applications are given to the Chairperson of the Interview Panel. The Interview Panel, usually consisting of two to three people from the department and in some cases a Union delegate, will short-list the applications and arrange interviews.

If you have not been short-listed for interview you will not receive formal notification until the process is finalised. If you are unsuccessful, you are entitled to contact the Chairperson for feedback on your application. This could be a useful way of improving your chances next time!

If you have been successful in winning an interview, you will be contacted by the Chairperson to arrange an interview time. Please advise the Contact Officer of any additional support or special requirements for the interview (even if you have included the requirements on the Job Application Cover Sheet).

The interview

The interview is a formal process with pre-determined questions being asked of all applicants and the applicant's responses graded for rating purposes.

The interview questions are largely based on the Selection Criteria, so ensure that you re-familiarise yourself with your application. Consider the challenges you've experienced that will illustrate to the Panel your skills, knowledge and experience to meet the criteria.

Some applicants choose to prepare notes and take them to interview along with their application to help remind them of questions they would like to ask or details they want to share.

People with a disability should consider if they will choose to disclose their disability at interview. If you are going to disclose your disability at interview, consider the purpose of your disclosure and how your disability may impact your ability to perform your duties so you are ready to discuss workplace or position modifications.

At interview remember that:

- It is expected that you will take your time and consider the question before answering;
- If the question is unclear, ask for it to be clarified;
- People with a disability who choose to disclose their condition should feel confident to inform the Panel regarding the likely work/position modification that will be required.
- Give complete answers. Do not assume because an interviewer may know you from a previous or your existing position, or you have mentioned certain details in your application, that you can omit appropriate details.

What will I be assessed on?

Selection is based on the rating each applicant receives across the three assessment areas of:

- Application;
- Performance at interview; and
- Referee Reports.

The principles of merit, natural justice and social justice must be maintained during the selection processes.

After the interview?

If you are successful, you will be contacted by the Chairperson, and a verbal offer of appointment made. This will be followed by a Letter of Offer and New Starter Pack sent out to you.

For people with a disability, prior to commencement ensure your new manager understands any workplace/position description modifications and support that may be required for you to reach your potential within the position. If you feel you need assistance with this contact the Disability Employment Support Officer.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive a letter notifying them of the outcome. In this situation you are entitled to contact the Chairperson for feedback on your application and we encourage you to do this.

Registering for temporary employment

DHCS Managers may choose to fill a short-term (up to 3 months) vacancy by using the Department's Temporary Register. To register your interest in temporary work within DHCS you will need to:

- Contact the Human Resource Officer on 6205check whose number to have the Temporary Register Application Form sent out to you.
- Complete the Form and return it along with your up-to-date resume to the Human Resource Officer.

We suggest that your Resume/Curriculum Vitae includes the following information:

- Your full name and contact details
- AGS Number (if applicable)
- Citizenship status
- Current Employer & Job details
- Employment History
- Educational qualifications and training
- Relevant professional and community involvement

Your Resume and Temporary Register Application form will then be kept on file for 12 months during which time if a Manager identifies you as a potential candidate you will be invited to an informal interview. There is no guarantee of placement.

Employment opportunities for people with a disability

The Department is committed to providing equal access to Public Sector employment opportunities to people with a disability.

The following section will provide information to people with a disability who are interested in applying for DHCS positions. In addition to the following notes, please read all of the general pages on applying for DHCS positions.

Disability Works Australia

Disability Works Australia (DWA, a disability recruitment coordination service), can be contacted by employers who would like to employ a staff member with a disability. DWA has been contracted by the ACT Government to work with Disability Employment Services across the ACT to encourage and

support applications from people with a disability. All ACT Public Service positions are now being advertised on the DWA website.

DWA and your specialist Disability Employment Agency (DEA) can assist you to access both permanent and temporary positions within the ACTPS. The Employment Framework for People with a Disability strategy endorses positive discrimination. Your registration with a DEA will allow you to access the benefits of this new strategy.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services

Work Training Scheme

CRS Australia is an agency of the Australian Government Department of Human Services that assists people with a disability, injury or health condition to return to work. CRS Australia has been working closely with the ACT Government to assist in the implementation of the ACT Government Employment Framework for People with Disability. CRS Australia assists the ACT Government to provide **work experience** for people with disabilities through a program known as the Work Training Scheme. Qualified allied health professional staff discuss the workplace needs with the employer and match the right person for the job to achieve sustainable employment outcomes. CRS Australia ensures any modifications to the workplace or duties are suitable for both the employer and employee. Further information can be found on at website <http://www.crsaustralia.gov.au/>

Why should I disclose that I have a disability?

One of the issues you may face as a person with a disability when applying for positions is whether or not to disclose your disability to potential employers. In making this decision, it is important to know your rights under the [ACT Discrimination Act 1991](#) and [Federal Privacy Act 1998](#).

There is no legal obligation for an applicant or employee to disclose their disability, unless it is likely to affect their performance to meet the inherent requirements of a position.

(Information courtesy of “[Choosing Your Path](#)” website)

The priority for the Department is to select employees who add value to the organisation. Your disclosure does not impact your chances due to the Departments principle of merit, so you can freely consider some of the benefits of sharing your experiences:

- Demonstrate your suitability to the position and Department;
- Demonstrate personal qualities, abilities, problem solving skills and other work based skills that may have been developed as a consequence of your disability;
- Provide specific information about your disability to dispel any mistaken or stereotyped views about your ability to perform in the job;
- Provide information about your disability and how you manage it in your daily life and workplace; and
- Establish how your disability may affect the job and possible work related adjustments to overcome any limitations and how these have been achieved in previous employment, education and/or other experiences.

Can I ask for the position description to be modified?

Yes. It is policy to make adjustments in the workplace to accommodate the needs of people with a disability. This includes adjusting the work environment and/or adjusting the job tasks within the boundaries of reasonable adjustment. It is appropriate to discuss workplace/position modifications at interview.

Is there a Medical Assessment?

All permanent DHCS employees undergo a pre-employment medical assessment. This is to ensure you are fit to perform the duties of your job and is not concerned with any conditions/disabilities that do not affect the inherent requirements of the position.

What can I do if I feel I have been discriminated against?

If you feel you have been discriminated against because of your disability, please contact the departments Workplace Diversity Contact Officer or Disability Employment Support Officer who can help to clarify any questions you may have regarding the Department's protocols or issues regarding the recruitment process.

If you wish to make a complaint and would prefer to use an external organisation, contact the [ACT Human Rights Office](#). The ACT Human Rights Office is a small, independent office headed by the ACT Discrimination Commissioner. The office investigates and conciliates complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment and vilification within the ACT.

Contacts & Links

DHCS Contacts

The Manager, Injury Prevention and Management Unit

Please contact:
James hogben
Team Leader
Injury Prevention and Management Unit
Level1, 10 Rudd Street, Canberra City
Phone: 620 50448

Your Workplace Diversity Contact Officers

Add list from Intranet of WDCO

Disability Employment Agencies

The following agencies may be contacted by either people with disabilities seeking work or employers who would like to employ a staff member with a disability.

[Disability Works Australia](#)

Disability Works Australia has been contract by the ACT Government to provide the following services to each ACT Government Department:

- Actively promote the diversity and inclusiveness of the ACT Public Service, as an employer of people with a disability, to the wider ACT community;
- Actively promote diversity in the workplace through relevant communication strategies;
- Actively promote work opportunities (suitable to the target group) within the target agency;

- Establish appropriate marketing strategies promoting the ACT Public Service as an employer to the talent pool of people with a disability;
- Assist the ACT Public Service to develop partnerships with local tertiary institutions to encourage and support pre-work training of people with a disability;
- Organise pre-placement work visits to identify and address any work requirements to support the effective employment of people with a disability in the workplace;
- Biennially review ACT Public Service workplaces to assess sustainability of employment of people with a disability;
- Provide relevant training to ACT Public Service managers to enhance inclusive workplace practices; and
- Actively seek job opportunities.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services

CRS Australia assists people with a disability, injury or health condition to get and/or keep a job. A specialised vocational rehabilitation program is delivered by allied health professionals and tailored to individual needs. A program may include:

- Assessment of (functional and physical) work capacity
- Vocational counselling
- Short-term employment skills training
- Fitness and work conditioning programs
- Workplace assessments or modifications
- Job placement assistance and post-placement support

Job seekers are referred to CRS Australia via a Job Capacity Assessment (JCA). Call your local Centrelink office to arrange a JCA.

CRS Australia also assists injured workers to return to work and provides advice on safe workplaces and safe work practices.

For more information, call 1800 624 824 or visit www.crsaustralia.gov.au.

Advance Personnel

Advance Personnel is a specialist employment agency providing quality services to people with a disability and employers. We have been established since 1989 and have a proven track record of working successfully within the employment sector.

If you are looking for work and have a disability Advance Personnel has a range of services available including employment preparation, skills identification and development, job search assistance, on the job training with post placement support and career development.

For employer we can offer:

Job matching, job design, advisory support about disability, on-the job training and support and assistance to access workplace modifications.

All our services come at no cost to either the employee or the employer.

For further information about our agency please phone us or visit our website.

Phone: 02 6285 2466
Fax/TTY: 02 6282 2320
E-mail: jobs@advance.org.au
Website: <http://www.advance.org.au/>

Work Ways

Work-Ways is a specialised employment agency that provides individualised support to people with a mental illness to obtain and maintain employment.

We can provide work ready dedicated staff.

Work-Ways services include:

- Career counselling
- Pre-employment preparation
- Assistance with work place adjustments and return to work plans
- Networks to other Community resources
- Job in jeopardy assistance
- Access to wage subsidies and the supported wage system
- Education programs on mental health issues
- Strategies to assist with the promotion of mental wellness in the workplace

Phone: 02 62 473611
Fax: 02 62 473640
E-mail: admin@work-ways.com.au
Website: www.work-ways.com.au

Unitronics

Unitronics has been employing people with disabilities who have high support needs since 1983. It is a Centre located within the School of Professional and Community Education of the University of Canberra.

Employees of Unitronics are staff of the University and engage in two fields of work:

- Electrical and electronic assembly, and
- Mail out and distribution of printed materials

Unitronics also participates in the academics work of the University and contributes to the advancements of contemporary good practices that supports workers with disability.

Phone: 02 6201 2903
Fax: 02 6201 5360
E-mail: unitron@comedu.canberra.edu.au

Job Solve ACT Inc

Jobsolve is an open employment service that helps people with disabilities to find and maintain jobs. Our staff talk to clients to find and establish their existing skills and indications of their preferred area of employment.

The resulting job search focuses on the client's stated desires and abilities. Once on the job we can provide initial training and on-going employment support.

Potential clients need to attend two interviews and, where possible, provide at least two contacts who are familiar with the applicant's work or school performance.

Phone: 02 6280 6032
Fax: 02 6280 5929
E-mail: admin@jobsolve.org.au

Work Places

Are you...

- An adult with a disability serious about finding and keeping work?
- An employer who needs skilled and committed employees?
- Interested in finding out more about the value employees with a disability bring to the workplace? WorkPlaces is a program of Community Programs Association (CPA) which specialises in assisting people with a disability to find meaningful and ongoing employment.

Workplaces services include:

- Job search assistance
- On-the-job support
- Career development
- Accredited training (CPA is a Registered Training Organisation) WorkPlaces assist people in open employment and business services in horticulture, cleaning and collating.

WorkPlaces also provides employers, co-workers and the community with information, training and support in relation to the employment of people with disabilities.

Phone: 02 6257 7088
Fax: 02 62577099
E-mail: wkplaces@goldweb.com.au
Website: <http://www.cpainc.com.au/>

Koomarri

The Koomarri Association provides a range of employment options to people who primarily have an intellectual disability, as well as a support and advisory service to employers. These options include open employment, supported employment and combinations of training and support options depending on the individual requirements of people with disabilities.

The Koomarri Association also operates a number of businesses that employ people with disabilities.

- Koomarri Gardens and Maintenance (a garden and grounds maintenance business)
- The Cut Cloth Shop (a commercial rag cutting operation)
- Koomarri Queanbeyan Fresh Flowers
- Pack'n;Post(a packaging and mail out service)
- Ezi Iron(a commercial ironing service)

From time to time the association has openings for new clients in these businesses and employment options, depending on work demands and movement of existing clients through the agency.

Phone: 02 6280 6143

Fax: 02 6239 1603
E-mail: reception@koomarri.asn.au

Centacare

Centacare Open employment Program is a small, client focussed program, which assists people with a wide range of disabilities to find and maintain employment.

The program provides assistance with access and training, job preparation, job seeking and ongoing workplace support. The Program specialises in helping people with mental health issues and hearing impairment to seek employment. The program is outreach based and appointments can be made by contacting the Program directly.

Phone: 02 6162 6800
Fax: 02 6249 6886
E-mail: open@ainslie-village.org

ACE

ACE National Network is the peak industry body representing agencies providing open employment services to people with disabilities across Australia. The national office is located in Victoria, Ph: 9411 4033

Related topics

[Public Service Employment Framework for People with a Disability](#)

ACT Chief Minister's Department outline and options to download the Framework.

["Employ Able"](#)

People with a disability in the NSW Public Sector.

["Choosing Your Path – Disclosure: It's a Personal Decision"](#)

Enhancing post secondary education, training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

[ACT Human Rights Office](#)

The ACT Human Rights Office is a small, independent office. Their mandate is to promote human rights in the ACT by administering the Discrimination Act 1991 and the Human Rights Act 2004.

[Discrimination Act 1991](#)

ACT Legislation register.

[Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

Commonwealth of Australia Law.

Community Support Services

[Spinal Cord Injuries Australia](#)

[Australian Cerebral Palsy Association](#)

Information about physical disabilities.

[National Council on Intellectual Disability](#)

Information about intellectual disabilities.

[Mental Health Foundation ACT](#)

Information about mental illness.

[Vision Information Line](#)

Information about visual impairment.

[Australian Communication Exchange](#)

Information about hearing or speech impairments.

