

State Disability Plan and the Victorian Autism Plan 2027-2031 submission

July 2026

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Safe and Equal is based on Wurundjeri Country. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional and ongoing custodians of the lands on which we live and work, and we pay respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded and recognise First Nations peoples' rights to self-determination and continuing connections to land, waters and community.

Honouring Victim Survivors

Safe and Equal acknowledges the strength and resilience of adults, children and young people who have experienced family violence and recognises that it is essential that responses to family violence are informed by their expert knowledge and advocacy. We pay respects to those who have not survived and acknowledge the lasting impacts of this preventable violence on families and communities.

About Safe and Equal

Safe and Equal is the peak body for Victorian organisations that specialise in family and gender-based violence across the continuum, including primary prevention, early intervention, response and recovery. Our vision is a world where everyone is safe, respected and thriving, living free from family and gender-based violence.

As a peak, we work with and for our members to prevent and respond to violence, building a better future for adults, children and young people experiencing, at risk of, or recovering from family and gender-based violence. While we know that most family violence is perpetrated by men against women and children, we recognise that family violence impacts people across a diversity of gender identities, social and cultural contexts, and within various intimate, family and other relationships. We apply an intersectional feminist lens in our work to address the gendered drivers of violence, and how these overlap and intersect with additional forms of violence, oppression and inequality.

© 2026 Safe and Equal

Author: Amy Tapsell, Policy and Advocacy Advisor

Key Contact: Dr Joumanah El-Matrah, CEO

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners	2
Honouring Victim Survivors	2
About Safe and Equal	2
Introduction	4
1. Prevalence of family violence against people with disabilities	5
2. Applying a family violence lens to disability services and supports	6
NDIS reform	7
Changes to the NDIS must not undermine safety infrastructure	7
Recommendation	8
Disability supports and services	8
Recommendations	9
3. Applying a disability lens to specialist family violence services	9
The Family Violence and Disability Practice Lead Initiative (FVDPLI)	9
The Disability and Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative (DFVCRI)	9
Recommendations	10
4. Safe, accessible and affordable housing	10
Recommendation	11
Accessibility and affordability of social housing	11
Recommendation	12
Conclusion	12
Summary of recommendations	13

Introduction

Safe and Equal welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)'s *State Disability Plan 2027-2031*. The new State Disability Plan will build on the systemic reform set out in the *Inclusive Victoria State Disability Plan 2022-2026* to ensure that Victorians with disabilities continue to be included, safe and able to access opportunities to improve their quality of life.

As stated in the *2026-2027 State Budget*, government has announced their commitment to making life easier, safer and more affordable for everyone. This includes the estimated 1.1 million Victorians with disabilities.¹ The *Inclusive Victoria State Disability Plan 2022-2026* rightly recognises changing lives requires action. This has commenced with 175 actions across 4 pillars being undertaken to improve inclusion, wellbeing, fairness, safety and opportunity for Victorians with disabilities. While reporting demonstrates progress against all of these pillars,² it is essential that these pillars and actions are the foundation on which the *State Disability Plan 2027-2031* is built and that momentum is sustained.

With reform and change underway for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the *State Disability Plan 2027-2031* provides an opportunity to provide reassurance and support for all Victorians with disabilities. Victoria must remain committed to eliminating obstacles that limit people with disabilities from fully participating in our community.³

As the peak body for Victorian organisations that specialise in family and gender-based violence across the continuum, our submission focuses on family violence and disability including the role of safe, accessible and affordable housing as a critical foundation for victim survivors with disabilities.

This submission outlines four key areas:

1. The prevalence of family violence against people with disabilities
2. Applying a family violence lens to disability services and supports
3. Applying a disability lens to specialist family violence services
4. Safe, accessible and affordable housing

¹ Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) (2025), *Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan midway report 2022–2024*, Victorian Government. <https://www.vic.gov.au/state-disability-plan-midway-report>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

1. Prevalence of family violence against people with disabilities

Violence perpetrated against women, girls and gender diverse people with disabilities is a form of human rights abuse.⁴ People with disabilities experience higher rates across all forms of violence,⁵ including family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV).⁶ Nationally, people with disabilities experience violence that is more frequent, prolonged and involves multiple perpetrators.⁷

Family violence perpetrated against people with disabilities refers to patterns of violence in which an adult using family violence deliberately harms a person with disability, and/or exploits related supports or care systems as a means to exert power and control. While people with disabilities can experience the same forms of family violence as people without disabilities, they also experience distinct types of violence.⁸ Some tactics of family violence that are more likely to be experienced by people with disabilities, include the withdrawal of medication, care and other assistance, the denial of access to social and other supports and exploitation and/or violation of bodily autonomy including reproductive coercion.⁹ In the context of family violence, financial abuse is often used to perpetuate dependency and isolation, including through the misuse or control of disability support payments.¹⁰ This violence is too often hidden,¹¹ but has detrimental, long-term impacts on people with disabilities.

Women with disabilities frequently face the intersecting impacts of gender-based and disability-based discrimination, which leads to higher rates of violence.¹² Australian women with disabilities have been reported to be around three times more likely to have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) since the age of 15 (30%), compared to men with disability (11%).¹³ In addition, women and gender diverse people with disabilities are much more likely to experience violence and abuse from their domestic partners over the course of their lives.¹⁴

⁴ Our Watch & Women with Disabilities Victoria (2022) *Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities*, Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/changing-the-landscape>

⁵ Sutherland, G (2020) *Violence against people with disability – Fact sheets*, University of Melbourne. <https://mispgh.unimelb.edu.au/research-groups/centre-for-health-policy/disability-and-health-unit/violence-against-people-with-disabilities>

⁶ Australian Institute Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2026) *People with disability*, AIHW. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/population-groups/people-with-disability>

⁷ Safe and Equal (unpublished) *MARAM Risk in Context: People with Disabilities*, Melbourne.

⁸ Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) *Fact Sheet 3 – Violence against women with disabilities*, WDV. <https://wdv.org.au/wdv-fact-sheets-and-statements/>

⁹ Sutherland G, Krnjacki L, Hargrave J, Vaughan C, Llewellyn G & Kavanagh A (2021) *No More Excuses: Final report – primary prevention of violence against women with disability*. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne and Respect Victoria. <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/no-more-excuses-primary-prevention-violence-against-women-disability>

¹⁰ Walter, B., Chung, D., Waters, R., & Watts, L (2024) Exploring Lived Experience of Family and Domestic Violence Against Women With Disability: A Scoping Review, *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 25(3), 1925-1937. doi: 10.1177/15248380231201813

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) *Fact Sheet 3 – Violence against women with disabilities*, WDV. <https://wdv.org.au/wdv-fact-sheets-and-statements/>

¹³ Australian Institute Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2026) *People with disability*, AIHW. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/population-groups/people-with-disability>

¹⁴ Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (2023) *Final Report – Volume 3: Nature and extent of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation*, Australian Government. <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/final-report-volume-3-nature-and-extent-violence-abuse-neglect-and-exploitation>; Walter, B., Chung, D., Waters, R., & Watts, L (2024) Exploring Lived Experience of Family and Domestic

It is important to highlight that people with disabilities are not a homogenous group. They are highly diverse across age, cultural background, gender identity, sexuality and disability type.¹⁵ While violence against people with disabilities is primarily driven by ableism and sexism,¹⁶ this does not occur in isolation from other intersecting forms of oppression, include racism, colonialism, classism, heteronormativity, cisnormativity, homo-, bi- and transphobia, ageism and class discrimination.¹⁷ For example, *The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability* found that among LGBTIQ+ people with disabilities, gender diverse people with disabilities experienced the highest rates of family violence often repeatedly across their lives.¹⁸

Family violence has also been found to be a major driver of disability and chronic health conditions.¹⁹ Family violence can directly contribute to a range of chronic health conditions and disabilities, including stress-related autoimmune disorders, chronic anxiety, depression and other mental health issues.²⁰ These impacts may result in disability or exacerbate existing disability.

Therefore, an integrated approach is needed to support victim survivors with disabilities. Disability services need to adopt a family violence lens in their work, and in turn, specialist family violence services need to be better equipped to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

2. Applying a family violence lens to disability services and supports

Disability services and supports play an important role in recognising, responding to and supporting victim survivors with disabilities. Victim survivors with disabilities may experience social isolation and face additional barriers to reporting and seeking support. These barriers can be particularly pronounced when a person with disabilities is reliant on the person using violence (PUV) for support with care and everyday activities.

Violence Against Women with Disability: A Scoping Review, *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 25(3), 1925-1937. doi: 10.1177/15248380231201813

¹⁵ Zbukvic, R & McGregor, E (Forthcoming) *Risk in Context: People with Disabilities*, Melbourne: Safe and Equal.

¹⁶ Our Watch (2026) *Preventing violence against women with disabilities*, Our Watch.

<https://www.ourwatch.org.au/preventing-violence/women-with-disabilities>

¹⁷ Our Watch & Women with Disabilities Victoria (2022) *Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities*, Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/changing-the-landscape>

¹⁸ Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (2023) *Final Report – Volume 3: Nature and extent of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation*, Australian Government. <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/final-report-volume-3-nature-and-extent-violence-abuse-neglect-and-exploitation>

¹⁹ Our Watch & Women with Disabilities Victoria (2022) *Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities*, Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/changing-the-landscape>

²⁰ Dube, SR, Fairweather, D, Pearson, WS, Felitti, VJ, Anda, RF & Croft, JB (2009) Cumulative Childhood Stress and Autoimmune Diseases in Adults, *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 71(2), 243-250. doi: 10.1097/PSY.0b013e3181907888; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2023) *Health outcomes*, AIHW. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/responses-and-outcomes/health-outcomes>

NDIS reform

Approximately 17% of Victorians live with a disability or disabilities, and only just over 10% are eligible for a NDIS plan.²¹ The planned changes to the NDIS, including the commissioning of new support coordination and connection functions, provides an opportunity to align and strengthen state supports for victim survivors with disabilities, and to provide coordinated, person-centred access to services, whether or not a victim survivor with disability receives NDIS supports.

Violence perpetrated against people with disabilities does not just happen once or alone but occurs via a complex relationship between individual circumstances, service level deficiencies and systemic issues.²² Victim survivors with disabilities must navigate multiple systems, including the NDIS, health, mental health, aged care, housing, compensation and family violence systems. Many of these systems are already operating under significant pressure and demand, meaning careful attention will need to be made to ensure that these systems remain readily accessible and responsive for people with disability support needs.²³

While the exact impact of the planned NDIS changes on victim survivors remains unclear, there is a significant risk that victim survivors with disabilities will be disproportionately affected. Anecdotal evidence highlights that the proposed changes to the NDIS will have impacts on both existing participants and the much larger cohort of people who have not previously accessed or applied for the NDIS. NDIS participants and people with disabilities who do not receive NDIS funding are therefore likely to form a substantial group for whom there are increased risks for unmet support needs, social isolation and family violence. This may further exclude people with disability from full participation in community life and limit opportunities to safely disclose family violence.

Changes to the NDIS must not undermine safety infrastructure

Any changes to the NDIS will likely have significant implications for people with disabilities experiencing family violence, leaving fewer alternatives available to victim survivors trying to escape danger.²⁴ Reductions in access to supports risks increasing isolation and exacerbating conditions where family violence, including abuse, neglect and exploitation go undetected.²⁵

Victim survivors with disabilities must be able to access flexible, person-centred services and resources that enable them to remain connected, visible and safe.²⁶ Critically, victim survivor's circumstances can change rapidly and with short notice, due to escalating safety risk. Victim survivors with disabilities must be able to change providers or access alternative services with minimal delay,

²¹ Victorian Government (2022) *About people with disability*, Victorian Government <https://www.vic.gov.au/state-disability-plan/about-plan/about-people-disability>

²² The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissions (NDIS Commission) (2025) *Risk Factors and Prevention of Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability*, NDIS Commission. <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/our-research/risk-factors-and-prevention-violence-abuse-neglect-and>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Britt, J (2026) *For women with disability fleeing violence, NDIS reforms are making safety harder* Women's Agenda. <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/the-only-safe-place-is-the-one-shes-trying-to-leave/>

²⁵ Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA) (2026) *Submission: Gendered Risks of the NDIS Amendment Bill 2026*, WWDA. <https://wwda.org.au/our-resources/publication/gendered-risks-of-the-ndis-amendment-bill-2026/>

²⁶ Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA) (2026) *Submission: Gendered Risks of the NDIS Amendment Bill 2026*, WWDA. <https://wwda.org.au/our-resources/publication/gendered-risks-of-the-ndis-amendment-bill-2026/>; Dickinson, H & Ganon-Davey, E (2026) *Tightened eligibility and cuts to plans: what the NDIS changes mean for participants*, The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/tightened-eligibility-and-cuts-to-plans-what-the-ndis-changes-mean-for-participants-281147>

regardless of if there is a change in location, living arrangements or service providers due to family violence. Many public services operate with substantial waiting lists, which may compromise safety or increase risk. Access to services must be prioritised for victim survivors with disabilities, and this access must be swift without recommencing any waiting periods.

As changes to NDIS supports are implemented, it is essential that disability services are accessible, flexible and responsive to the changing needs of victim survivors with disabilities.

Recommendation

- Ensure disability services are equipped to respond quickly, safely and flexibly to the changing circumstances and safety needs of victim survivors with disabilities, with minimal delays

Disability supports and services

One of the proposed changes to the NDIS, includes the establishment of foundational supports. 'Foundational supports' are specific supports outside the NDIS,²⁷ which contribute towards a connected ecosystem of accessible, inclusive supports for people with disabilities. As these supports have not yet been fully developed, people with disabilities may be pushed into service gaps before appropriate supports exist.²⁸ This may disproportionately affect women, girls and gender diverse people with disabilities – commonly victim survivors of family violence – who already face under-recognition within the disability system.²⁹

Anecdotal evidence suggests that these foundational supports could support access to a range of community-based services, including allied and community health, engagement with activities of daily living such as with grocery shopping or housework and engagement with disability specific groups, as well as community groups and social activities. As these supports are developed, there is a key opportunity for dedicated workforce uplift to ensure that a family violence lens is embedded across foundational supports. This must include supporting alignment with the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework and co-designing foundational supports with victim survivors with disabilities to appropriately reflect lived experience. Embedding this early will also help reduce pressure on emerging foundational supports and adjacent sectors that may be required to absorb unmet needs as a result of NDIS reforms.

Strengthening family violence capability for existing disability services and settings is of equal importance. Safe and Equal member services have reported that there are ongoing challenges for Specialist Family Violence Services (SFVSS) in gaining access and providing support to victim survivors in Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) settings. Staff working in SIL and SDA often do not have the breadth of knowledge required to recognise family violence and may lack capacity, and access to training and resources to develop this expertise. Any family violence training provided must be aligned with the MARAM Framework.

²⁷ Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (2026) *Foundational supports for people with disability*, Australian Government. <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/foundational-supports-for-people-with-disability?language=en>

²⁸ Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA) (2026) *Submission: Gendered Risks of the NDIS Amendment Bill 2026*, WWDA. <https://wwda.org.au/our-resources/publication/gendered-risks-of-the-ndis-amendment-bill-2026/>

²⁹ Ibid.

Recommendations

- Ensure all foundational supports receive family violence capability building that is MARAM aligned and that they are co-designed with victim survivors with disabilities
- Strengthen family violence capability for existing disability services, including alignment with the MARAM framework

3. Applying a disability lens to specialist family violence services

Specialist family violence services (SFVSs) provide crisis responses and case management to victim survivors of family violence. Specialist family violence practitioners have a dedicated and distinct role in responding to victim survivors, through focus on a victim survivor's safety and managing risk posed by the PUV.³⁰

In Victoria, there are two initiatives that support workforce capacity and capability in responding to victim survivors with a disability – the Family Violence and Disability Practice Lead Initiative and the Disability and Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative. They act as complimentary initiatives which provide improved service delivery for victim survivors with disabilities and aim to strengthen system capability.

The Family Violence and Disability Practice Lead Initiative (FVDPLI)

The Family Violence and Disability Practice Lead Initiative (FVDPLI) was established to ensure people with disabilities who are at risk of or currently experiencing family violence or sexual assault receive support that is accessible, inclusive and tailored to their specific needs.³¹ Family Violence Disability Practice Leads (FDPLs) directly inform service delivery through providing expert advice on inclusive, disability-responsive practice and by helping to build workforce capability for the specialist family violence and sexual assault sectors.³²

The Disability and Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative (DFVCRI)

The Disability and Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative (DFVCRI) facilitates immediate crisis supports and practical help to people with disabilities who are experiencing family violence statewide. Supporting more than 180 victim survivors with disabilities each year, the DFVCRI provides assistance regardless of whether a NDIS plan is in place. The DFVCRI offers specialist disability advice and liaison, alongside access to brokerage.³³ Brokerage funding offered through the DFVCRI

³⁰ Safe and Equal (2026) *Specialist family violence services*, Safe and Equal. <https://safeandequal.org.au/working-in-family-violence/service-responses/specialist-family-violence-services/#>

³¹ Safe and Equal (2026) *Family Violence and Disability Practice Leader Initiative*, Safe and Equal. <https://safeandequal.org.au/working-in-family-violence/tailored-inclusive-support/people-with-disability/fvdpli/>

³² Ibid; Note: FDPLs are funded and situated within SFVSs across Victoria.

³³ Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) (2024) *Children, youth and families: Disability and family violence crisis response*, Victorian Government. <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/disability-and-family-violence-crisis-response>; Note: The DFVCRI is funded to employ one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Disability and Family Violence Liaison Officer, based at Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre.

helps victim survivors access critical resources and covers a wide range of supports, such as personal support workers and carers, disability and sensory aids, transport and other practical assistance. Victim survivors with disabilities may be required to relocate at short notice, which means leaving behind their essential supports, support networks and care arrangements that are non-negotiable for maintaining their safety, health and wellbeing.

By providing brokerage to victim survivors with disabilities that is tailored to meet their needs in crisis, the DFVCRI fills a critical service gap; the demand for this brokerage funding frequently exceeds available resourcing, with not all victim survivors able to access the full range of supports. Sustained and increased investment is needed to ensure the initiative can continue to meet demand and victim survivors with disabilities can access the full range of supports essential for their safety and rebuilding their lives.

Recommendations

- Continued investment in the Family Violence and Disability Practice Lead Initiative to support workforce capacity and capability
- Continued investment in the Disability and Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative and associated brokerage to ensure victim survivors with disabilities have access to timely and tailored support that meet their needs during crisis

4. Safe, accessible and affordable housing

Safe, accessible and affordable housing is a necessity for keeping victim survivors with disabilities, including children and young people, safe from family violence. Yet, across the housing continuum, our member services have identified that victim survivors with disabilities face barriers at every stage. People with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by a lack of suitable options, often struggling to find housing that is affordable, accessible and meets their disability-related needs.³⁴

Disability is diverse and people with disabilities have unique experiences and needs, including physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disabilities.³⁵ Disabilities can be permanent or temporary, visible or invisible.³⁶ Therefore, housing must reflect universal accessibility standards that are appropriate for all victim survivors with disabilities, including those with physical and/or cognitive disabilities, for single, adult victim survivors with disabilities and children with disabilities.

There are ongoing challenges faced by victim survivors with disabilities – many of whom are women – in accessing housing.³⁷ Evidence suggests that without access to secure housing, efforts to support women with disabilities to leave violence are unlikely to succeed.³⁸ If a victim survivor does not have

³⁴ Ballan, M, Freyer, M, & Romanelli, M (2024) Supporting the Housing Needs of Domestic Violence Shelter Residents: Considerations for Survivors With and Without Disabilities, *Housing Policy Debate*, 34(1), 90-107. doi: 10.1080/10511482.2022.2125336

³⁵ Department of Premier and Cabinet (2026) *Disability definition*, Victorian Government. <https://www.vic.gov.au/disability-access-and-inclusion-plan-2021-2025/disability-definition>

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) (2026) *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Review (Cth): Submission to the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Review*, Melbourne: WDV. <https://wdv.org.au/submissions/>

³⁸ Robinson, S, Valentine, K, Newton, BJ, Smyth, C, & Parmenter, N (2020) *Violence prevention and early intervention for mothers and children with disability: Building promising practice*, Sydney: ANROWS.

appropriate and affordable housing options, they will be trapped in the home; often forced to remain in a violent relationship.³⁹ Compounding this, the PUV may also be a primary carer for the person with disabilities.⁴⁰

Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, victim survivors with disabilities should be supported to remain safely in their home, while the PUV is held accountable and required to leave.⁴¹ Our member services report that remaining in the home can be particularly important for victim survivors with disabilities, as the home is familiar, more likely to be adapted for specific disability needs and accessible to supports and services. However, helping victim survivors with disabilities remaining safely in their homes will require greater investment in Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) responses.

Recommendation

- Continued investment in initiatives that facilitate victim survivors with disabilities to remain safely at home, such as Safe at Home programs and the Personal Safety Initiative (PSI)

Accessibility and affordability of social housing

People with disabilities are locked out of the private rental market.⁴² The recently published *Victorian Rental Affordability Snapshot 2026* found only one property available that was affordable for someone receiving the Disability Support Pension in Victoria.⁴³

At the same time, people with disabilities are overrepresented in social housing and are more likely to live in social housing compared to people without disability.⁴⁴ Approximately 38% of social housing tenancies in Australia have at least one person with a disability.⁴⁵ While Australia's new housing accessibility standards delivered under *The National Construction Code (NCC) 2022* should help to ensure that new homes better meet the needs of people with mobility-related disabilities, there continues to be a severe shortage of social housing in Victoria. The consequences of this are acutely felt by victim survivors of family violence. Currently, the wait for social housing is an average 17.3 months for those on the priority wait lists.⁴⁶ This timeline is likely longer for victim survivors with disabilities, as accessible social housing options may be even more limited.

<https://www.anrows.org.au/publication/violence-prevention-and-early-intervention-for-mothers-and-children-with-disability-building-promising-practice/>

³⁹ Britt, J (2026) *For women with disability fleeing violence, NDIS reforms are making safety harder* Women's Agenda. <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/the-only-safe-place-is-the-one-shes-trying-to-leave/>

⁴⁰ Australian Institute Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2026) *People with disability*, AIHW. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/population-groups/people-with-disability>

⁴¹ Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee (2023) *Inquiry into the Rental and Housing Affordability Crisis in Victoria*, Parliament of Victoria, <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/490daa/contentassets/90eeac3a41ca4c498ca4e1cffe125eb/committee-final-report.pdf>

⁴² Anglicare Australia (2026) *Victorian Rental Affordability Snapshot 2026*, Anglicare Australia. <https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/research/victorian-rental-affordability-snapshot-2026/>

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Aitken, Z & Kavenagh, M (2019) *Why housing is a major public health issue for Australians with disability*, University of Melbourne. <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/why-housing-is-a-major-public-health-issue-for-australians-with-disability>

⁴⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2025) *National social housing survey 2025: Social housing experiences for households with one or more people with disability*, AIHW. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/housing-assistance/national-social-housing-survey-2025/contents/social-housing-experiences-households-disability>

⁴⁶ Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) (2025) *Annual Report 2024-25*, Victorian Government. <https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/annual-report>

Modelling undertaken in conjunction with the *Victorian Housing Peaks Alliance* estimates that a minimum of 83,000 social homes are required by 2051 (approximately 3,300 per year) for victim survivors alone.⁴⁷ While far more social housing is needed in Victoria, exact data on the required social housing numbers to accommodate victim survivors with disabilities is limited.

Without a sufficient supply of accessible and affordable social housing options, victim survivors with disabilities are prevented from leaving the PUV, increasing their risk of ongoing harm and potential homelessness. Expanding Victoria's supply of social housing that is both affordable and accessible is therefore essential to enabling victim survivor safety and addressing the ongoing risk of homelessness experienced by people with disabilities.⁴⁸

Recommendation

- Commit to building more social homes in Victoria over the next decade, including alignment with the projected demand for victim survivors of family violence (83,000 by 2051)

Conclusion

People with disabilities are entitled to access the same opportunities as people without disabilities to live full, safe lives. While progress has been made, barriers still exist in accessing supports, services and housing. For family violence victim survivors with disabilities, these barriers affect their journey to safety, healing and recovery. The *State Disability Plan 2027-2031* must work towards ensuring that victim survivors with disabilities are included, safe and have access to what's needed to improve their quality of life.

⁴⁷ SGS Economics and Planning (2025) *Growing Social Housing: Data, insights and targets*, Melbourne: Victorian Housing Peaks Alliance. <https://apo.org.au/node/330589>

⁴⁸ Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) (2026) *Ending Homelessness for All: Submission to the Victorian State Disability Plan and State Autism Plan*, CHP. <https://chp.org.au/publication/submission-ending-homelessness-for-all/>

Summary of recommendations

- Ensure disability services are equipped to respond quickly, safely and flexibly to the changing circumstances and safety needs of victim survivors with disabilities, with minimal delays
- Ensure all foundational supports receive family violence capability building that is MARAM aligned and that they are co-designed with victim survivors with disabilities
- Strengthen family violence capability for existing disability services, including alignment with the MARAM framework
- Continued investment in the Family Violence and Disability Practice Lead Initiative to support workforce capacity and capability
- Continued investment in the Disability and Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative and associated brokerage to ensure victim survivors with disabilities have access to timely and tailored support that meet their needs during crisis
- Continued investment in initiatives that facilitate victim survivors with disabilities to remain safely at home, such as Safe at Home programs and the Personal Safety Initiative (PSI)
- Commit to building more social homes in Victoria over the next decade, including alignment with the projected demand for victim survivors of family violence (83,000 by 2051)