



National Disability Coordination Officer Program  
AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

## What is Disability

- **Nearly 1 in 5 Australians has one or more disabilities.** This means that sometime in your life you will have a disability and/or know, work with, love and/or have in your family a person with a disability.
- **A disability may be visible or hidden, may be permanent or temporary** and may have a minimal or substantial impact on a person's abilities. More than 80% of disabilities are invisible. Many people may not think of themselves as having a disability; however they may be eligible for reasonable adjustments in education or employment to help them reach their potential.
- **A disability may affect mobility, ability to learn, or ability to communicate easily.**
- **The *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* definition is broad and may include points that you had not previously considered as disability, including:**
  - total or partial loss of a person's bodily or mental functions
  - total or partial loss of a part of the body
  - the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
  - the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body
  - a disorder or malfunction that results in a person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
  - a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement, or that results in disturbed behaviour.
- **Although some people are born with disability, many people who currently have a disability may have spent much of their lives without it.** For example, people who have acquired their disability through a workplace incident or car accident, and people who may have acquired a disability as they age.

- **Examples of conditions that may be considered disability under the *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* include:**
  - **Chronic Medical Conditions**  
Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Crohn’s Disease, Arthritis
  - **Intellectual disabilities**  
Down Syndrome, Fragile X Syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
  - **Learning disabilities**  
Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Scotopic Sensitivity
  - **Mental Health Conditions**  
Depression, Anxiety Disorders, Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder
  - **Neurological conditions**  
Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Asperger’s
  - **Physical disabilities**  
Spinal Cord Injury, Cerebral Palsy
  - **Sensory disabilities**  
Hearing, Vision

## Who Are People with Disability?

- People with disability are part of every section of our community: men, women, and children; employers and employees; students and teachers; indigenous and non-indigenous; customers; and citizens.
- The only thing that distinguishes a person with disability is that they may be unable to do certain things in the same way as most people in the mainstream of society without some form of adaptation, or alteration to assist them overcome the effects of their disability. No two people with the same disability experience their disability in the same way.

Source

**Job Access**

[www.jobaccess.gov.au/content/Working-with-people-with-disability](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/content/Working-with-people-with-disability)

**Australian Employers Network on Disability**

[www.employersnetworkondisability.com.au](http://www.employersnetworkondisability.com.au)

Scan to access  
resource online.



[westernsydney.edu.au/ndco](http://westernsydney.edu.au/ndco)