

CITY OF BELMONT

Accessible Business Program Guide

Friendly For All



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BELMONT
CITY OF OPPORTUNITY



Acknowledgment of Country

The City of Belmont acknowledges the Noongar Whadjuk people as the Traditional Owners of this land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We further acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs, connection and relationship with this land which continues today.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living within the City of Belmont.

Statement by the Co-Design Group



Members of the Accessible Business Program Co-design team

Having an Accessible Business Program here in the City of Belmont will be of value to both consumers and local businesses. Consumers will have a way of identifying businesses that are welcoming and accessible when making decisions of where to go to spend their money while businesses will have a greater understanding that accessibility is not only about the physical environment but also about attitudes and the level of support provided. We believe the program will create additional business opportunities by appealing to a new and expanding market of customers not only those living with disability but the growing number of elderly patrons and families with strollers.

The co-design process has brought together persons with a lived experience of disability and business representatives to discuss improvement opportunities here in the City of Belmont. From a business perspective we have a better understanding that improving accessibility for business owners need not be expensive or onerous. Small changes to both infrastructure and importantly, awareness amongst staff can be a 'win-win'. From the perspective of people living with disability there is the recognition of the interest and willingness of business to do things better. Being part of this process has been very rewarding.

Acknowledgement

This Guide and related documents have been provided with the permission of its developers, including City of Melbourne, Moreland City Council and Australian Human Rights Commission.

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Introduction

People living with disability are customers and consumers. They spend money. But are they spending money in your business? There are many reasons why a person would be attracted to your business – quality service, being a local business, products they wish purchase, or in the case of a café/restaurant to meet with friends and be entertained. But can they access your business? Is there a barrier – physical or otherwise - preventing them from spending money in your business?

Accessible businesses can create supportive environments for all and offer potential economic and social benefits by better meeting the needs of the entire population. Across the last decade, there has been growth in the number of people living with disability. For this reason, there has been an increased focus on accessible environments to meet the emerging and diverse needs of our community. 1 in 6 Australians will experience disability in their lifetime – that is 18% of the population and your customer base.

While the Accessible Business Program has been designed to ensure businesses are accessible for people living with disability, there are many others in the community who are looking for an accessible business. This includes:

- People with age-related mobility impairments – their families and friends
- Parents or grandparents with prams and strollers their family and friends.
- People living with dementia – their families and friends

These groups add up to a lot of customers who may choose to use or not use your business.

The City is committed to ensuring access and inclusion for all residents, including people living with disability, who live in or visit the City of Belmont. In response to the community's emerging needs, the City developed the Accessible Business Program (ABP) which is also a key target of the City's Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2021.

The program has been developed using a Co-design Model. The Model draws on those who have lived experience as key contributors to the design of the project. Two co-design groups have been developed to inform this project. The first group of people represents lived experience of different disabilities and have assisted in identifying key barriers and potential solutions to make business more accessible. A second group was formed from the business sector who assisted in developing materials and advising the City on how best to design the program to attract business participation. This ABP Guide, checklist, factsheets, and training videos can help you and your staff make your business more accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

This ABP is based on four pillars:

- Make It Easy for People to Find Me
- Make It Easy for People to Get In
- Make It Easy for People to Move Around
- Make The Most of Our Team and Customer Service

The aim of the program to assist you as a business to:

- Meet the community's expectations that all people, of all abilities, should have access to goods and services;
- Ensure you don't miss out on potential customers and revenue and;
- Meet your legal requirements.

Background

Access issues affect everyone, especially people living with disability, older residents and those using prams. The purpose of this Guide is to assist the community by improving access for these groups, in particular people living with disability, and assist businesses in fulfilling their legal obligations, accessing new customers, and increasing business potential.

There is a range of support and assistance available to help your business achieve this, details of which are contained at the end of this document.

Definition of Disability

Disability is a continuing condition that restricts a person's day-to-day activities. It is defined in the *Disability Services Act* (1993) (Western Australia) as an:

"Intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments".

Social Model of Disability

Ensuring Australia is an inclusive society for people living with disability means acknowledging the social model of disability. This model recognises that societal attitudes, practices, and structures, rather than an individual's impairment, can restrict and prevent people living with disability from economic participation, social inclusion, and equality.

When thinking about disability in pursuit of the social model, we can say that, regardless of disability type, disability impacts individuals by affecting their capacities and/or abilities in 1 of 4 areas:

Physical Capacity

Including but not limited to wheelchair users, amputees, reduced or restricted physical mobility, dexterity, and control. Some of the key issues which impact inclusion for people with physical disabilities are public attitudes and understanding, communication and

assistance techniques and mobility (e.g., moving from A to B in the environment) and ability to control movement in one's own personal space.

Visual Acuity

Includes but is not limited to total blindness, legal blindness (less than 10% vision) and low or restricted vision conditions. Some of the key issues impacting on inclusion for people with vision impairments are public attitude and understanding, communication and assistance techniques, independent safe mobility and information provision.

Hearing Acuity

Includes but is not limited to deafness and reduced hearing conditions. Some of the key issues impacting on inclusion for people with hearing impairments are public attitude and understanding, communication and assistance techniques and information provision.

Cognitive Capacity

Includes any condition that impacts on a person's thought processes - intellectual, psychiatric, mental health, dementia, psychosis, schizophrenia. Some of the key issues impacting on inclusion for people with cognitive disability are public attitude and understanding, communication and assistance techniques and information provision.

Barriers to Accessibility

Accessibility is an umbrella term for all aspects which influence a person's ability to function within an environment (*Warsson and Stahl, 2003*). Put another way, accessibility is simply a measure of how a person can participate in an activity.

There are a multitude of different barriers faced by people living with disability as they attempt to build a good life and pursue their citizenship entitlements. In businesses, Staff at all levels and in all divisions need to have some understanding of the types of barriers and how they might impact on people with different abilities and take this into account when at work.

Most of these barriers can be categorised under one of the following types:

Attitudinal Barriers

People related issues

This is by far the most commonly experienced barrier. It comes about when people in society misunderstand what it means to live with a disability and how it might impact on someone.

Attitudinal barriers tend to be characterised by a range of negative stereotypes and assumptions about the person's capacity, abilities and entitlement to belong and participate. When experienced by people living with disability, its impact can be severe and profound. It can result in people being made to feel different, as though they don't belong and as if they are not welcome. Working to reduce the attitudinal barrier is primarily about awareness raising through education and training initiatives.

Physical Barriers

Place related issues

Levels of awareness around physical barriers are quite high and widespread. However, a common misunderstanding is that inclusion for people living with disability is only about the built environment. i.e., "We are accessible, we have a ramp." Physical barriers or obstacles can limit a person's capacity to move independently in the environment in a safe and dignified manner. These barriers can result in people living with disability experiencing difficulty accessing the built environment or total exclusion from it altogether.

Working to reduce physical barriers is primarily about ensuring that infrastructure is designed, built and maintained in a manner that allows it to be accessed by people who use wheelchairs. There are a range of codes, standards and guidelines available which provide information on best practice physical access for people living with disability. In addition, are the Universal Design principles which provide a broader holistic view to building design.








Procedural Barriers

Policy and procedure related issues

Policies and procedures can present unfair or unreasonable barriers for people living with disability. The impact of a disability is unique for every person and every person's capacity to deal with that impact will also vary. As a result, people living with disability must often do things in a different way to others. Sometimes this can conflict with a policy or procedure or with 'the way we do things'.

Working to reduce procedural barriers is about ensuring that disability access and inclusion becomes an integrated part of the mainstream way of doing things. Initiatives to reduce attitudinal and physical barriers will assist this.

The Access and Inclusion Matrix

		Human capacities impacted by disability			
		 Physical	 Vision	 Hearing	 Cognitive
Environmental and situational factors to consider	 People	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attitudes• Interaction• Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Face to face communication• Terminology• Assistance	
	 Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical access• Moving from a to b and in personal space• Environmental factors			
	 Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information• Consultation processes• Employment		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication• Complaint mechanisms	



What is an Accessible Business?

An accessible business is one where everyone can easily access the goods and services provided whether it be from entering the premises, purchasing online, to the design of products, devices, or services or the environment in which the business operates.

Accessibility is broader than structural changes such as ramps and wider aisles; it encompasses a range of matters such as training employees on how to accommodate the needs of all people, the font chosen for your menus and website, how you arrange your product on shelves and where you place your signage.

Often accommodation to assist people living with disability can assist many other people as well; for instance, a ramp into your premises can assist wheelchair users as well as parents with prams, people using gophers and other mobility devices or someone that has broken their leg.

Benefits of being an Accessible Business



Return on Investment

\$13 for every \$1 potential return on investment universally accessible environments.



Employment Returns

\$26 for every \$1 is the return for keeping people living with a disability in employment.



Retail Environments

20% to 25% increase in turnover for universally accessible retail environments compared to non-accessible environments.¹

Consumers are increasingly becoming more concerned about business values. Ethical investing and consumer behaviour drive many people to where they spend their money. People are more likely to buy from a business that genuinely cares about people and the community in which it operates. Having an accessible business shows you care.

Accessible practices can also be good for everyone and including more people in your business can give you access to a larger pool of potential customers and suppliers. A clean, simple website design for example can benefit all users, and not just some users with cognitive disabilities. For example, Apple's Siri was initially created for people with visual impairment but is now commonly used by sighted people.

¹ Thomascos, N. & McDonald, R. (2012), Economic benefits of universal access: Creating supportive, accessible and economically viable environments in the City of Melbourne. Final Report. Melbourne.

The benefits of being an accessible business include:

- Increased and diversified customer base;
- A positive community perception of your business;
- Compliance with relevant legislation.
- Extending the range of products and services for sale (e.g., Kmart Belmont now stock disability aids (such as walking sticks);
- Provide an opportunity for people with disability to purchase goods and services for themselves or others;
- Become an employer of choice where prospective employees like your values and want to work for you.

Including everyone is more than just the right thing to do - it's a smart business move. As more businesses are moving online and social expectations around discrimination and ethical purchasing is becoming paramount, those businesses adopting accessibility principles will have a demonstrable competitive advantage.

By ensuring that your business is accessible, you are removing a barrier for people living with disability from spending money in your business. Given Australia's aging population and many accompanying disability types, by removing barriers businesses are able to reach an additional 5% to 20% of the market.

Whilst there may be costs associated with creating an accessible business - audits, training, or additional marketing - the benefits, in terms of sales and revenue usually out-weigh these costs.



Meeting Your Legal Responsibilities

Improving access will also assist your business to meet your legal responsibilities.

In Australia, the law says that a person living with a disability should be able to access your goods, services, or public facilities just like any other customer.

If a customer with a disability cannot get into your building or cannot access your goods or services, they could make a complaint of discrimination under either State or Territory anti-discrimination laws, or the *Federal Disability Discrimination Act*.



Making your business more accessible is also likely to improve safety for customers and staff, which could have a positive impact on your public liability and workplace safety responsibilities.

Applicable Legislation

The following legislation prescribes penalties for discrimination against people living with disability:

- *The Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) (WA);*
- *Disability Services Regulations 2004 (WA);*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (amended 1988) (WA) and;*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth).*

This legislation adopts the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Right of Persons with Disability.



The 4 Pillars

**Easy Ways
to Improve
Access for
All Your
Customers**

Make It Easy for People to Find Me

Making your business easy to find and get to will increase your business' appeal to customers who live with a disability.

Surroundings – The environment around your business can make a big difference to a customer's experience

- Ensure there are disabled (ACROD) parking bays, along with a drop-off area near the entrance of your business.
- There should be a clear and continuous path of travel from the carpark to your entrance. The passage of travel should be free from barriers (such as steep inclines, bollards, uneven or loose surfaces). The path should be wide enough for a person using a wheelchair or mobility aids to pass by someone else using the path of travel. If the path includes a ramp, the ramp must have a gradual slope/incline and level landings at regular intervals to allow someone to rest.
- Ensure lighting around your business is fully operational as well-lit areas make car parks and pathways safer.
- Ensure trees are trimmed regularly and signage is placed in locations that do not impede on footpaths as both are a potential hazard to a person who is vision impaired.
- The floor surface or covering should be slip-resistant, firm, and smooth. If there are any stairs, continuous handrails on both sides are recommended.

Make the Entrance Easy to See


- Paint the entrance to your business in a colour that contrast its surroundings as this will assist people with vision impairment and distinguish the door surroundings to the doorway.
- If your business has multiple entrances provide clear directions to each entrance.
- Consider putting safety markings of reflective glass at your shop front as this will assist people with vision impairment to distinguish between the window display and the doorway.

Avoid obstructions

- Remove dangerous obstacles from the entrance to avoid people falling over them.

Advertise Your Advantages

- If your business is accessible, let people know and promote it
- Put up clear external signs to help people with vision impairments or learning difficulties identify what your shop is.



Ensure good street signage, use clear large numbers and display business name

Make It Easy for People to Get In

All customers – including people using wheelchairs – should be able to enter and use your business independently. While many of these ideas are easy to put into practice, some may require technical advice to ensure they are done correctly.

Accessible doors and doorways	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reposition the entrance door handles to an accessible height.• Use handles that are easy to use, such as “D-shaped” handles.• Reduce the weight of the door or consider an automatic door.• Widen the doorway to allow a person who uses a wheelchair or a walking frame to pass through with ease.• Secure any doormats, and only use them if they can be made flush with the surrounding floor.• Install a handrail.
Clear Lines of Sight	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If possible, ensure there are clear sight lines between the entry and the counter, so staff members can see when a customer needs assistance to enter the premises or purchase goods.
Level Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If possible steps and provide a level entry to your business or build a ramp. If neither of the options is possible, consider moving the main entrance to another more accessible location.



Automatic doors and flat entrance ways can assist with easy entry to a business

Make It Easy for People to Get Around

Once inside your shop or premises, all customers should be able to find their way to all sales areas, browse, inspect goods and bring them to the cash desk, and receive services in the same way.

The following tips are designed to assist you to better understand and meet the needs of customers with a range of disabilities.

For people who have difficulty hearing

- Noise - Use features to easily turn down music when necessary, to reduce the amount of background noise.
- Lighting - Improving lighting, especially around service counters to assist people who might lip-read.
- Notification systems - Supplement auditory announcements with visual displays.

For people with mobility impairments

- Aisles - shopping aisles that are 120cm wide are easy for everyone to use.
- Counters - To ensure customers who use wheelchairs or who are shorter in stature can access your customer service area or checkout, maintain a wide aisle and make part of the area's counter lower (75cm to 85cm from floor level). It is recommended that this lower counter area is open all the time during business hours.
- Reach - try to place goods, particularly the most popular ones, within reach of someone using a wheelchair. If this is not always possible, make sure staff are trained to offer assistance.
- Changing Rooms - if there are change rooms, make sure at least one of them is large enough to be used by a person using a wheelchair or walking frame.
- Chairs and waiting areas - if your customers need to wait, make a chair available for someone who may be older and frail, uses crutches or have poor balance. If your business has fixed seating, include spaces for people using wheelchairs spread throughout the area.
- Surfaces - make sure the floor surface is non-slip, and free from trip hazards.
- EFTPOS - ensure electronic payment systems and EFTPOS machines have a cord long enough to pass them to a customer who uses a wheelchair.
- Other facilities -if there are tables, cubicles, water coolers, telephones, computers, ticketing machines, turnstiles, or any other facilities to be used by customers, at least one of each kind should be at a height that would be accessible to people using a wheelchair.



For people who are blind or have a vision impairment

- **Signs:** Use high-contrast colours and clear text for signs and product pricing labels. Ensure overhanging signs do not cause a hazard.
- **Information:** Provide written menus, menu boards, or product information displays in large print versions (e.g. 18 point Arial) to make them easier to read, or have staff read information out to customers. You could even consider providing information such as menus in Braille.
- **Notification systems:** Supplement any visual notifications with auditory announcements.
- **Lighting:** Improving lighting can aid communication and assist a person with vision impairment to find the safest pathway.
- **Layout:** Move any dangerously placed fittings and fixtures that can make independent movement difficult for customers who are vision impaired.
- **Provide a clear path of travel** through aisles and avoid having displays sticking out into the pathway.
- **EFTPOS:** Provide EFTPOS machines with tactile features so people who are blind can use them.



Consider large print
menus for your
customers or even a
menu in braille



Make the Most of our Team and Customer Service

Teaching your staff to communicate effectively with all your customers and to give practical assistance when it is needed doesn't have to be complicated. The results can improve the experience for all your customers – not just those who have a disability.

Respect and Communication – treat customers with disabilities as you do all customers – with respect.

- Focus on the person: Treat each customer with a disability as an individual customer with their own likes and dislikes. Always focus on the person, not their disability. Address the customer directly, not the other people who may be with them (such as a sign language interpreter).
- Offer assistance: Always ask the customer first if they want help; do not assume they need assistance. If the customer declines your help, accept the answer.
- If you have a conversation that will last more than a few moments with a customer using a wheelchair, bend to eye level or pull up a chair.
- Ask questions: Ask customers with disabilities how they would like goods and services to be provided, particularly where there are barriers to equal access.

For people who may have a learning difficulty, an intellectual disability or brain injury

- Be clear: Address the customer directly, listen carefully, speak clearly, and check for understanding. Use clear language without being patronising.
- Allow time: Allow your customer time to ask questions, try not to rush them and avoid overloading them with information. Reassure your customer you are there to help if they forget the information.

For people who have vision impairment or are blind

- Using names: Identify yourself by name. If appropriate, ask for the customer's name so you can address them directly so they know you are talking to them and not someone else.
- Giving assistance: If a customer asks for assistance to go somewhere, ask which side you should be on and offer your arm so they can hold just above your elbow.
- Guide dogs: Never pat or distract a guide dog or offer it food while it is in harness, it is a working animal under the control of its owner.



Speak to the person with a disability, the carer will assist only if required



Address the customer directly

For people who have a hearing impairment or are deaf

- Lip reading: Always face the customer so they can see your lips. Try to make sure there are no bright lights behind you that may limit the customer's ability to see your lips.
- Sound: Use your normal tone of voice and volume. If possible, minimise or move out of the way of background noise.
- Interpreters: If your customer is with a sign language interpreter always address your comments directly to your customer rather than to the interpreter.
- Pen and paper: Have a pen and paper on hand to help you communicate with your customer.

Language Matters

If you are making changes to your business to be more accessible, the language used by you and your staff, or on signage, makes a difference.

- Use signage that identifies 'Accessible' instead of 'Disabled'
- Refer to a 'person with a disability' rather than a 'disabled person'
- Refer to a 'person who uses a wheelchair' rather than a person 'in' or 'confined to' a wheelchair.
- Refer to a 'person who is blind' rather than a person who 'suffers' blindness.

Finding short term alternative ways to provide service

Every business or service provider is different, and their resources vary so it might not be possible to provide full access in the short-term. If this is the case, you might consider alternate ways of providing the same service.

For example:

- Operating a telephone, mail order or local delivery scheme.
- Using a call bell at the entrance and having staff put together an order and bring the goods to the front door or the nearest easy collection point.
- Offering a home visiting service for a customer with a disability.
- Providing service in an alternative, accessible location either by appointment or on a regular basis.



Train staff to offer assistance to those who may require help



Make Your Website More Accessible For All

Most businesses have an online presence, and it is important that this can be accessed by people living with disability. Just as a community facility is a public place, so too is a website – anyone should be able to access information and interact with it (e.g. completing a form or buying online).

Browsing a website for many of us is easy however this is not the case for everyone. For example:

- Someone who cannot hear may not be able to access audio unless it has captions.
- Using certain font styles or text spacing may make it difficult for someone with dyslexia to read.
- Someone with vision impairment cannot browse a website unless it is coded with accessibility in mind and can be read correctly by a screen reader (software that converts text to speech).

Making the digital world accessible is not only the right thing to do, it can also be an overall asset to your business.

Website accessibility is based on the four principles of the Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) being Perceivability, Operability, Understandability and Robust (POUR) as outlined below:

- Perceivability – is it easy to understand what your site does and what the functions do? E.g., structure of the site – headings, etc – and labels on links and buttons to accompany pictorial representation of the function.
- Operability – can the users accomplish the purpose of their visit to your site – obtain information, complete a form, watch a video, etc.
- Understandability – is the language easy to understand?
- Robust – is your site adaptable for use on desktop, mobile phones, and other devices.

To make your website more accessible consider implementing the following design adjustments:

- The site must be operable using means other than the mouse – keyboard, touch screen, voice recognition, etc.
- Alternative text provided for images, icons, charts, pictures and other visual elements.
- Elements such as links, buttons, tables, forms, and input fields are labelled.
- Captions and transcripts available for audio and video content.
- Ensure there is high contrast between the text presented and the background colour.
- Ensure your text can be made larger without affecting the content or function of the page or site.
- Ensure that pages with a time limit can have that limit adjusted or turned off.

Further information on how to make your website accessible can be obtained from W3C Web Adaptability Initiative. There are several low and no cost solutions available so speak to your website designer about implementing accessibility principles onto your website.

Employing People Living with Disability

Having people living with disability employed in your business will assist in understanding what your customers or clients with disability may need. This can give you an edge over your competitors; and may also minimise the risk of injury, complaint, or breach of discrimination law.

People living with disability bring high potential and a diverse range of skills and abilities to the marketplace and work in a wide range of occupations and industries. Getting the opportunity to have a job is a life changing experience for anyone. Having a job means recognised status and income. Both of which in turn lead to a greater range of life opportunities. The impact on the life of a person living with a disability can be even more significant.

Employing people living with disability is likely to attract new skills and bring new and valuable perspectives to your business. Not only will this increase talent in your organisation, but by accommodating people living with disability you are gaining loyal and committed employees who will support you in achieving your business objectives.

Benefits of Employing People Living with Disability

- Enthusiastic, long-term employees and fewer absences, less recruitment, and retraining costs for the business.
- Competitiveness in winning government tenders and other new business opportunities;
- Regular and loyal customers who value the support, actions, and interest by the business in the provision of an inclusive business environment.
- Improved staff morale, with a diverse workforce resulting in greater teamwork and cohesiveness.
- Existing staff have confidence to disclose current or future disabilities.
- Access to an untapped hidden talent pool.
- Community support for businesses that promote and demonstrate commitments to diversity as well as many workplace culture and cost benefits. Customers will also see that you are upholding the rights of people living with disability.

Things Your Business can do

- Continue to select on merit for all employment opportunities and give fair and due consideration to all candidates, including people living with disability.
- Provide staff with information, training, support and resources to strengthen their understanding of issues surrounding equitable access to employment for people living with disability.
- Make appropriate workplace flexibility, modifications, and adaptive technologies available to ensure people living with disability are successfully included in the workforce.
- Review human resource management policies, procedures, and practices to remove barriers to people living with disability from applying for a job and working with your business. Promote employment opportunities widely using a range of formats and through a variety of avenues including Disability Employment Services and disability networks.
- Ensure all venues used for recruitment and employment are physically accessible.
- Consider offering a supported employment opportunity specifically to a person living with disability via the formal disability employment services network.
- Develop strategies to nurture an inclusive business culture.

Available Financial Support

Employment Assistance Fund

The Employment Assistance Fund provides financial assistance for work-related modifications, equipment, and services to help individuals living with disability get employment and perform their work as independently and productively as possible. The assistance is available to new and existing employees living with disability.

For employers, the Employment Assistance Fund makes accommodating workers living with disability in the workplace easier. It can help cover the costs of modifications to the physical work environment, modifications to work vehicles, adaptive technology, a wide range of information and communication devices, Auslan interpreting and other specialist services for employees with specific learning difficulties or mental health conditions.

The assistance is tailored to the individual needs of the person living with disability, their job requirements and work environment. The Employment Assistance Fund is managed through the JobAccess service which may arrange a free workplace assessment to recommend necessary adjustments.

The Employment Assistance Fund can also provide financial assistance for disability, deaf and mental health awareness training.

To find out more about how the Employment Assistance Fund can help you, or to make an application for funds, [visit the JobAccess website](#) or phone 1800 464 800.

Wage Subsidies

Western Australian Payroll Tax Exemption Scheme

The Western Australian Payroll Tax Exemption Scheme provides financial incentives to businesses that employ people living with disability.

The Scheme provides payroll tax relief where an employer engages a person living with disability. It applies to businesses that hire new employees with a disability on or after 1 July 2012 who are in receipt of a Commonwealth Disability Employment Service wage subsidy or who are eligible for Western Australian specialist disability services support.

[Visit the Western Australian Payroll Tax Employer Guide for more.](#)

Wage Subsidy Scheme

The Wage Subsidy Scheme offers financial assistance of up to \$1,500 to employers who employ eligible job seekers registered with a Disability Employment Services provider. The subsidy requires employers to employ the person for a minimum of eight hours a week for 13 weeks, with the intent of achieving sustainable employment.

Enhanced Wage Subsidy

The Enhanced Wage Subsidy provides up to \$3,000 for employers who assist eligible job seekers who are registered with a Disability Employment Services provider. It is aimed at assisting people who have had difficulty obtaining employment, to get a job of at least 15 hours a week for 26 weeks.

Support to access both the Wage Subsidy Scheme and the Enhanced Wage Subsidy Scheme are provided by the relevant Disability Employment Services Provider.



Wage Connect

Wage Connect is a wage subsidy for employers who offer employment to job seekers with little or no recent work experience. Wage Connect is paid for the first 26 weeks a person is employed and may be paid for longer in some circumstances. Wage Connect is worth around \$5,912 per placement, or around \$227 per week (pre-GST).

The position must be expected to be ongoing and sustainable beyond the period of the subsidy. To access Wage Connect, employers need to enter into a Wage Connect Agreement with a Job Services Australia or Disability Employment Services provider.

For more information about Wage Subsidies visit the JobAccess website or phone **1800 464 800**.

Disabled Australian Apprenticeship Wage Support

Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support is an Australian Government incentive payable to an employer who employs an Australian Apprentice who satisfies the disability eligibility criteria in an Australian Apprenticeship.

This wage support is also available to an employer who employs an Australian Apprentice who acquires a disability during their apprenticeship or traineeship.

For more information contact an Australian Apprenticeships Centre on 13 38 73 or [visit the Australian Apprenticeships website](#) for more information.

Free Webinar

The Belmont Business Enterprise Centre offers a free Count Me IN Employer Awareness Webinar to provide information on employment of people with disability. Email training@belmontbec.com for further information.

Joining the City of Belmont Accessible Business Program

The City understands that sometimes while there is the will, the 'way' can be sometimes more difficult. Businesses can range from a small coffee van to a major shopping centre and with that the resources and ability to make changes are unique to your business. However, even a small change can make a big difference! That is why the City's Accessible Business program has been developed. So where to start?

The following steps outline how to participate in the City of Belmont Accessible Business Program. We will continue to engage with businesses and people with living disability to ensure the program adapts and grows to become a more Accessible and Inclusive City for all.

Step 1

Contact the City and express your interest in joining the program.

Step 2

Review the range of resources including this guide to increase your understanding of disability and accessibility.

Step 3

Arrange for an accessible assessment to be undertaken at your business.

Step 4

Commit to addressing a minimum of two recommendations of the assessment within the year. (We do not propose these be expensive or major works.)

Step 5

Provide feedback to City staff and continue to explore other opportunities to increase accessibility and inclusion at your business.



Recognition

Once you have started on your Accessible Business journey, you will be provided with the City's decal sticker to display at your business and listed on the City's Website as a 'Friendly for All' business.

Costs of joining the program

As part of the City's commitment to creating an accessible and inclusive community, joining the program is free. The first workplace assessment is provided at no cost and there is the opportunity for staff to participate in annual training. Further additional training opportunities and actions that may be recommended from assessments will be the responsibility of the respective business however the City will work alongside you to identify available support in improving the accessibility of your business.

References and Information

Further information about becoming an accessible business and disability rights generally can be found from the following organisations and websites.

[City of Belmont](#)

[Disability Services Commission \(WA\)](#)

[Department of Social Services \(Commonwealth\)](#)

[Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

[W3C Web Adaptability Initiative](#)

[Employing people with disability](#)

[Disability Services Act 1986 \(Commonwealth\)](#)

[Disability Services Act 1993 \(WA\)](#)

[Disability Services Regulations \(WA\)](#)

[City of Melbourne](#)

[City of Marrickville](#)

[Knox City Council](#)

[Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[Disability Service Commission WA](#)

[Job Access – Driving Disability Employment](#)

Alternative Formats

This document is available on the City of Belmont website and can be requested in alternative formats including electronic format by email, in hardcopy both in large and standard print and in audio format.

For further information please contact the Community Development team on (08) 9477 7219.

For language assistance please contact TIS (Translating and Interpreting Service) on 131 450.

For Further Support and Information

If you have identified some access barriers or gaps in your services, you should make attempts to fix them as soon as possible in order to avoid continuing discrimination, and to encourage customers who live with a disability to use your business.

Contact the City's Economic and Community Development Team on 9477-7219 or by email at community.development@belmont.wa.gov.au.



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