

# Changes to laws that protect people with disability living in specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

Easy Read version



## How to use this document



The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) wrote this document.

When you see the word 'we', it means DFFH.



We wrote this information in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

**Bold**

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

Not bold

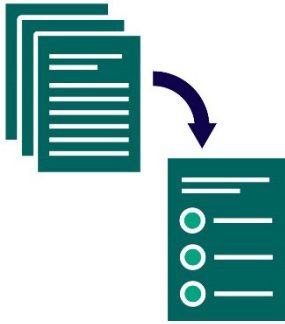
This means the letters are thicker and darker.

**Word list**



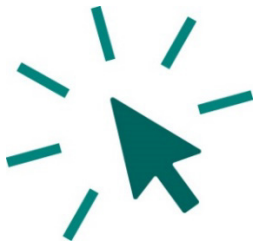
We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page **18**.



This is an Easy Read summary of another document.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other document on our website.

**[www.dffh.vic.gov.au/changes-residential-tenancies-act-1997](http://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/changes-residential-tenancies-act-1997)**



You can ask for help to read this document.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

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## What this document is about



This document explains the changes to the laws in Victoria about **specialist disability accommodation (SDA)**.



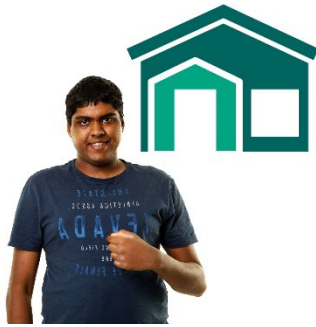
SDA is housing for people with disability who need extra support most of the time.



In Victoria, the law is called the Residential Tenancies Act 1997.

In this document, we call it the Act.

The Act protects the **rights** of people who:



- live in a house they don't own



- own a house that other people live in.



Rights are rules about how people must treat you:

- fairly
- equally.

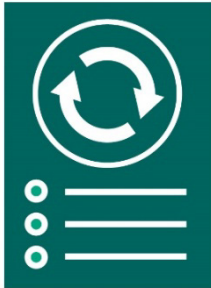


The Victorian Government has made a new law called the Disability and Social Services Regulation Amendment Act 2023.

In this document, we call it the new law.



The new law changes the Act.

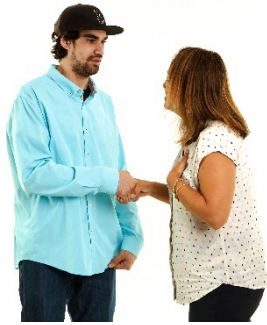


This document explains:

- how the Act will change
- when the Act will change.



## About specialist disability accommodation (SDA)



People who live in SDA can have different types of **rental agreements**.



A rental agreement is an agreement between:

- the person who owns or provides the house
- the person who will live in the house.



One type of rental agreement is called an SDA residency agreement.



An SDA residency agreement protects people with disability in more ways than other rental agreements.



An SDA residency agreement can make it harder for the person who owns the house to:



- increase the rent



- force the person who lives there to leave.

**Community Visitors** go to places where people with disability live to:



- make sure they are safe
- check on their wellbeing
- help them speak up about any problems.



Community Visitors can check places with SDA residency agreements at any time.



They check how well services:

- protect the rights of people with disability
- support the wellbeing of people with disability.

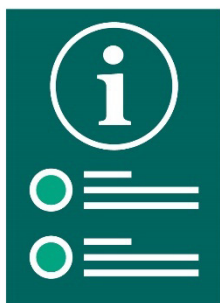


Consumer Affairs Victoria helps to protect the rights of people who live in SDA.



The Consumer Affairs Victoria website has more information about:

- SDA residency agreements
- other rental agreements.



This includes information in Easy Read.



You can visit the Consumer Affairs Victoria website.

**[www.consumer.vic.gov.au/sda](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/sda)**

## How the Act will change



The changes will better protect the rights of people with disability living in SDA.



The Act will change on 1 July 2024.



After the change, more people will be able to get SDA residency agreements.



This includes some people with disability who get **funding** for housing and supports.

Funding is money from the government that pays for services and supports.

For example, you might get funding from:



- us – DFFH



- the Transport Accident Commission – support for people who get hurt on the road



- the Victorian WorkCover Authority – support for people who get hurt at work



- the **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**.



The NDIS provides services and support to people with disability.



More **providers** will have to follow the Act.

Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.

For example, providers who:



- support you with a home to live in



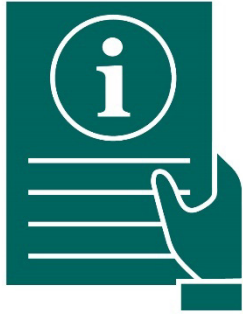
- deliver disability services to support you at your home.



From 1 July 2024, your provider might need to give you a choice of what rental agreement you want.



They must offer you this choice if they haven't before.



Your provider will need to give you information to help you understand this choice.

This includes information about your rights.



They will need to explain this choice to you in words you can understand.



Your provider must also tell Consumer Affairs Victoria if you have an SDA residency agreement.



The new law will not change anything for people who already have SDA residency agreements.

This is because the Act already protects these people.

## More information

You can contact Consumer Affairs Victoria for more information about:



- rental agreements



- how the Act will change.



You can call them.

**1300 40 43 19**



If you need information in a language other than English, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

**131 450**



You can ask them to connect you to Consumer Affairs Victoria by phone.

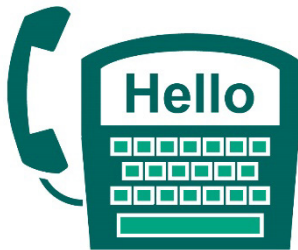
**1300 40 43 19**





You can call the National Relay Service if you:

- are deaf or hard of hearing
- find it hard to speak using the phone.



Textphone or modem

**133 677**



Speak and listen

**1300 555 727**



You can ask them to connect you to Consumer Affairs Victoria by phone.

**1300 40 43 19**



You can visit the Consumer Affairs Victoria website.

**[www.consumer.vic.gov.au/sda](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/sda)**

You can follow Consumer Affairs Victoria on:



Facebook

**[www.facebook.com/ConsumerAffairsVictoria](https://www.facebook.com/ConsumerAffairsVictoria)**



Twitter

**[@consumervic](https://twitter.com/consumervic)**

Twitter is also called X.



YouTube

**[www.youtube.com/user/consumervic](https://www.youtube.com/user/consumervic)**

## Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.

### **Community Visitors**



Community Visitors go to places where people with disability live to:

- make sure they are safe
- check on their wellbeing
- help them speak up about any problems.



### **Funding**

Funding is money from the government that pays for services and supports.



### **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**

The NDIS provides services and support to people with disability.



## Providers

Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.



## Rental agreement

A rental agreement is an agreement between:

- the person who owns or provides the house
- the person who will live in the house.



## Rights

Rights are rules about how people must treat you:

- fairly
- equally.



## Specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

SDA is housing for people with disability who need extra support most of the time.

## Contact us



You can contact us if you need us to give you this information in a different way.



For example, if you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment.



You can call us.

**(03) 9821 6113**



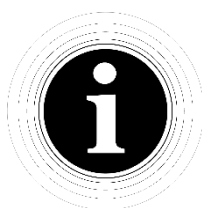
You can call the National Relay Service.

**1800 555 660**




You can also email the Disability Act Review team.

**[disabilityactreview@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:disabilityactreview@dffh.vic.gov.au)**



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To receive this document in another format, phone **(03) 9821 6113** or email the Disability Act Review team [disabilityactreview@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:disabilityactreview@dffh.vic.gov.au)

## **Help for people with hearing or speech communication difficulties**

Contact us through the National Relay Service (NRS).

For more information on the NRS:

- visit National Relay Service - [www.accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs](http://www.accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs)
- call the NRS Helpdesk on **1800 555 660**.

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