



# **GRAMPIANS DISABILITY ADVOCACY ASSOCIATION**

## **INFORMATION FOR ADVOCACY CLIENTS**

### **Easy Read**

**Also available in large print and audio**



## Contact details

[www.grampiansadvocacy.org.au](http://www.grampiansadvocacy.org.au)



### Phone numbers

Ararat	<b>1800 552 272</b>
Ballarat	5333 7344
Horsham	5381 2400
Daylesford and Clunes	5348 3350
Stawell	5358 2164



### email

Ararat	asas@netconnect.com.au
Ballarat	gdaab@bigpond.net.au
Horsham & Stawell	gdaah@bigpond.net.au
Daylesford & Clunes	gdaad@mmnet.com.au

### addresses

Ararat	Southwalk Arcade, 2/32 Tuson St, Ararat
Ballarat	Eastwood Leisure Centre, 20 Eastwood St, Ballarat
Horsham	Wimmera Sports Assembly, 17 McLachlan St, Horsham
Stawell (Tues)	Community Axis, 111 Main St, Stawell
Daylesford	Daylesford Community Health, Hospital St, Daylesford
Clunes (Tues)	Clunes Health Service, 69 Service St, Clunes

### Postal addresses



Ararat	PO Box 112, Ararat 3377
Ballarat	PO Box 1060, Bakery Hill 3354
Horsham and Stawell	PO Box 270, Horsham 3402
Daylesford and Clunes	PO Box 250, Daylesford 3460

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# ABOUT GRAMPIANS disABILITY ADVOCACY

## *Our Mission*

*This advocacy service listens to, takes direction from, and stands beside people with disability, from the Central Highlands to across the Wimmera, in their interactions with organisations and the community.*

*We help people to learn about and act on their rights to achieve the best possible result.*

Grampians disAbility Advocacy provides FREE advocacy support for people with a disability and their families or carers.

We work in Ballarat, Horsham, Ararat, Stawell, Daylesford, Clunes and Bacchus Marsh and many other smaller towns.

Cities and Shires covered by our service are the Rural City of Ararat, Horsham Rural City, City of Ballarat, Golden Plains Shire, Pyrenees Shire, Hepburn Shire, Moorabool Shire, West Wimmera Shire, Yarriambiack Shire, Northern Grampians Shire and Hindmarsh Shire.

Grampians disAbility Advocacy has offices in Ararat, Ballarat, Stawell, Daylesford, Clunes and Horsham.

Our funding comes from Federal and State Governments.

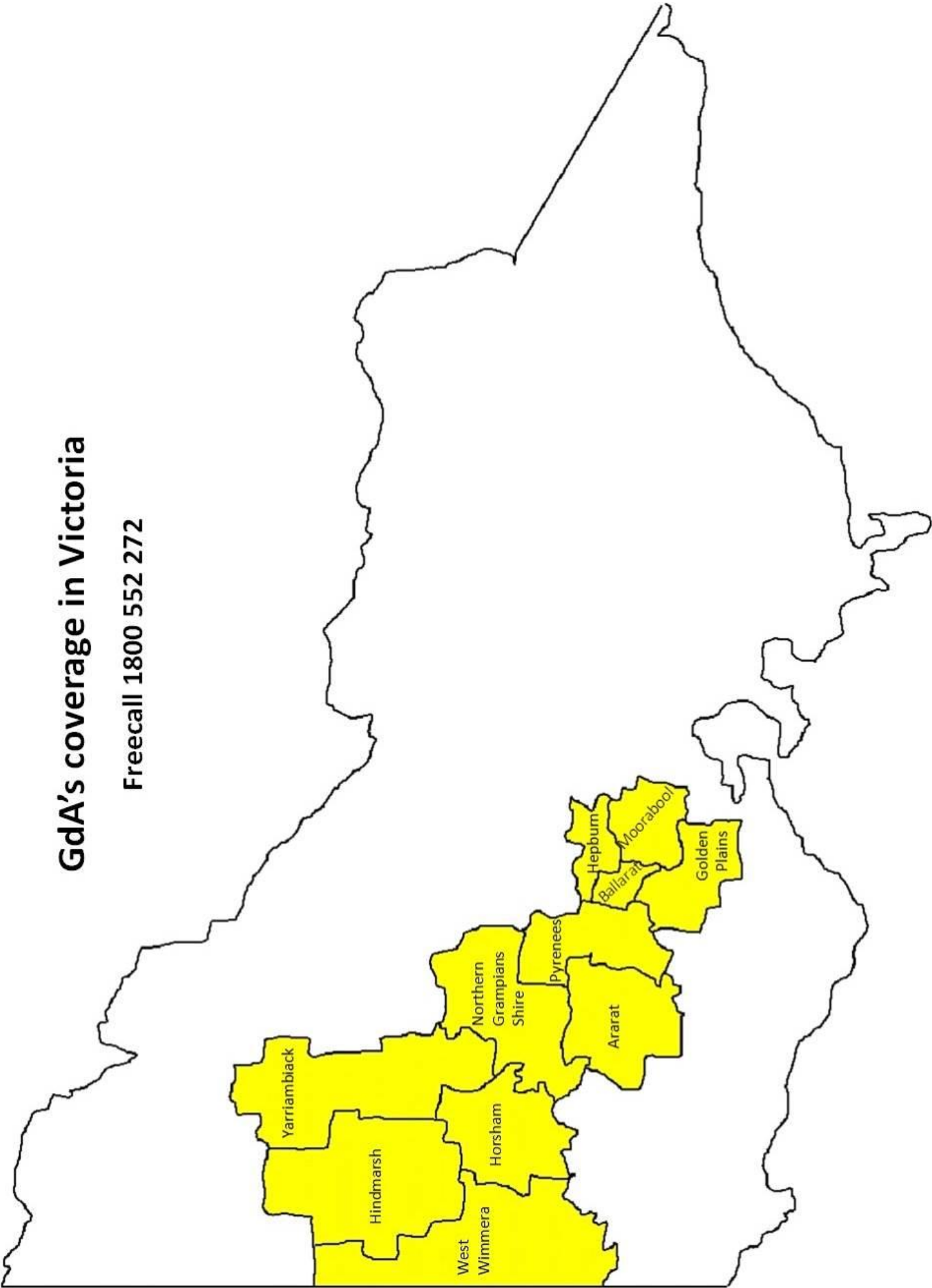
We are an independent advocacy service. Our workers are skilled and can help with many things.

Grampians disAbility Advocacy from time to time works with other advocacy services to bring about change in the way things are done. This is called systemic advocacy. Sometimes ideas for change come from our individual clients.

If you think you might need our help, contact the GdA office closest to you or call us on **1800 552 272**.

# GdA's coverage in Victoria

Freecall 1800 552 272



## HOW CAN GdA HELP?

GdA helps people with a disability to stand up for their rights. We can help you to:

- get information
- know your rights
- speak up and be heard
- work out a good outcome when you have a problem
- make a complaint
- arrange and attend meetings with you
- attend a court or hearing with you

Call us to see if we can help. You can call 1800 552 272 free of charge.

We will ask you about what's going on and tell you if and how we can help.

If we can help an advocate will make an appointment with you to talk about your issue and ask you what outcome you want. We need you to tell us **WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE**.

The advocate will give you information about different ways you can handle your issue with our support. Your advocate will write up an **individual advocacy plan** with you. The plan will include things you will do on your own, things your advocate will do with your permission, and things you will do together.

We stop working with you if:

- you ask us to
- your issue has been fixed
- you and your advocate agree that it cannot be fixed

## Sometimes we can't help you straight away

We are here to help people with any kind of disability. We help people who need it first.

We work out who needs help first by asking:

1. How serious is it?
2. Can the person get help somewhere else?
3. Can the person work it out on their own?
4. Are they at risk of being hurt or abused?

**If you leave a message with us someone will usually make contact with you in 1-5 days.**

## WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GdA's CLIENTS?

Our clients have a right to:

- Respect
- Privacy
- Equal treatment
- Accurate information
- Choices
- Complain
- Look at our policies
- Get information in the right way for you
- An interpreter
- A support person

Our clients have a responsibility to:

- Give us true information
- Let us know if you can't make an appointment
- Respect our staff. Abuse, threats or violence are not okay. **If you act in this way we may decide not to help you anymore.**

## GdA, PRIVACY AND YOU

We collect information about you and your problem so we can help you best.

You have a right to **privacy, dignity and confidentiality**. We keep your information private.

You have a right not to tell us all of your personal information.

Information about you is:

- Stored safely.
- Only discussed with other staff who can help with your issue.
- Only given to other people if you say that's ok.
- Kept for 7 years then destroyed.
- Collected from you unless you say we can get it from someone else.

You have a right to see your file.

Ask your advocate how you can do this or call **1800 552 272**.

## Information collected for reports

GdA uses general information about its clients and what we are helping people with to write reports for the Government departments that give us money to run the service.

We don't pass on any of your personal information.

## What can I do if I think my information has not been kept private?

If you are worried that your privacy has not been properly respected you can talk about this with the Executive Officer by phoning **1800 552 272**.

If you want to you can make a complaint. You will be told how to do this.

You can contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner on **1300 363 992**.

## IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY WITH OUR SERVICE

**You have a right to complain.**

### How?

1. Phone the Executive Officer of GdA on **1800 552 272**. The Executive Officer will talk with you about your complaint and tell you what can be done about it.
2. If you don't want to talk to the Executive Officer or you are unhappy with what was said you can write to:  
The Chairperson  
Grampians disAbility Advocacy Association  
PO Box 112, Ararat, VIC 3377
3. The GdA Board or a Special Complaints Committee will try to fix your complaint within seven working days.
4. If you are not happy with their answer, a person from the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria will be asked to help work things out.

Or you might wish to contact the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS). They sort out complaints about advocacy services.

**Complaints Resolution and Referral Service**  
**FREE CALL NUMBER** 1800 880 052  
**TTY** 1800 301 130  
**NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE** 1800 555 677  
**TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICE** 13 14 50

**email:** [crrs@workfocus.com](mailto:crrs@workfocus.com)

**website:** [www.crrs.net.au](http://www.crrs.net.au)



You can have a family member or friend help you to make a complaint, or GdA can try to find a support person for you.

Your complaint is private. We will only tell the people we need to so we can work with you to fix the problem.

## **FEEDBACK ABOUT GdA**

We welcome your comments about our advocacy service. We want to hear about how we can make our service better.

When we finish working with you we will ask you to answer some questions about the service. This is so you can tell us what worked well, and what we could do better.

You are welcome to talk to your advocate or the Executive Officer any time you are not happy with our work.

**GdA wants to work with you to build a better service.**

## **GdA POLICIES**

GdA has policies to help us deliver a good service. You can see them or ask your advocate about them.

## **WHO RUNS GdA?**

People with a disability have a say in how GdA is run.

Our Board is elected each year at the Annual General Meeting. At least half of the Board are people with a disability.

Any GdA member can be on the Board.

The Board meets once a month in Ararat. Phone 1800 552 272 if you want to know more.

## **JOINING GdA**

Anyone can join GdA. It's free.

Members get a newsletter four times a year and can come to any special events organised by GdA.

You can join a GdA group in Horsham or Ballarat if you want to work on local issues.

Call **1800 552 272** if you want to become a member.

## OTHER USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

You might need advice from another agency. Here are some useful phone numbers

**Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability**      **Ph: 9416 4003**

VALID is an advocacy group for adults with intellectual disabilities and their families. VALID's mission is to protect and defend the human rights of people with an intellectual disability and to champion their rights as citizens.

**Disability Discrimination Legal Service**      **Ph: 1300 882 872**

DDLS promotes justice for people with disabilities and offers free legal services, including information, referral, advice, casework assistance, community legal education, and policy and law reform.

**Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council**      **Ph: 9387 8317**

VMIAC supports people who are experiencing a mental illness or emotional distress. VMIAC can provide information, advice, individual and group advocacy.

**Commonwealth Ombudsman**      **Ph: 1300 362 072**

The Commonwealth Ombudsman investigates complaints from people who believe they have been treated unfairly by an Australian Government department or agency, e.g. Centrelink.

**AED Legal Centre**      **Ph: 9639 4333**

AED provides legal advocacy to people with a disability in the areas of employment, education and training. Their main purpose is to protect and advance the rights of people with a disability who experience difficulties and/or discrimination in employment or education because of their disability.

**Office of the Public Advocate**      **Ph: 1300 309 337**

OPA investigates and speaks out about situations where people with disabilities are exploited, neglected or abused. The Victorian Office of the Public Advocate aims to promote and protect the rights and dignity of people with disabilities.

**Villamanta Legal Service**      **Ph: 1800 014 111**

VLS is a free, state-wide community legal service that informs people in Victoria who have a disability about the law and helps them to use the law to get their rights. It works mostly for people who have an intellectual disability or other cognitive impairment.