

# International Day of People with Disability 2023



International Day of People with Disability aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilise support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

The day has been observed annually following its proclamation in 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly, and this year was held on Sunday, 3 December 2023.

The theme of the 2023 International Day of Persons with Disabilities is: 'United in action to rescue and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for, with and by persons with disabilities'.



At Hall & Wilcox we focus on assisting persons with disabilities. This aligns with SDG 16 and its goal to provide access to justice for all. Our assistance includes dedicated clinics such as our Disability Support Pension Clinic with the Welfare Rights Centre, and our clinic with the Australian Centre for Disability Law. Through partnerships with community legal centres such as Sussex Street Community Law Service, we receive referrals of clients who have disabilities and assist with a broad range of civil law matters including in relation to their current employment conditions and allegations of disability discrimination. We have worked with PIAC to protect the human rights of persons with disabilities.





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## Successful appeal at AAT for DSP client

Zumena and her young son moved to Australia from New Zealand a few years ago. She has an extensive history of mental health conditions, including depressive disorder, anxiety and PTSD that prevent her from working in open employment. She received extensive psychological and psychiatric care while she was living in New Zealand. Zumena’s conditions also kept her from engaging in social activities and she often struggled to leave the house.

When she arrived in Australia, Zumena was referred to a psychologist where she sought treatment for her mental health conditions. She applied for the DSP in early 2023 and her application and appeal were rejected on the grounds that her conditions were not fully diagnosed, treated and stabilised. Specifically, the Authorised Review Officer at Centrelink found that there was insufficient detail in the medical evidence to indicate that Zumena had undertaken reasonable treatment in the past.

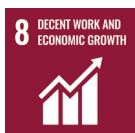
Zumena came to the WRC after she lodged an appeal to the AAT and needed legal assistance. The Hall and Wilcox DSP clinic contacted all the medical professionals she had sought advice from both in NZ and Australia and were able to collect further reports and evidence of Zumena’s history of treatments, as well as letters from her psychologists and GPs detailing the impact her conditions have on her functional capacity in order to support her appeal to the AAT. The Hall and Wilcox DSP clinic wrote the AAT submissions.

The AAT decision was in favour of Zumena and agreed that she is appropriately diagnosed and treated by a relevant medical professional.

Donna Flood, Senior Solicitor at the Welfare Rights Centre, said: ‘Without the Hall and Wilcox DSP clinic, we would have been unable to gather as much evidence as we did and would not have had the capacity to write comprehensive submissions to the Tribunal.’

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We also provide legal assistance to organisations that support persons with disabilities such as Guide Dogs, HOME in Queanbeyan, Accessible Arts, SANE and Special Olympics Australia.



As an employer, Hall & Wilcox also works towards SDG 8 to promote full and productive employment and decent work for persons with disabilities. We are a member of the Australian Network on Disability (AND). Our people benefit from the Disability Awareness sessions it facilitates. We also partner with JobSupport, a specialist not-for-profit Disability Employment Service that works exclusively with people with intellectual disability to find employment. We have an ongoing focus on recruitment of people with disability.

We ensure that career pathways from recruitment (including opportunities for graduates with disability) and development opportunities are supportive and accessible for people living with diverse types of disability.

We support managers of employees with disabilities and focus on creating a physical and social environment and culture that is accessible and that enables our people with all types of disability, and those caring for someone with disability, to succeed and thrive in their careers.



## Hall & Wilcox Community Fund

Melbourne organisation Flying Fox runs programs to build connections between people with disability and the community. They believe that through education and shared experience the barriers that prevent social inclusion can be broken down. Each year, in partnership with Flying Fox, we hold our Graduate Volunteer Community Day, where our law graduates spend a day volunteering with young people attending a Flying Fox camp. The Hall & Wilcox Community Fund also sponsored Flying Fox's first ever Basketball Corporate Funday this year.



Our community partnership with Flying Fox works to achieve SDG 10 by empowering and promoting the social inclusion of all.

## Our community partners



Australian Centre for  
**Disability Law**



**FLYING FOX**  
o n g a t e

**Guide Dogs.**



Patron: The Hon. Sir William Deane

**Public  
Interest  
Advocacy  
Centre**

**SANE**  
We're people like you.



**Welfare  
Rights  
Centre**