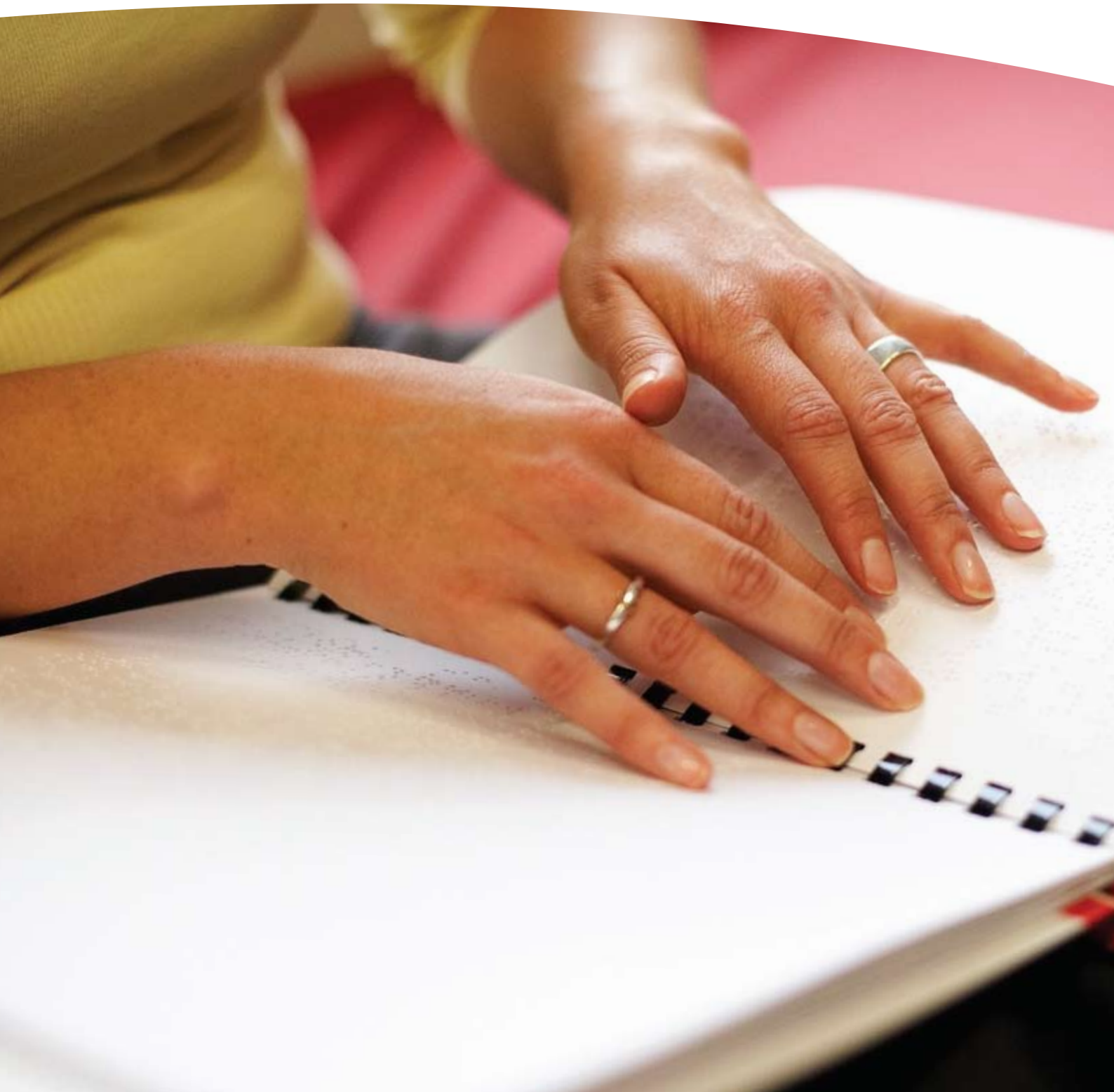




Employment and Job Seeking

Information for People who are Vision Impaired



Job Seekers

People who are vision impaired who are seeking full or part-time work can access a range of services to assist with the job seeking process.

Job Seeking Process

Job seeking assistance is provided by Disability Employment Services (DES). DES agencies are contracted by the Australian Government to provide assistance to people with disabilities to find jobs. DES providers are located throughout Western Australia, and some specialise in helping people with vision loss.

Job seekers can approach a DES service provider directly for services. In most cases, the provider will refer you for a job capacity assessment to determine your eligibility for the service. Alternatively, you can contact your local Centrelink office to arrange a job capacity assessment. The job capacity assessor will then arrange a referral to a suitable DES service.

The DES service will help you develop a pathway to employment that may include further education, training, rehabilitation services, work experience, job search and job placement assistance.

Career Choices

If you are unsure what job you would like to do, explore possible career options using the Careers Service. The website www.myfuture.edu.au provides information, support and advice on getting a job.

You can also visit the Career Information Centre at:
2nd Floor,
City Central Building
166 Murray Street Mall
Perth WA 6000
Tel: 1800 026 134

Changes in the Workplace

From time to time, as jobs, technology and systems change within the workplace, you may be faced with the need to upgrade equipment, undertake further training or change job roles. The key to managing these changes is communicating with your supervisor or manager.

The Employment Assistance Fund is available to your employer to provide you with new equipment and training to help you with the changes. The Fund is administered through JobAccess.

The JobAccess website www.jobaccess.gov.au has an Employers and Managers section which will help your employer access the Employment Assistance Fund and other services.

The leaflet Information for Employers of People who are Vision Impaired is also available from our website or our Consultancy Service. You can provide this leaflet to your employer or suggest that a copy is obtained from us.

JobAccess Service

Free expert help is available through the JobAccess service. Visit the JobAccess website at www.jobaccess.gov.au and follow the link to Job Seekers and Employees. Alternatively you can call 1800 464 800 and speak to a JobAccess advisor. This is a free and confidential service.

People who are already employed

People who are vision impaired and are already employed will normally have the skills, equipment and modifications required to do their job and continue their career.

Changes in Your Vision

If you are already employed and are experiencing problems with your vision, the first step is to have an eye health check-up. Visit your local GP or optometrist who may refer you to a specialist if required.

Having determined the cause of your vision loss, it may be that your vision problems can be overcome using simple additions to your workplace, such as extra lighting, portable or desktop magnification systems, and by changing fonts, colours and settings in computers.

Disclosure to your employer about your vision problem is always recommended but this is a personal choice, and the timing is, of course, up to you.

There are several services available to help you:

- Call the JobAccess service and speak to an advisor confidentially. The JobAccess advisor can refer you to a service that will help you while you manage your vision loss and provide assistance if you fear that your job might be in jeopardy. The earlier this process is started the better the outcome is likely to be.
- Contact the Association for the Blind of WA. We will require eye information from your GP or specialist to determine if you are able to access our services. You can then be referred to a social worker who will assist you as you deal with the issues surrounding your vision loss, and in particular, the disclosure to your employer.

Remember that most employers are very helpful and willing to assist you to retain your current job, obtaining modifications if required. Most employers will also consider retraining or redistributing duties to ensure that you keep your job.

Employment Assistance Fund (Workplace Modifications Scheme)

You may have heard about the Workplace Modifications Scheme. Since 1 March 2010 this is called the Employment Assistance Fund.

While you are job seeking, your DES service provider will work with potential employers to ensure that any modifications that need to be made to the workplace are provided.

For those already employed, your employer can apply through the Employment Assistance Fund to obtain modifications required as a result of a change in your job or a change in your vision.

This includes provision of assistive technology devices such as computer software, magnification devices, telephonic devices and physical modifications such as workstations, lighting, etc. These workplace modifications are provided by the Australian Government and are not paid for by your employer.

Further information about the Employment Assistance Fund is available from the JobAccess website www.jobaccess.gov.au or a JobAccess advisor.



Association for the Blind of WA

If you have difficulty following the job seeking process and gaining access to an employment service, please contact us for assistance.

For people already employed, we can assist you by providing information to your employer about JobAccess and the Employment Assistance Fund.

Contact information

Association for the Blind of WA Consultancy Service

www.guidedogswa.com.au

Tel: 9311 8202 or
1800 847 466 (1800 VISION)

Career Information Service

www.myfuture.edu.au

2nd Floor,
City Central Building
166 Murray Street Mall
Perth WA 6000
Tel: 1800 026 134

Centrelink Employment Services

www.centrelink.gov.au

Tel: 13 2850

JobAccess

www.jobaccess.gov.au

Tel: 1800 464 800





**Association
for the Blind of WA**
Guide Dogs WA

Victoria Park (Main Centre)

61 Kitchener Avenue Victoria Park 6100

PO Box 101 Victoria Park 6979

Tel: (08) 9311 8202 Fax: (08) 9361 8696

Toll free: 1800 847 466

Email: info@guidedogswa.com.au

www.guidedogswa.com.au

