



# SOCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY ROLES

This tip sheet has been created in co-design with people with disability and representatives of the Social Services industry. It is intended to support employers to hire, retain and grow employees with disability within their business or organisation.

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# RECRUITMENT

## TIP

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

**Encourage people with disabilities to apply, and consider lived experience when hiring.**

It is important to consider lived experience when people with a disability apply for work as this has a lot of value and is not something that can be taught.

We encourage cover letters from our applicants, as this is a way to showcase their lived experience.

**– Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**

**Allow conversation-based applications and flexible options for filling criteria.**

It is important to allow for flexible applications that could include conversation-based methods for people with a disability as the use of technical devices may be difficult for them. Some people with a disability advised they feel they can express the best version of themselves and their attributes verbally rather than written.

**Be open-minded and focus on transferrable skills.**

It is important to be open-minded and have some focus on transferable skills as not all people fit in the same box and having transferable skills means less training for you, the employer. People with a disability have many transferable skills offer, and this in turn will ensure an inclusive workplace.

We take into consideration transferrable skills, this is something we discuss during the interview and recruitment process.

**– Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**

**Manually shortlist and read interests/experiences.**

It is important to manually shortlist applicants as sometimes talents and experience are not picked up on computer based shortlisting programs. This puts people with disability at a disadvantage in the process.

As an employer we are aware of JobAccess and other government incentives. At present we do offer flexible working agreements and some part time roles.

**– Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**

**Provide disability job networks and offer flexible job arrangements.**

It is important to for employers to be aware of flexible working relationships and JobAccess services so they can maintain employment in the workplace. Eg. Part-time, flexible hours.

# ONBOARDING

## TIP

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

**Ensure a smooth transition from recruiting to onboarding.**

It is important to have a smooth transition from the recruitment phase to onboarding. People with disability can find long waits and different contacts triggering which can affect confidence and increase anxiety. This may lead to withdrawing applications and less people employed in the workplace with a disability.

**Guide through the onboarding process and understand additional needs for support.**

It is important to ensure during the onboarding process that the employer understands the additional needs and support that may be required for employing a person with a disability. This should be communicated to the various supervisors ahead of the person starting. If not, awkward conversations may arise that could leave the person with the disability feeling disengaged, or they may leave your employ.

Training across the board needs to continue around employing people with a disability.

**- Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**

**Provide education on how to set up the work environment so that they feel supported.**

It is important to ensure your workplace is educated around how to set up a work environment for people with a disability and what is required. There needs to be a clear transition from onboarding to commencing employment to ensure your new employee feels included in the workplace.

**Avoid 'tick box for disability' and instead offer a safe space to discuss needs.**

It is important to consider not having a tick box in the onboarding process if they wish to identify as a person with disability. Instead make a safe space to discuss disability during the onboarding process.

We have a space on the online application to fill in around this. We could look at adding this in the interview process.

**- Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**

**Consider quotas carefully.**

It is important to consider not just employing people with a disability to meet quotas in the workplace. People with disability would like all positions available to be inclusive. This in turn will make the workplace inclusive for all employees.

**Provide information on Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), supervision, and WHS support.**

It is important to provide information on EAP, supervision and workplace health and safety to ensure a person with a disability has all the information to start their role.





## EVERYDAY PRACTICES

### TIP

### WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

**Have ongoing “my needs” conversations and ensure equipment maintenance.**

It is important to have open conversations where feedback and suggestions for improvement can be discussed. Regular check-ins reduce anxiety for people with disability.

**Prioritise actions over words and provide ongoing training and support.**

It is important to have a line manager to facilitate regular, meaningful check-ins with a person with a disability to ensure their needs are met.

**Utilise realistic KPI measurement and KPI sharing.**

It is important to have realistic expectations around KPIs. It may take some people longer to understand priorities and to learn the role, however once this is learnt KPIs can be met.

**Share job roles and offer job flexibility.**

This could include job-sharing across full-time roles or multiple casual roles. Allowing flexibility, such as when and where to work, can also improve productivity as it caters to people’s strengths.

We offer flexible working arrangements. This includes part-time or job-sharing and some flexibility around where work is done.

**– Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**



# CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## TIP

**Encourage growth opportunities, study flexibility and put a reward system in place.**

**Pair employees with experienced colleagues to help them adjust to their new role.**

**Provide project roles and support access to higher roles.**

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

It is important to implement a rewards system for employees achieving well, ideally with a choice of reward. This could include an option for further learning with additional time to work towards greater skills.

Peer-to-peer support will help people with disability feel more confident in their role as it provides encouragement, learning and up-skilling.

It is important to provide opportunities for people with a disability to access higher level roles without it impacting their option to move back into their current role. People with a disability are less likely to put their hand up to take on higher duties due to the anxiety around not having their previous roles secured.

We have a rewards system to travel to another site and experience their work and mentoring with different departments.

**- Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**

Expressions of Interest often go out to our team for stepping into higher roles for a limited period.

**- Takara, Service Area Manager, Feros Care**