

Aboriginal Cultural Capability Toolkit



Introduction

The Barring Djinang Aboriginal Cultural Capability toolkit supports public sector workplaces to build their capability to attract, recruit, retain, support and develop Aboriginal staff at all levels. Its aim is to strengthen the cultural capability of managers and staff, as well as the cultural safety of public sector workplaces for Aboriginal employees.

Recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees at all levels across the Victorian public sector will lead to improved policies and programs, designed to better reflect the needs and aspirations of communities and delivered through more appropriate models and processes.

The name Barring Djinang is from the Taungurung language and means 'path of the feet' and was chosen as a reminder of the many different career paths that the Victorian public sector can provide to Aboriginal people.


Barring Djinang Five Year Aboriginal Employment Strategy

This toolkit is one of the fifteen initiatives that form the Victorian Government's Barring Djinang Aboriginal Employment Strategy for the Victorian public sector 2017-2022. The toolkit supports Barring Djinang's strategic aim to enhance the career options and experiences of Aboriginal staff across the Victorian public sector. Building the cultural capability of the public sector at individual, managerial, leadership and whole-of-organisation levels will help to ensure that the Victorian public sector can work more effectively with the community it serves, including supporting Aboriginal self-determination and ensuring that the priorities of Aboriginal Victorians shape the work of government.¹

Barring Djinang has adopted a target that by 2022, employment of Aboriginal people in the Victorian public sector will increase from 0.9 per cent in 2016 to 2 per cent of total employees.² The strategy also aims to support Aboriginal Victorians to be represented at the highest levels of public sector leadership.

How to use this toolkit

The toolkit provides information on how to build the cultural capability of public sector workplaces. It discusses key concepts and understandings of Aboriginal culture and cultural capability. Each section contains topic information, questions which workplaces can use to



reflect on their cultural capability and useful links for further information.

Throughout this toolkit, the term Aboriginal is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

How we wrote this toolkit

This toolkit was developed with the valuable support of the Victorian Aboriginal Childcare Agency (VACCA). We acknowledge the cultural expertise provided by VACCA to this project.

Policy frameworks that support this toolkit

Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VAAF) 2018-2023

The VAAF provides an ambitious and forward-looking agenda for Aboriginal affairs with the vision that 'All Aboriginal Victorian people, families and communities are healthy, safe, resilient, thriving and living culturally rich lives'.

The VAAF has two key purposes:

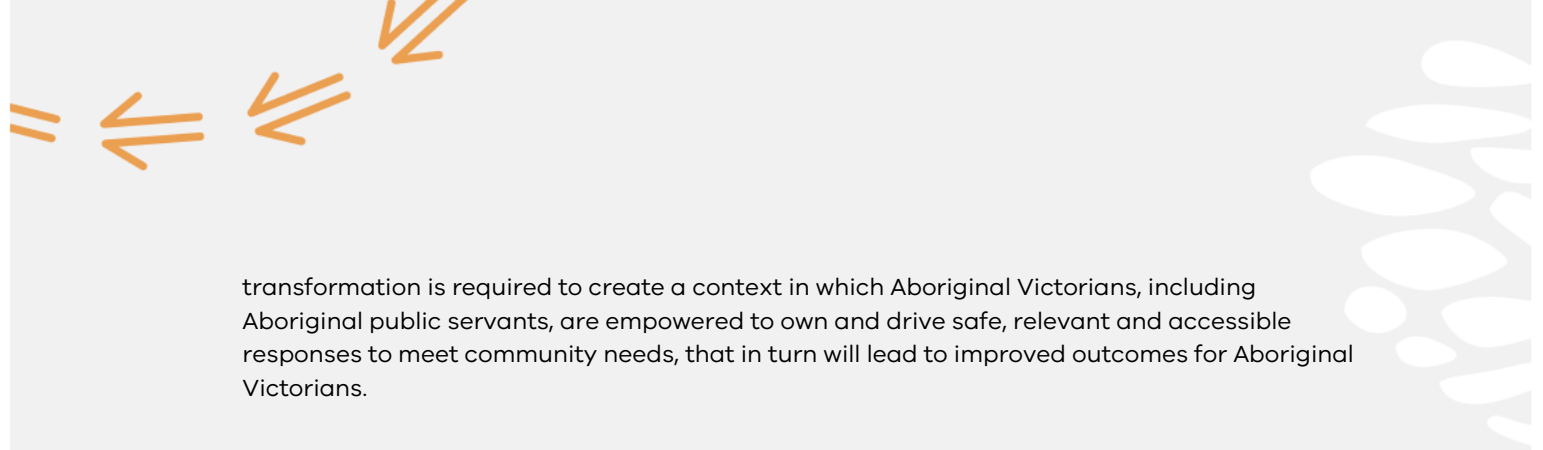
1. It is the Victorian Government's overarching framework for working with Aboriginal Victorians, organisations and the wider community to drive action and improve outcomes
2. It sets the whole-of-government self-determination enablers and principles, and commits government to significant structural and systemic transformation.

Improving the cultural capability of the government is an important step leading to improved outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians. The VAAF's action logic acknowledges that, to do this, government must embed self-determining approaches across government and transform its current structures and systems through action to:

- ⇒ prioritise culture
- ⇒ address racism and promote cultural safety
- ⇒ address trauma and support healing
- ⇒ transfer power and resources to community.

The application of these enablers of self-determination will help to address structural and systemic barriers experienced by Aboriginal Victorians.

Government is taking responsibility for this first step, acknowledging that an internal



transformation is required to create a context in which Aboriginal Victorians, including Aboriginal public servants, are empowered to own and drive safe, relevant and accessible responses to meet community needs, that in turn will lead to improved outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians.

Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013-2020

The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013-2020 complements commitments made in the VAAF and identifies building Aboriginal public sector employment and career development opportunities in the public sector as key element to improving Aboriginal economic participation and development and a vital foundation for Aboriginal self-determination. Aboriginal economic development is also vital to growing Victoria's wealth generally and to increasing overall economic productivity and competitive advantage.

Victorian Aboriginal Inclusion Framework 2011

Aboriginal people, families and communities continue to experience social exclusion. This means being less able to contribute to and benefit from participation in the workforce and other aspects of social, economic community life.³ Social inclusion on the other hand means having opportunities to participate fully in society through employment, access to education, health and community services and being heard.⁴

Closing the Gap

In 2011, the Victorian Government recommitted to Closing the Gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. As part of this, all Victorian Government departments were required to prepare Aboriginal inclusion action plans. These included strategies to increase employment of Aboriginal people.⁵



Useful links and other information

(1) Barring Djinang website details the full range of Barring Djinang initiatives.

(2) [Barring Djinang, VPSC and AEU launch brochure.](#)

(3, 4) [Social exclusion and inclusion: Resources for child and family services.](#)

(5) [DPC's Aboriginal Employment Action Plan.](#)

[The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023.](#)

[The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013-2020.](#)