

Step-by-Step Guide: Disability Support for Legally Blind Residents (VIC)

Navigating government support in Australia can be overwhelming. As someone with Albinism who is legally blind, we have compiled this step-by-step guide to help you streamline your applications for essential services and benefits.

Step 1: The Essential Medical Evidence

The foundation of all your applications is a formal report from your **Ophthalmologist**.

- **Requirements:** The letter must confirm that your condition is permanent and state your visual acuity (e.g., 6/60) or field of vision (e.g., <20 degrees).
- **Key Phrase:** It must explicitly state that you are "**Legally Blind.**"
- **Why:** This is your primary evidence for NDIS, Public Transport, and Centrelink.
- **Action:** Ask for multiple original copies, as you will need to provide or show them for different applications. A digital version also works generally.

Also request a referral to Vision Australia. You can reach out to Vision Australia for their support when you complete your NDIS application.

- **Note :** While you are there, also ask your doctor to complete the form detailed in Step 2 below.
- **Note :** If you are eligible for "Centrelink Blind Pension" discuss this with your Ophthalmologist in your appointment and request that they complete the form as explained in Step 6.

Step 2: PTV Vision Impaired Travel Pass (Victoria)

This pass provides free travel on all public transport in Victoria, including trains, trams, and buses. Other states have similar passes.

- **Action:** Download the application and have your ophthalmologist complete the "Section 4 - Health practitioner declaration" section.
- **Link:** [Vision impaired free travel form](#)
- **Submission :** You can post this, but the easiest way is to go to a PTV hub where they can also certify your photo.

Step 3: Companion Card (Victoria)

The Victorian Companion Card allows a carer to accompany you to venues (cinemas, sports, etc.) for free.

Note : To complete this application, you need to visit your GP for them to fill out a form for you. Before going to the GP, also complete Step 4, which also requires GP input. This way you can complete 2 applications with one GP visit.

- **Action:**
 1. Complete **Part A** (your details) online or via the hard copy form. We suggest you apply online for Part A here: Start your [application](#) (you'll receive a reference number to give to the GP)
 2. Ask your **GP** to complete **Part B** online
- **Pro Tip:** Provide your GP with a copy of your completed Part A in this [form](#); it serves as a guide for them to describe your support needs accurately.
- **Link:** [Companion Card Website](#)

Step 4: Accessible Parking Permit (APP)

For safety and accessibility, you can apply for an Australian Disability Parking Permit through your local council's scheme.

- **Action:**
 1. Start the application online at the [Accessible Parking](#) portal. [Apply for individuals](#)
 2. You will receive a **reference number** via SMS/Email.
 3. Take this number to your **GP appointment**; they will use it to complete the medical assessment online. Bring your letter from the Ophthalmologist which you obtained in Step 1 and give to the GP for reference.

Step 5: NDIS Access Request

The NDIS provides funding for equipment (like magnifiers or screen readers) and mobility training.

- **Action:** Use the ophthalmologist report from Step 1 and your Companion Card Part B from the GP as supporting evidence. If you have an OT (Occupational Therapist) report, you can use that to inform the NDIS application of your goals and expectations. If you do not have one, please follow the steps below which will help you to cover OT visits by NDIS.

Contact the NDIS local Area coordinator, and they will guide and help you to complete the application.

- **Link:** [NDIS Access Request Form](#)
- The local area coordinator will guide you through your application and help finalize your application. When the application is complete, NDIS will review your application and if approved, they will contact you to write your NDIS plan and identify your goals. Get prepared for this interview based on the information available on AFA web site.
- **Note :** Usually it is better if you have more medical records to support your application, but with the forms completed in the 1st step and 2nd step, it is likely your application will be approved. When approved in your plan management interview, request support to cover OT visits. NDIS will pay for your OT visits and you will receive additional reports to update/revise your plan based on your needs.

Step 7: Vision Australia or Guide dogs

Contact vision Australia or Guide Dogs with your referral from the Ophthalmologist and NDIS details, they will organize your appointments with an OT and other specialists which will be covered by NDIS.

Step 6: Centrelink Blind Pension

If you are legally blind, you may be eligible for the **Disability Support Pension (Blind)**

- **The "Manifest" Advantage:** Legal blindness is a "manifest" condition, meaning you are often fast-tracked and **not subject to the standard income or assets test** (unless claiming Rent Assistance).
- **Action:**
 1. Link your **Centrelink** account to **myGov**.
 2. Download the [Request for Ophthalmologist/Optomtrist Report \(SA013\)](#) and have your specialist complete it.
 3. Submit your claim via the "Make a Claim" section under "Disabled, ill or injured" in myGov.