

Victoria

Voluntary Assisted Dying Act (2017)

Victoria became the first state in Australia to legalise Voluntary Assisted Dying when the Victorian Parliament passed the **Voluntary Assisted Dying Act (2017)** in November 2017. The Act came into effect in June 2019. (https://988c9073-ec7c-40b2-8b6c-41fea61805a8.filesusr.com/ugd/1062e1_527bca8232ae41c2afeb1e4f25ab59f8.pdf)

The VAD Bill was introduced as a Government Bill, with the benefit of the machinery of government to manage the debate and ensure sufficient debate time. All previous VAD bills in Australia have been tabled by a Private Member and have universally encountered difficulty in achieving sufficient parliamentary time to debate the Bill.

Victoria also benefited from the support of Andrew Denton and the GoGentle team in briefing MPs, advocating in the media and generating community support to achieve a legal option for people to end their suffering at the end of their life.

Listen to an interview with **Andrew Denton** on the operation of the Victorian VAD Act one year on. (<https://twitter.com/ValeEnding/status/1274119424996306950>)

One aspect of the Victorian VAD Act (not contained in the WA VAD Act) is the inability of doctors to initiate discussion about VAD with a patient.

The **Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board** will issue six monthly reports for the first two years. Reports and details of the operation of the VAD Review Board are available on their website.

The main debate took place in the Legislative Council in October and November 2017. **Hansard** of the debate in the Victorian Parliament can be found by searching the page Parliament of Victoria/Hansard. In the Legislative Council, Ministers Hon Gavin Jennings and Hon Inga Peulich carried the debate for the Government in the Committee Stage, where opponents to the Bill proposed various amendments.

Regulations which control how the VAD Act operates in Victoria were released in September 2018. The Regulations include the forms which will need to be completed to comply with the VAD Act.

The Victorian Government has created a **webpage** to answer frequently asked questions (<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/ServicesAndSupport/voluntary-assisted-dying>)

A useful **Parliamentary Research Paper** on the VAD Bill provides a snapshot of the global and local environment in relation to VAD legislation. This paper contains links to other important documents, including the **Inquiry into End of Life Choices** which preceded the drafting of the VAD Bill. (https://988c9073-ec7c-40b2-8b6c-41fea61805a8.filesusr.com/ugd/1062e1_23b2a25be3a247419e209b91bd23a53d.pdf)

Dying With Dignity Victoria provides current information on the implementation of the VAD Act 2017. (<https://www.dwdv.org.au>)