



DIRECTOR POLICY, ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS

Position Description

Date: January 2026	Location: Melbourne with regular in-person engagement.
Reports to: Executive Director, Policy, Advocacy and Programs	Direct Reports: Nil
Conditions: 1 x FTE	Contract Type: Fixed Term- 12 months ending February 2027

BACKGROUND

Mental Health Victoria (MHV) is the independent peak body for mental health and wellbeing in Victoria with a purpose to ensure every Victorian has access to the enablers of positive mental health and wellbeing.

MHV represents the breadth of the mental health and wellbeing sector, bringing together service providers, from the public health, private and non-government sector, community health, and allied sector organisations.

MHV provide independent policy leadership, advocacy, and coordination at a time of significant system reform following the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System.

MHV is committed to equity, inclusion and safety for people of all backgrounds and experiences.

SUMMARY OF ROLE

The Director - Policy, Advocacy & Campaigns plays a critical role in strengthening Victoria’s mental health system by delivering senior specialist, high-quality, independent policy leadership and advocacy. This role operates with a high degree of professional autonomy and is relied upon as MHV’s senior policy authority. Operating within a complex and evolving reform environment, this is a specialist technical role that translates a range of evidence into clear, influential policy advice and campaign strategies that achieve impact and support improved outcomes.

This position is central to MHV’s strategic objectives to:

- Establish MHV as the authoritative, independent peak body for mental health in Victoria

- Strengthen sector cohesion and policy influence
- Support sustainable, evidence-informed mental health reform

KEY OUTCOMES

The Director - Policy, Advocacy & Campaigns is accountable for achieving the following outcomes:

- High-quality, timely technical and specialist advice and delivery of policy and strategy that informs mental health policy and campaign development
- Strong, trusted policy technical and specialist outputs that reflects sector and community perspectives and expectations
- Coordinated and cohesive advocacy
- Increased credibility, influence, and visibility of MHV as Victoria's independent mental health peak body

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Core Responsibilities (approximately 70%)

- Lead the development of evidence-informed policy positions, submissions, and advice
- Monitor mental health, social, and adjacent policy environments to identify emerging issues, risks, and opportunities for influence
- Lead the Victorian Mental Health Policy Network, supporting shared problem definition, consensus building, and collective advocacy
- Lead campaign development and execution
- Ensure all policy and advocacy outputs are informed by and in partnership with MHV advisory groups
- Represent MHV on relevant local, state, and national policy forums, consultations, and working groups
- Provide authoritative advice to the Executive on strategic policy positioning and advocacy priorities

Contributory Responsibilities (approximately 30%)

- Contribute to election and strategic advocacy messaging aligned with reform and policy cycles
- Support data analysis and insight generation to strengthen MHV's evidence base
- Coordinate policy-related engagement activities including consultations, webinars, and briefings
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to support organisational sustainability initiatives, innovation, and partnership development
- Other duties as required

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- Tertiary qualification in Public Policy, Public Health, Social Policy, or a related field
- Demonstrated experience delivering high-quality specialist policy and advocacy work within complex public policy environments
- Strong understanding of mental health systems, reform processes, and social determinants of mental health

- Highly developed analytical and research skills, with the ability to synthesise diverse evidence and perspectives
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including preparation of policy submissions, briefings, and public-facing materials
- Proven capability in stakeholder engagement, coordination, and relationship management
- Sound judgement, autonomy, and ability to prioritise work in fast-paced, responsive environments

Desirable

- Knowledge of Victoria’s mental health reform policy settings and service system
- Experience working within human rights frameworks
- Experience working in a small, values-led organisation or peak body

CAPABILITIES AND BEHAVIOURS

The Director - Policy, Advocacy & Campaigns is expected to demonstrate:

- Strategic thinking: understands how policy work advances MHV’s mission and reform outcomes
- Collaboration: builds trust and works effectively across diverse stakeholders
- Accountability: with minimal oversight delivers to commitments, manages risk, and maintains high standards
- Integrity and independence: provides robust, evidence-informed advice grounded in MHV’s values

OTHER INFORMATION

- Some infrequent work outside business hours may be required
- Flexible working arrangements are supported in line with MHV policy
- Background checks (including police and social media) may be required

PERFORMANCE KPIS

The Director - Policy, Advocacy & Campaign’s performance will be assessed against the following KPIs, aligned to MHV’s strategic objectives and mission:

Policy Quality and Influence

- Delivery of specialist and technical high-quality, evidence-informed policy submissions, briefings, and advice that are well-regarded by government and stakeholders
- Demonstrated contribution to policy influence, including uptake, citation, or positive feedback from decision-makers
- Provides authoritative advice to the Executive on strategic policy positioning and advocacy priorities

Advocacy and Sector Leadership

- Effective coordination of the Victorian Mental Health Policy Network, evidenced by timely outputs, shared positions, and strengthened sector cohesion
- Clear integration of community experience and human rights perspectives across all policy and advocacy products

Delivery and Responsiveness

- Consistent delivery of priority policy outputs within agreed timeframes
- Effective management of competing priorities in fast-paced and time-sensitive environments

Stakeholder Engagement and Relationships

- Strong, constructive relationships maintained with key government, sector, lived experience, and research stakeholders
- Positive feedback from partners regarding engagement, collaboration, and credibility

Evidence and Insight Development

- Contribution to strengthening MHV's evidence base through analysis of data, trends, and system insights
- Clear use of evidence to inform recommendations and advocacy positions