



Department of Justice and Community Safety

Secretary

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Our ref: 26056065

Her Honour Judge Liberty Sanger
State Coroner
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

By email: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Judge Sanger

Finding into death without inquest – JNY – COR 2023 003518

I refer to your findings and recommendations delivered on 27 April 2026 into the death of JNY at the West Gippsland Hospital on 29 June 2023.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) acknowledges the distressing circumstances leading up to the death of JNY, outlined in your report, and I thank you for your comprehensive investigation.

As the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) is a business unit of DJCS, I write to respond on behalf of the Victorian Government to recommendation (i) – **That the Minister for Disability and the Victorian Government make available appropriate funding to the Office of the Public Advocate to enable it to implement all of the recommendations from the VAGO report.**

The Victorian-Auditor General's Office (VAGO) report *Guardianship and Decision-making for Vulnerable Adults (May)* was tabled on 29 May 2024 (VAGO report). The VAGO report examined whether OPA provides guardianship and investigation services that promote and protect the rights and interests of vulnerable adults. It found that OPA provides crucial guardianship and investigation services for thousands of vulnerable adults each year in complex and challenging circumstances, but that it could do more to protect and promote their interests.

The report made 10 recommendations directed towards OPA about: improving its documentation; how it engages with clients; its training and guidance for staff; how it collects and uses data; and its planning and oversight. It also made 3 recommendations to both DJCS and OPA about improving their planning and recruitment processes and performance measures. The recommendations have been accepted or accepted in principle by OPA and DJCS, and implementation is underway.

The Victorian Government supports this work through its funding of OPA's guardianship, investigation and Independent Third Person programs, supporting OPA to promote and safeguard the human rights and interests of Victorians with disability.

Given that the implementation of some recommendations of the VAGO report directed to OPA may require government investment above existing levels, support for recommendation (i) is subject to further funding consideration by government as part of future budget processes.

You note in your findings that DJCS, in its response to the JZA finding, did not specifically address recommendations concerning the introduction of adult safeguarding legislation and associated functions. This was because, as noted in the response, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) responded separately to those recommendations.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet coordinates responses to Coroners' Court recommendations across the Victorian government. As DFFH is leading the Victorian Government's response to recommendation 11.1 of the final report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (that states and territories should introduce legislation to establish nationally consistent adult safeguarding functions), DFFH will respond separately – on behalf of the Victorian Government – to the recommendations in your report relating to the introduction of adult safeguarding legislation and associated functions.

Yours sincerely



Emma Cassar PSM
Secretary

22 / 07 /2026

cc: Jeremy Moule,, Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

Peta McCammon Secretary, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing