



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2023/24



## Acknowledgment of Country

Essential Personnel acknowledges the Aboriginal peoples of Western Australia as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Essential Personnel works. We are privileged to work with and alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present.

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## Diversity and Inclusivity

At Essential Personnel, Choice, Equality and Inclusion are at the core of who we are. Our commitment to these values is seen throughout all levels of our organisation. Diverse and inclusive teams have a positive impact on our services and help us better serve customers, employees and community stakeholders from every background.



Avon Community Employment Support Centre Inc.  
T/A Essential Personnel

ABN: 73049570899





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# Our Organisation

## People Living Their Best Lives

In our annual reports, we proudly celebrate the individual achievements of our customers and staff. This year, our focus has been on collaboration and partnership: walking alongside one another to create positive outcomes for all our stakeholders. By working together, we find solutions and efficiencies in our everyday tasks, empowering everyone to live their best lives.

## Our Vision

The most efficient and positive provider for people in our communities to live their best lives.

## Our Purpose

To inspire and collaborate with people to utilise their abilities to achieve their goals. Our mission is to partner with people with disabilities and disadvantage in the Wheatbelt and Perth to achieve their goals.

## Strategic Outcomes

Fulfilled lives, happy employees, sustainable organisation.

## Focus Areas

- Increase housing options
- Expand services
- Expand reach
- Optimise sustainability

## Principles

- Choice
- Equity
- Inclusion



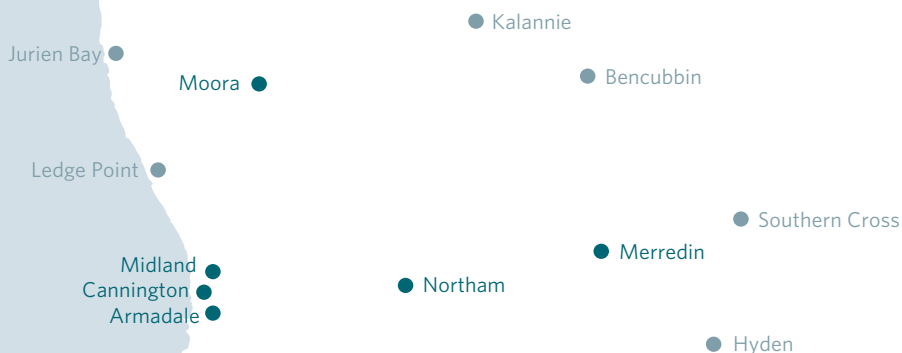
**115**  
staff



**37%**  
of Essential Personnel  
staff live with  
disability



**2354.74**  
hours of  
staff training



@essentialpersonnelwa



@essentialpersonnelperth



**OUR VISION:** The most efficient and positive provider for people in our communities to live their best lives.

**To inspire and collaborate with people to utilise their abilities to achieve their goals.**

Our mission is to partner with people with disabilities and disadvantage in the Wheatbelt and Perth to achieve their goals.

**Strategic outcomes: fulfilled lives, happy employees, sustainable organisation.**

PURPOSE

FOCUS AREAS

PRIORITY INITIATIVES

PRINCIPLES

Increase housing options

Expand services

Expand reach

Optimise sustainability

Build a house and two units on our land

Conduct a feasibility study of other housing options and use of other land assets

Create a Youth Service (buddy program pilot)

Expand employment services in the Metro

Expand our Wheatbelt footprint

Reach more NDIS customers

Implement the best structure for growth

Refresh identity (brand) and marketing approach

Recruit a business development role

Consolidate Property Care Program

CHOICE

EQUITY

INCLUSION



# CEO's Report

Another year has passed, and we are proud to report that Essential Personnel continues to provide high-quality services and support to our customers and staff. This year has seen remarkable achievements for both people with disabilities and our team members.

In collaboration with our staff and Board, we have introduced a new strategic plan for the next five years, ensuring that the needs of our customers and communities remain at the forefront of our decision-making processes. To meet these objectives, we have refined and future-proofed our systems and processes, including the introduction of new standards to our suite of policies. This ensures a consistent service experience across all interactions with Essential Personnel. We have enhanced our centralised, accessible digital hub for document control and real-time communication, which complements our regular CEO briefings where staff are encouraged to connect, receive updates, and contribute their insights.

We hold regular staff and leadership team meetings to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge, and skills. We conducted a Program Logic workshop, bringing staff together to brainstorm ideas aimed at enhancing outcomes for the individuals we support. This collaborative environment has resulted in innovative initiatives, which we are excited to see come to fruition. To spearhead these efforts, we are focused on ensuring we have a lead who will drive these events and activities across the regions, fostering connections among stakeholders and advocating for the needs of people with disabilities within our communities.

Our focus on staff training and development has been paramount, with several team members successfully completing certifications and diplomas in Community Services or Disability. We take great pride in these accomplishments, recognising the positive impact that skilled, qualified staff have on the quality of services provided to our customers.



The exceptional work performed by our staff across all departments and programs is truly commendable. While it is not possible to capture every achievement in this document, the following pages offer a snapshot of the outstanding contributions made by our team. For additional stories and updates, we invite you to visit our social media platforms.

To sustain our efforts, we have placed a strong emphasis on risk management, resulting in a comprehensive update of our Risk Framework and Register to ensure safety and prevent harm across all operations. Our Board and staff remain committed to continuous learning and advocacy through participation in conferences, Communities of Practice, industry surveys, and collaboration with various community services.

With our new strategic plan in place, a dedicated team, loyal customers, and more efficient systems and processes, we are optimistic about the opportunities and advancements the coming year will bring. We extend our sincere thanks to all who have supported us—our success would not be possible without you.

**Teeny Lane**  
Chief Executive Officer

# Chairperson's Report

On behalf of the Board of Essential Personnel, it is my privilege to present our Annual Report for 2023-2024.

This year, after a rigorous recruitment process, we are thrilled to announce that we have welcomed two new members to the Essential Personnel Board: Paul Vivian and Ross Polis.

Their appointments have led to the formation of two new committees – Risk and Marketing – and I am pleased to report that both the Board and our executive team are already benefiting from Paul and Ross's vast commercial experience in these areas.

In October 2023 the entire board and executive team attended a Strategic Direction Day, where we reflected on Essential Personnel's journey and history, and unpacked the key elements of our purpose, vision, goals and values.

We explored the future, set strategic priorities, and workshopped what steps we need to take to enable a successful future.

The result was our *Strategic Plan for 2024 – 2029*, and I am excited to share that we are now fully engaged in our strategic journey.

Among the many highlights of the past year, it has been a pleasure to meet so many of our customers and our people on my road trips across WA and at our festivals, parties, staff days, and open days.

A particularly proud moment for me was filled with music, happiness, and celebration as we threw open the doors of our new Koodjal Cottage in Northam and invited our community to share this welcoming and beautiful space.

Our most sincere thanks to the Hon. Mia Davies MLA Member for Central Wheatbelt for officially opening the cottage, and to each and every person involved in this very special project.



The Board's goals for the year ahead are to continue to support our customers and our people, to build on our strong financial and cultural performance, and to provide good leadership, governance, and guidance as we together work on our strategic plan.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Board, to thank our CEO, Teeny Lane, and her team for their extraordinary contributions, and to express our deepest gratitude to all our customers and their families for allowing Essential Personnel to support them in achieving their goals.

It truly is an honour.

**Jodie Beeson**  
Chairperson

# Financial Report

by Finance Committee Chairman – Nigel Alvares

Year Ended 30 June 2024



Essential Personnel's financial position has reinforced the underlying strength of our core business, with a steadfast performance throughout the year ended 30 June 2024, despite a challenging and changing business environment.

The net profit for the year ended 30 June 2024 was \$335,304, lower than the 2023 profit of \$677,541. However, this is an excellent outcome when compared to similar organisations in the industry, given the continuing effects of high inflationary costs that have impacted businesses over the last couple of years. The balance sheet remains strong, with net assets increasing by over \$200,000 to \$6,566,355.

There have been challenges in delivering the full range of services this year primarily due to staff shortages and increased competition for labour across the state. Nevertheless, the organisation has done extremely well to continue delivering a high standard of service within efficient and effective guidelines, resulting in a financial outcome at the high end of industry expectations.

CEO Teeny Lane, our Finance Manager Marian Zhao, senior managers, and staff have worked under difficult conditions to achieve a reassuring financial result.

The continuing financial improvement can be seen in the following statistics from the year ended 30 June 2024.

	2020 \$	2021 \$	2022 \$	2023 \$	2024 \$
Gross Revenue	6,032,000	6,953,000	6,026,000	5,943,362	6,165,730
Net Profit	787,105	1,515,393	586,259	677,541	335,304
Net Profit (before Depreciation)	904,670	1,639,825	696,769	775,094	440,472



	<b>2020</b> \$	<b>2021</b> \$	<b>2022</b> \$	<b>2023</b> \$	<b>2024</b> \$
Current Assets	2,297,216	4,156,718	4,530,919	5,071,113	5,049,994
Current Liabilities	821,013	1,088,336	1,043,239	1,098,261	891,684
Working Capital	1,476,203	3,068,382	3,487,680	3,972,852	4,158,310
Current Ratio	2.8	3.8	4.3	4.6	5.7

The strong financial performance has further consolidated the working capital, with the current ratio rising to 5.7. Essential Personnel currently maintains significant cash reserves.

In line with our strategy, the Board and the Executive are keen to utilise available funds effectively to enhance the quality of our services, safeguard customers and invest in various growth initiatives and projects that add value in the community.

On 30 June 2024, we saw the departure of John Hancock from the Board. John has made a significant contribution to Essential Personnel over the years, playing a key role in influencing the strategic direction and guiding us towards the strong financial position we are in today.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I would like to thank John Hancock for his contributions and wish him the best in the future.

I would also like to thank Teeny Lane and Marian Zhao, for their combined efforts throughout the year. The future looks very exciting for Essential Personnel, with Teeny introducing numerous initiatives and reshaping the team so we can continue delivering successful outcomes.

As Chairman of the Finance Committee, I sincerely thank Teeny, Navneet, Marian, and the managers and staff for their efforts, and the Board for their work in ensuring we continue to steer a strong financial course.



## A Staff Perspective – Christine’s Story



Christine has gathered a wealth of experience working in multiple industries. No matter where she was, her work always involved the support, care and well-being of other people: from a dental technician at Nimmingarra Mine, to aged care in Pemberton.

With over 30 years of experience in disability services Christine finds this career path incredibly fulfilling. She started by running a holiday program called Inroads for school-age children with disabilities around Pingelly and Popanyinning. She also provided monthly respite care for two people during that time.

Upon moving to Northam, Christine’s desire to find a fulfilling and rewarding role led her to Essential Personnel. Christine has been with us for two years working with the Lifestyle and Property Care teams. She loves assisting customers with their daily tasks and supporting them in achieving their goals.

Christine won the award for Excellence in Regional Support at the 2024 NDS WA Disability Support Awards. The acknowledgement of her work was an honour, but she believes the real heroes are the individuals who face and overcome daily challenges. “I’m proud to stand by their side, providing support and guidance,” Christine said.

Christine embodies the future of Essential Personnel – especially with the new Koodjal Cottage and Ability Housing facilities. She is looking forward to continuing to work with skilled support workers and coordinators to achieve positive and exciting outcomes that enable customers to reach their goals, and which prove the value of social inclusion.

***“I’m grateful for the dedicated staff at Essential Personnel who keep everything running smoothly. An awesome group of individuals!”***



# Property Care

Property Care is our gardening and maintenance service which was established over 20 years ago. The primary purpose of Property Care is to offer employment opportunities to people with disabilities who require more on-the-job support than those in open employment. Unlike other regions, Northam and surrounding Wheatbelt towns do not have the benefit of Australian Disability Enterprises, which typically provide such support.

Our Property Care team includes nine people with varying disabilities who are employed to work alongside their Essential Personnel supervisors at numerous locations in and around Northam. There are five dedicated supervisors with horticultural expertise to ensure that the gardeners continually acquire new skills while delivering valuable services to the community.

The benefits of the amazing work done by the team is evident as Essential Personnel consistently secures tenders from various government departments including TAFE, Muresk Institute, DPRID, Main Roads, and other businesses and organisations such as Juniper Homes, and Aboriginal Health Services. They even undertake smaller jobs for local families.

Many of our Property Care Gardeners stay with us for years because they draw a deep passion and purpose from their work. We have several long-serving team members with tenures ranging from 1 to 15 years. This dedication is worth celebrating and acknowledging.



# Disability Employment Services

For over 37 years, our Disability Employment Services (DES) have been at the core of Essential Personnel, beginning in the Wheatbelt region. Throughout this time, we have consistently delivered high-quality services across the Wheatbelt and into the Perth metropolitan area. As the sole DES provider in the Wheatbelt, our commitment to supporting individuals in finding and maintaining open employment and/or training opportunities of their choice speaks to the exceptional work we do.

We tailor our support to each person's skills, capacity, goals, and personal circumstances, ensuring a successful journey into employment and improvement in other aspects of life. Over the years, we have established enduring relationships with our customers, their families, employers, training organisations, other stakeholders, and the communities we serve, to secure suitable employment opportunities and outcomes for those we support.



**636**  
participants supported

..... **125** metro  
..... **511** wheatbelt



**143**  
new DES customers



**63**  
commenced work



**176**  
supported to keep their job

## Douglas's Story



Douglas's journey is one of resilience and adaptability. Through his determination and Essential Personnel's support, Douglas has completed a Certificate III in Civil Construction and that was just the beginning.

A skilled welder by trade, Douglas has faced some challenging health conditions, including epilepsy brought on by open-heart surgery and subsequent operations to install a pacemaker. Due to the pacemaker, Douglas was unable to operate welding equipment.

Since his seizures have stopped, Douglas completed a six-week Heavy Vehicle Driving Operations skill set at Muresk Institute where he earned a Forklift Ticket and Heavy Rigid licence which enabled him to drive a wide range of vehicles.

When Essential Personnel assisted Douglas to update his resume with his newly acquired skills and qualifications, he was able to secure a full-time position with the Shire of Mundaring, working on the road construction crew.

Douglas' story is a testament to the impact dedicated support can have in helping people who face challenging personal circumstances, to open doors to new career possibilities.





## John's Story



For most of his life, John found fulfillment as an industrial building painter, however, enduring several setbacks led to depression and a sense of hopelessness about the future. In the face of these challenges, John chose to pursue a fresh start by once again becoming a self-employed house painter.

John sought help from various employment services, but none were able to offer the support he needed. When he connected with Essential Personnel his aspiration to establish his own painting business was met with enthusiasm from our team, who recognised the extensive experience he had to draw upon. "I was totally surprised that Essential Personnel said this was possible and they would help," John said.

Essential Personnel connected John with the Sam Garrone Training Alliance to support his transition into self-employment. As well as providing training and resources, they worked with Essential Personnel to provide John with advertising support, referrals for additional support services, clothing to ensure he could present himself professionally and, perhaps most importantly, encouragement so John could maintain his morale and focus on his goals.

John recently secured his first significant contract: painting the historic Castle Hotel in York. Likely to last several months, this project has brought John immense joy and a renewed sense of purpose. John's goals moving forward are to be able to generate a good income doing what he enjoys, to find stable and comfortable accommodation, and to get a dog.

John's successful transition to self-employment as a house painter marks a new chapter in his professional life. We are very proud to have played a role in helping him rediscover his capabilities. His story is a powerful example of determination in the face of hardship and the value of providing support so people can draw on their own strengths and experiences.







# Lifestyle Services



**36,233**  
support hours  
provided

We all want a life filled with happiness, purpose and opportunities to pursue our goals and dreams. Our Lifestyle Services assist people to turn this vision into reality by focusing on supporting them to enjoy social, recreational, educational and employment experiences and embrace a life connected within their community. These supports can assist people to build new life skills so they can enjoy greater independence and have a new world of possibilities.

Our team works with our customers to carefully design services to achieve their goals and proudly live the life they want.

Some of these services include:

- Assistance with activities of daily living,
- Assistance with acquiring new life skills to improve independence,
- Support with building friendships and social connections,
- Enabling social and community participation, and
- Empowering people to actively engage in decision-making that positively impacts their life outcomes.



## Sue's Story



Over the past year, our customer Sue navigated significant life changes with great resilience. Her Support Worker, Bo takes a proactive and compassionate approach that ensures Sue's voice is always heard and her needs are fully met.

During multiple recent moves, Bo assisted Sue by communicating with real estate agents, the Coordinator of Supports, Sue's Guardian, and the Public Trustee to ensure that Sue always had a safe home within which to live.

Now settled in her new home, Sue is flourishing. She is connecting with the community in several ways such as attending events and having coffee catchups. She has even been gifted furniture for her new home by some lovely locals. Sue and Bo volunteer at the local Food Bank together, which gives Sue a strong sense of purpose and connection. She also delivers food donations to those in need.

Sue's health has greatly improved with the stability of her new living situation.

Bo assists her with cooking and works with Sue to manage her diabetes with a healthy diet. Together, they have set up a visual board that is updated weekly to capture all of Sue's appointments, events and various therapies. This gives Sue a clear overview of what each week looks like, so that she can choose when to take time for her art and other creative pursuits. She has even held a couple of get-togethers and has welcomed a rescue cat into her home!

Bo and the Lifestyles team are dedicated to empowering Sue to live her life in a way that brings her the most stability and happiness. Control over her environment, schedule, commitments and supports, enables Sue to live independently and confidently. Sue is now saving for her first boat cruise which has been a long-standing dream of hers.

The outcomes Sue has achieved for her health and wellbeing highlight what a difference the right Support Worker makes to someone on their journey towards their best life.



## Vincent's Story



Vincent became an Essential Personnel customer in June 1995, receiving Disability Employment Services. His first Employment Consultant learned that Vincent's family history in the region motivated him to want to contribute to the community, and so sought a role for him with the Shire of Dandaragan. In February 1998, Vincent began working as a maintenance worker, a position he has held for 26 years.

His initial duties included maintaining the oval and Recreational Centre, mowing, edging grass, and caring for two cemeteries. To expand his duties Vincent needed a driver's licence, but the licensing department was reluctant to allow him to apply because of his disability. Vincent's Employment Consultant persisted until Vincent was allowed to take and pass his driver's test in 1999. That same year, he was allocated a Support Worker to assist him in his duties.

In 2016, Vincent began receiving NDIS funded Lifestyle Services, for social and community engagement, and in 2020, funding under the Capacity Building category was added. His Support Coordinator Georgia, works closely with Vincent and his family to set up goals and implement supports such as occupational therapy, community support, physiotherapy, and psychology.

When changes in Vincent's life and disability needs arose last year, his existing plan became insufficient. Even after reassessment, the new plan's funding still fell short. Georgia assisted in requesting an interim review and helped to gather additional evidence from professionals to support their case. Finally the requested supports and funding were approved, ensuring that Vincent has adequate support to reach his goals. Vincent has been a longstanding customer of Essential Personnel, and with these supports in place, he continues to thrive in various aspects of his life.

The Lifestyles team maintains regular communication with Vincent's family to ensure his needs are met. Vincent has been mentored to do his weekly shopping and learn new skills to maintain a clean and healthy home environment. Vincent receives workplace support two days a week, working four hours each day under supervision. He enjoys movies, ten-pin bowling, fishing, and canoeing and he drives to Moora every Thursday to attend Men's Shed, where he helps other customers repair pushbikes, engaging in conversations and hands-on activities.

Vincent knows the entire town of Dandaragan where he is seen as a humble and sympathetic member of the community. He loves that through his job he can keep the area beautiful and well-maintained for everyone to enjoy. Vincent's story demonstrates how committed and holistic support can enable people to achieve an excellent quality of life.





# Accommodation

In late June, we opened Koodjal Cottage in Northam, our new purpose-built respite facility for Short Term Accommodation and Supported Independent Living, to address the accommodation needs of people with disability in the Wheatbelt.

Koodjal is designed to enable independence, comfort and exploration. It is an eight-bedroom cottage on Burgoyne Street, within walking distance from many local amenities.

With a real focus on engagement, the team at Koodjal provide opportunities to access events and activities in the region, develop social and independence skills, and make new friends and new memories. They facilitate accessible excursions for interested residents and guests to experience all the culture, beauty and adventure the Wheatbelt has to offer.

For example, a lot of great events took place in and around Northam for the Avon Descent weekend in August – from live music to a street parade and fireworks over the Avon River. Guests at Koodjal Cottage were supported to enjoy these experiences to the fullest! We are also looking forward to taking visitors and residents to enjoy the wildflower season in spring.

Being able to live in familiar surroundings has a positive effect on people's mental wellbeing and overall health. It provides comfort and reassurance for their families and enforces a strong sense of belonging in our community.

Koodjal Cottage offers:

- Spacious, accessible and furnished rooms,
- Individual private ensuite bathrooms,
- Household appliances,
- Transportation for events and excursions,
- Garden with BBQ and veggie patch, and
- Activities, games and crafts.

*"Gavin had a wonderful weekend. He came home so excited and very proudly gave us his Thank You card. Our many thanks to all involved."*



# Coordination of Support



**4,957**  
support hours  
provided

Our Support Coordinators offer a personalised service by recognising the individuality of each person's circumstances and prioritising their choice and control over how they use their plan.

Essential Personnel has a team of Support Coordinators based in Perth, Northam, Moora and Merredin, who can assist customers with navigating and implementing their NDIS plan. They collaborate with each person as well as their informal network, to explore the potential of their plan, and connect them with tailored supports that meet their needs.

Our Support Coordinators focus on improving customers' NDIS experience by:

- Coordinating services across various providers ranging from healthcare, housing, education and employment,
- Advocating on their behalf to ensure they receive appropriate support and services through their NDIS plan,
- Providing guidance for informed decision-making regarding their support,
- Assisting to build capacity and achieve greater independence,
- Coordinating and collating evidence from various providers for plan reviews to ensure the continuation of adequate funding for services,
- Assisting with the transition out of hospital into their home, and
- Crafting comprehensive support plans which are aligned to each person's unique needs and goals.





## Kiara's Story



Kiara has been an Essential Personnel customer since 2010 when she was a teenager growing up in Northam. When her family moved to Perth in 2019, she continued to be supported by Essential Personnel and conversations about her potentially living more independently began. Her complex needs required collaboration with a Specialist Coordinator of Supports.

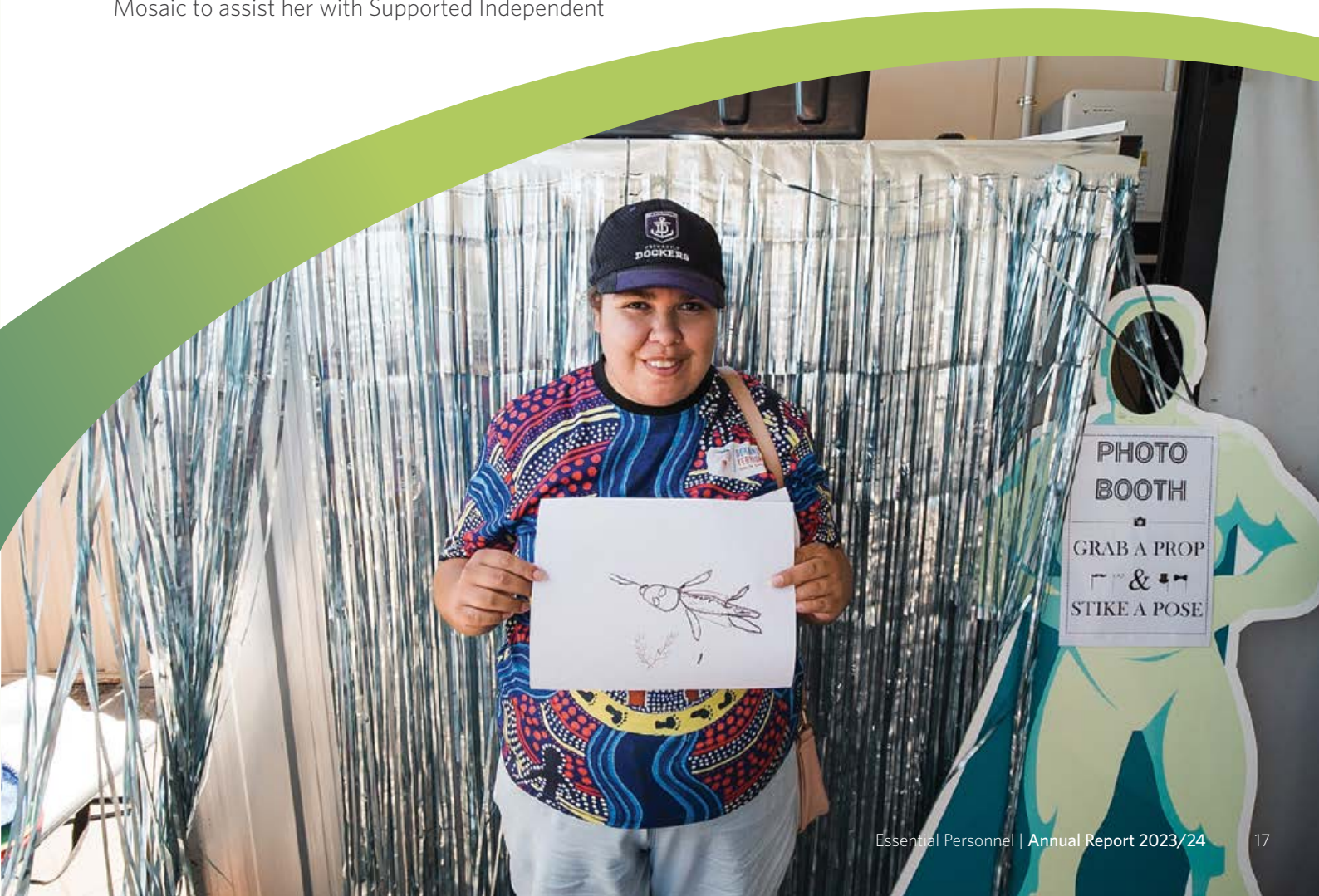
While still at home with her family, Essential Personnel Lifestyles worked with Dreambuilders Church who provided care packages to support Kiara with her personal care, while she worked on developing skills like cooking, meal planning and budgeting in preparation to move out. Positive Behaviour Support was introduced as well with Support Workers assisting Kiara to implement strategies.

Her Support Coordinator connected Kiara with Mosaic to assist her with Supported Independent

Living options. The transition period took two years, including short-term stays to practice living alone. Both organisations worked with Kiara, with each providing their own specialised support.

Kiara is now 29 years old and is living in a share house with other women who have similar interests and aspirations in life. Having achieved the enormous milestone to live independently, Kiara has set her sights on her next goal - improving her health so she can take up horse riding again. With the help of an exercise physiologist she is almost there! Kiara has always loved horses and she draws on that passion to strengthen her resolve.

Essential Personnel are thrilled to continue supporting Kiara in her personal growth and to collaborate with other providers and organisations to her benefit.





## Dyllan's Story



Dyllan is in his 30s and has worked as an administrative assistant, disability advocate, tyre fitter, and oversized truck pilot. Dyllan loves to tinker with mechanical things and fix cars, and each year he crops a four-acre plot of land near his family home: this year he put in some oats, and they are looking good.

Dyllan lives with Cerebral Palsy and Osteopenia and uses a wheelchair, scooter, or walker to get around, depending on the situation. His ultimate goal is independence and he makes that abundantly clear by his lifestyle and choices. Dyllan wants a "fair go" at achieving this goal and to him that means accessible housing.

Five years ago, Dyllan purchased his own home, with the understanding that the NDIA would assist in modifying it to meet his needs. This would make Dyllan as independent as possible in his own home and negate the need for NDIS to fund Support Workers to come into his home to help him.

His home presented significant challenges: a steep ramp he had to manually drag his wheelchair up, a non-accessible toilet, a bathroom with a shower over the bath, and a kitchen bench too high for his wheelchair.

When our Level 2 NDIS Support Coordinator Liz joined his team in November 2022, Dyllan and his allied health team had been trying to get his home modified for wheelchair accessibility for over 18 months. Dyllan, his team, and Liz refused to give up despite multiple setbacks.



Finally in June 2024 (after three years!) the home modifications were approved. "I'll believe it when I see it," Dyllan said on being told the news. When Liz showed him the approved plan he admitted, "I had honestly given up hope of it ever happening."

Liz and Essential Personnel are proud to have supported Dyllan in his pursuit of a "fair go".

# Employment **Buddy** Program

This year Essential Personnel entered its third year of the Employment Buddy Program. We have now engaged over 125 young adults with disabilities, aged 15 to 24, to gain the skills and job experience needed to better understand their desired career paths. Funded by an Information Linkages and Capacity Building grant from the Department of Social Services, we successfully secured additional funding to continue delivering the program in collaboration with Rise.

The program offers a twelve-week, skills-based curriculum through supported, facilitated workshops, including two four-hour work experience placements hosted by 'Buddies' in roles that participants are interested in pursuing as a career. Hosting organisations receive training and financial support to help ensure the young person gains valuable experience during their placement. These employers also benefit from increased disability and inclusion awareness, enhancing their reputation and reflecting the diversity of the communities in which they operate.

A significant challenge for young people with disabilities when entering employment is navigating social and cultural interactions in the workplace, where collaboration and confidence in presenting ideas are essential. This unique program provides participants with individualised development opportunities, boosts their confidence in the workplace, and helps them better understand the type of job they might want in the future.

The program has seen fantastic outcomes and has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants and their families which has resulted in a further 12 months of funding until June 2025. We are excited about the program's future and are actively seeking funding to continue its success after June 2025.





## Kate's Story



Kate and Will are siblings who both work at A Cats Holiday Home in Maida Vale. Kate joined the team in November 2023 and Will in March 2024.

Kate has many duties at the cattery including changing water bowls, feeding, cleaning enclosures, and providing cuddles! Spending time with the cats is important to make them feel comfortable and content during their stay. Kate and her Support Worker Maddie, create content for the company Instagram page that allows pet owners to see their cats are well cared for while also promoting the business. Kate has a passion for all animals and clearly loves her work.

Will is also busy with a range of tasks that include maintaining enclosures, changing litter trays and gardening. Will is keen to assist in all tasks assigned to him and is a paid employee who gained employment following completion of Essential Personnel's Employment Buddy Program.

Kate is also a graduate of this program which equips young people with practical skills and confidence for job readiness. She also receives support via the NDIS Employment Support Program.

Creating opportunities for young people to gain experience in the workplace is beneficial for everyone involved. With the assistance of the owner and staff at A Cats Holiday Home both Kate and Will have gained important employment skills while bringing joy to other team members and the resident cats.

Great work Kate and Will!



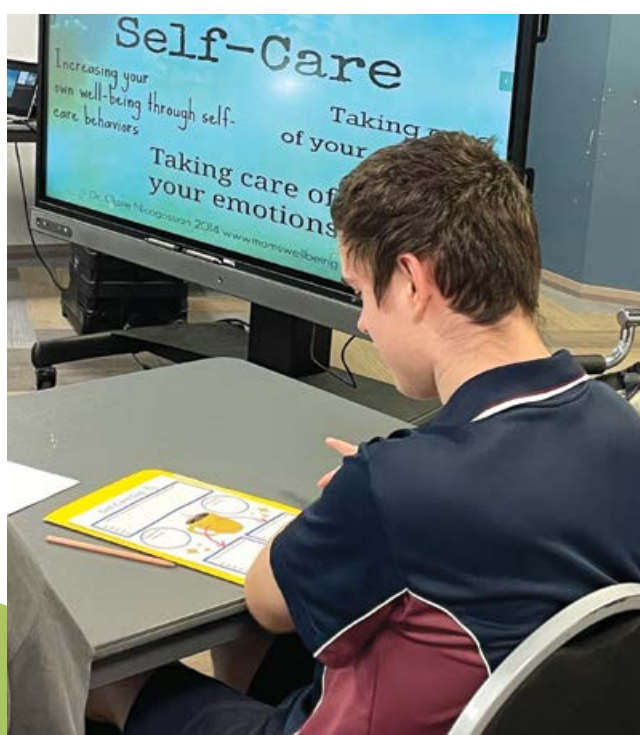
# NDIS Employment Supports

When Essential Personnel introduced NDIS employment-related supports, we appointed a dedicated, experienced Employment Coach to lead this initiative. Our Disability Employment Consultants now work with the Employment Coach and customers across all locations, applying their expertise in employment-related supports. We collaborate to provide learning opportunities, skills, and experiences that empower individuals to confidently enter the workforce or pursue further training.

There are two pathways to access employment assistance through the NDIS, *Finding and Keeping a Job Employment Support* or *School Leaver Employment Supports*. For those who do not yet have a NDIS plan or who lack the specific funding in their plan, we can assist them to apply for the funding, or they have the option to pay for the service directly.

## School Leaver Employment Supports

This service supports young people to transition smoothly from school to employment. Whether they choose to study, gain work experience, or dive straight into work, we are here to support them



every step of the way. Our focus is on helping school leavers develop the employability skills, knowledge and experience they need to succeed in the workplace.

## Finding and Keeping a Job

We assist people to prepare for the workforce by supporting them to build the skills needed to thrive at work, while supporting their journey to employment. Whether the preference is to take things slowly or move quickly, we work with them to build confidence, become work-ready, and achieve their goal of finding sustainable, long-term employment that they enjoy.

## What Does it Mean to Get Work Ready?

Stage one of getting work ready with Essential Personnel, involves embarking on a Discovery Journey. This means during the initial sessions, we brainstorm and narrow down passions, likes and dislikes, skills, and ambitions.

After completing the Discovery Evaluation, we utilise 20 easy workbooks to learn and develop essential skills such as:

- Creating a resume and cover letter,
- Job seeking and interview skills,
- Marketing yourself effectively,
- Understanding work ethics and workplace behaviours,
- Communicating effectively when something feels wrong,
- Career counselling and guidance,
- Strategies to build confidence,
- Travel training, budgeting, and numeracy skills, and
- Enhancing confidence, social, and communication skills.

In today's competitive job market getting a foot in the door can be challenging, and everyone's journey is unique. That's why we are here to support anyone, with or without funding, through our Employment Support programs.



## Gloria's Story



Gloria's journey with Essential Personnel began when she joined the Employment Buddy Program in 2023. As part of this program, she gained work experience at Fremantle Hospital. Gloria was so motivated by the program that she continued her journey with Essential Personnel to receive NDIS Employment Supports. Her Employment Support Coach recognised her enthusiasm and potential and worked with her to further build her capacity and life skills.



Gloria completed three weeks of work experience at Lollipops, a kid's indoor play centre in Jandakot, which she really enjoyed. Following this, our DES Employment Consultants worked with Lollipops to create the opportunity for Gloria to undertake paid employment.

Lollipops was initially reluctant, due to limited financial resources, however, when we informed them about the wage subsidy that was available, they welcomed Gloria to the team.

From the start, Gloria demonstrated a strong commitment to becoming job ready. The support she receives in the workplace combined with the strong relationship Essential Personnel has cultivated with her employer, ensures that Gloria is thriving in her role.

Gloria now works two days a week, four hours each day, meeting her benchmark hours, with the potential for additional shifts in the future. Gloria absolutely loves going to work and finds joy in each day she spends at Lollipops. We understand that her parents had tears in their eyes when Gloria received her first ever payslip.

This path into employment has empowered Gloria to enrol at TAFE and study a Certificate in Adult Education and she continues to work with her Employment Support Coach to achieve this.

Gloria's success was made possible through the efforts of Gloria herself, her family, Essential Personnel, the NDIS Employment Program for capacity building, the team at Lollipops, and the other organisations where she gained valuable experience. Dedicated collaboration has the power to enable people to chase their dreams!



## Tully's Story



Meeting his employment benchmarks with his job at Woolworths in Northam is important to 19 year old Tully. More important however, is that his work-life journey with Essential Personnel is helping Tully gain the confidence and skills to become more independent.

With Essential Personnel's encouragement and support, Tully has taken significant steps towards expanding his skill set. He studied for and obtained his Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) certificate.

One of Tully's most transformative achievements was obtaining his driver's licence. Despite his mother's ongoing efforts to motivate him, Tully had been hesitant to take the test, unsure of his ability to succeed.

Tully's Employment Consultant worked closely with him, practicing the hazard perception test online and, after some reluctance, Tully agreed to give it a try. His Employment Consultant went with him to the Driver and Vehicles Service Centre and to Tully's amazement, he passed the test on his first attempt. This success gave Tully a surge of confidence.

Just two weeks later, and on his first attempt, Tully also passed the practical driving test. He called us straight away to share the good news and shortly afterwards, his mother reached out to thank his Employment Consultant for building up Tully's confidence so he could achieve this milestone.

Tully's success shows how the right support can empower young people in their personal growth to overcome their fears, increase their self-confidence and expand their independence.



# Our Commitment to Excellence



Essential Personnel continues to drive efficiencies that ensure the highest standard of quality service provision, consistently exceeding compliance expectations. Once again, we excelled in our Disability Employment Service contract requirements, receiving an outstanding external National Standards for Disability Services audit report with no non-conformities. We were particularly commended for our exceptional efforts in Standard 6 – Service Management, recognising our achievements in refining systems and processes that enhance efficiencies for both staff and customers. We are pleased to have retained our certification with Right Fit for Risk Cyber Security Accreditation, aligned with ISO27001.

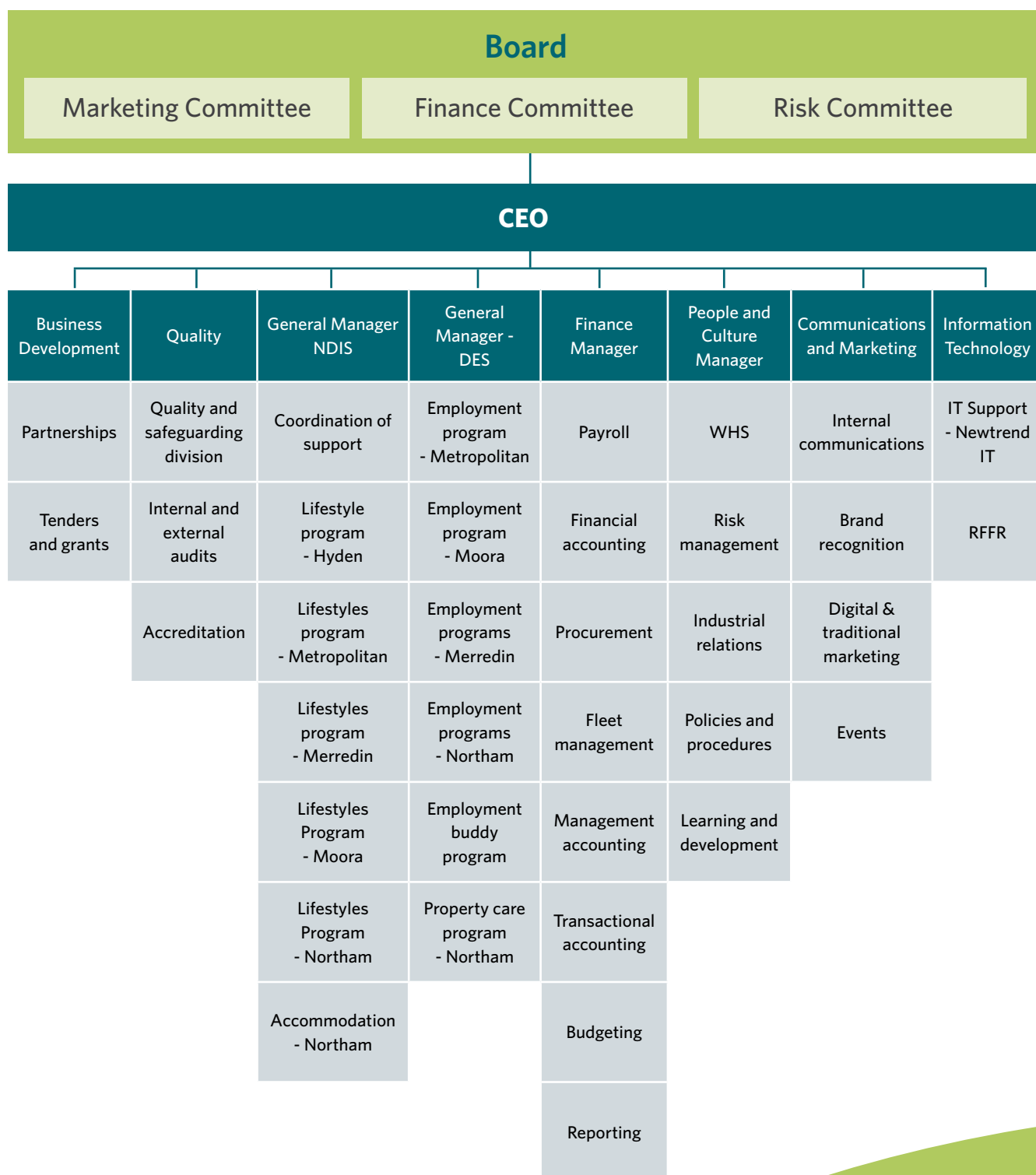
Our Lifestyle and Coordination of Support Services recently underwent their Mid-Term NDIS audit which evaluates service quality, compliance with NDIS practice standards, and the safeguarding of participant rights.

The auditors assessed Essential Personnel's performance, adherence to ethical and professional practices, and efforts to protect participant rights and interests.

We are proud that Essential Personnel passed with flying colours, again with no non-conformities. This success reflects the dedication of our staff, who consistently prioritise the safety, goals, needs and desires of our customers by delivering the highest quality, individualised services and support.

We have also collaborated with our board of directors to update and modernise our Risk Management Framework and Register, ensuring they remain relevant in an ever-evolving environment where quality, customer choice and participation, risk, and safety are increasingly emphasised across all our government contracts as well as long-term sustainability. To support this effort, we continue to uphold and strengthen all Workplace Health and Safety requirements, ensuring our staff are fully trained and compliant with all regulations.

# Our Functional Structure





# Our Board & Leadership Teams

## Board



**Jodie Beeson**  
Chairperson



**Debbie Cameron**  
Deputy Chairperson



**John Hancock (res)**  
Board Member



**Nigel Alvares**  
Board Member



**Les Pettitt**  
Board Member



**Ross Polis**  
Board Member



**Paul Vivian**  
Board Member

## Leadership team

**Left to right:** Matt Howell (General Manager DES), Shelley Warne (Executive Assistant), Teeny Lane (CEO), Navneet Kaur (General Manager NDIS), Alfred Carere (People & Culture Officer), Marian Zhao (Finance Manager).





# What Our Staff Say About Us

Our Annual Staff Engagement Survey is a valuable tool for our leadership to understand the experiences, opinions, and suggestions our staff have for the organisation. Their honest responses help us identify areas of improvement, celebrate successes, and enhance the overall working environment. It assists us to ensure services provided by our staff are of high quality and staff feel empowered and supported to provide the right services and supports.



**"We are responsive to the changing needs of our customers"**



**"I feel Essential Personnel values diversity"**  
(e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, language, education qualifications, ideas, and perspectives)



**"Essential Personnel's work positively impacts people's lives"**

*"We have a vibrant team of leaders who welcome feedback and ideas. We work with other service providers to value-add for our customers and community."*

*"In my time with this organisation, it has helped me grow as a person, overcome my own disabilities, feel supported, part of a team and most importantly provide services to others."*

*"I really love working for this company and really appreciate to be in such a good workplace with such nice people."*

*"We collaborate with all agencies in the community that can assist our customers to build better lives."*

*"We listen and provide assistance and support wherever possible. Staff are very committed to providing very high standards of support."*



# Staff Tenure

We would like to celebrate all employees within our organisation and thank them for their hard work, dedication and commitment to the people we support at Essential Personnel.

22 - 23 Years	
Karen Chedzoy	Employment Consultant
15 - 16 Years	
Christopher Hasan	Property Care Gardener
14 - 15 Years	
Mark Wilson	Property Care Gardener
Wendy Hoare	Operations Manager -DES
Teeny Lane	CEO
Bruce Clark	Property Care Gardener
12 - 13 Years	
Dianne Anderson	Employment Consultant
11 - 12 Years	
Hayden Plackett	Property Care Gardener
10 - 11 Years	
Christine Kitson	Property Care Supervisor and Lifestyles Support Worker
Anita Morana	Support Coordinator
Jake Clark	Team Leader and Support Worker
9 - 10 Years	
Jacinta Churms	Program Coordinator Lifestyles
8 - 9 Years	
Tammy Hanke	Employment Consultant
May Saisuwan	Support Worker
Valerie Trent	Program Coordinator Lifestyles
Michael Bishop	Administrative Assistant
Sheldon Hutchings	Support Worker
Penny Woodhams	Support Worker
Susan Kellie	Claims Officer and Support Worker
6 - 7 Years	
Judith Goss	Administrative Assistant
Ashley Glass	Support Worker
Cheryl Wood	Support worker
Michael Wood	Team Leader and Support Worker

5 - 6 Years	
Shannan McDermott	Support Worker
Russell Ryan	Property Care Gardener
Carolyn Jorissen	Support Worker
Cassidy Zelinka	Administrative Assistant
Marian Zhao	Finance Manager
Louise Mihailovic	Support Worker
Amanda Wilson	Support Worker
4 - 5 Years	
Alana Cox	Cleaner
Margaret Huteau	Support Worker
Natalie Veal	Support Worker
3 - 4 Years	
Katherine Metaxakis	Administrative Assistant
Navneet Kaur	General Manager
Bruce Fehlauer	Support Worker
Beverly Alejandre	Assistant Accountant
Rachel Malaspina	Support Coordinator
2 - 3 Years	
Michael Edwards	Support Worker
Jami Hart	Support Worker
Divya Raj	Support Worker
Nicholas Anderson	Property Care Gardener
Roslyn Hall	Support Coordinator
Jonathan Cheyne	Property Care Supervisor and Lifestyles Support Worker
Darren Tyrrell	Property Care Gardener
James Nazzari	Property Care Gardener
Samuel Harland	Support Worker
Shelley Warne	Executive Assistant
Elizabeth Lockley-Deypalan	Support Coordinator
Dawn Haysom	Support Worker



### 1 - 2 Years

Christine Whitmore	Support Worker and Property Care Supervisor
Amy Robert	Employment Consultant
Jacqueline Ryland	Employment Consultant
Paris Hatch	Support Worker
Craig Fernandez	Support Worker
Allen Tonkin	Support Worker
Diana Morrell-Kaser	Operations Manager DES, EBP and NDIS Employment
Georgia Jennion	Support Coordinator
Matthew Eyayu	Support Worker
Bo Kinnell	Support Worker
Susan Peacock	Business Support Officer
Mareta Porter	Employment Consultant
Racquel Baldueza	Employment Consultant
Trevor Randell	Employment Consultant
Anshika Verma	Support Worker
Joseph Mansell	Property Care Supervisor and Lifestyles Support Worker
Robert Elliot	Cleaner
Ashley Ryland	Support Worker
Louise Ruediger	Employment Consultant

### Less than 1 year

Nicholas Palmer	Property Care Gardener
Sonia Stack	Support Worker
Brett Taylor	Employment Consultant
Sandy Burke	Support Worker
Leesa Morton	Support Worker
Tayliah Boysen	Program Coordinator Lifestyles
Ralph Colton	Support Worker
Nicola Mckenzie	Events and Fundraising Coordinator
Gerald Mengich	Support Worker
Katrina Mechler	Business Development Officer
Leanne Vicensoni	Support Worker
Ryan Moar	Support Worker



# Special Thank You

A Cats Holiday Home  
Ability Housing  
Accessibility Belmont  
Amity Health  
APM Communities  
Attwell College  
Audit Partners Australia  
Australian Grain Technology  
Avon Valley Dental  
Michael Banks  
Best & Less Cockburn  
Bridgeley Community Centre  
Bunnings Northam  
Violet Bekkers  
Carers WA  
Central Regional Tafe  
Certification Partner Global  
Chorus Community Services  
Coles  
Community Resource Centres  
across the Wheatbelt  
Country Realty  
Crosslinks  
Cuddly Animal Farm  
Danzalin Kennels  
Deborah Costello Consulting  
Department of Communities  
Department of Health  
Department of Social Services  
Department Primary Industries  
and Regional Development  
Development WA  
Directions  
Dream Builders Church  
Dulux Wearhouse Maddington  
Duncraig Library  
Ellenbrook College

Employii  
ES2  
Explorability  
Foodbank  
Football Futures  
Fremantle Hospital  
Frameswest  
Glenroy Chaff  
Global Compliance Certification  
(GCC)  
Greenwood College  
GroBro Hydroponics  
Head to Health  
Hollett and Lawrence  
Holyoake  
IGA  
Indigo Junction Midland  
Jamaica Blue Livingston  
Jobs & Skills Centre  
JP Employee Relations  
Juniper  
Landcorp  
Little Olive Leaf café  
Lollipops Jandakot  
Lotterywest  
Main Roads Head Offices  
Mc Donalds Ascott  
Mc Donalds Ellenbrook  
'The Promenade'  
MLC Mia Davies  
Moora Men's Shed  
Moorditj Koort  
Mosaic  
Multicon  
Muresk Institute  
Native Animal Rescue  
NDIA  
NDS

Newtrend IT  
Northam Central Regional TAFE  
Northam Districts Glass  
Northam Centre For Accessibility  
Nostalgia Box  
Office Works Cannington  
Professionals  
Public Trustee  
rebel Whitford City Sports Store  
Red Dot Bentley  
Richmond Wellbeing  
Ridges at Esplanade Hotel  
Fremantle  
Rise  
RSM Australia Pty Ltd  
Max Thore  
Salvation Army  
Sam Garrone Training Alliance  
Share and Care Shire of Northam  
– Magnolia Women's centre  
Shire of Dandaragan  
Shire of Northam  
Silk Logistics  
SMYL  
Sonshine Radio  
Square Peg Community Support  
Sussex Street Disability Advocacy  
and Legal Centre  
Swansea Street Market  
The Vines Golf Resort  
Training Alliance Group  
Tuna Blue  
Visibility WA  
Vision Counselling  
Webb Project Services  
Wheatbelt Aboriginal Health  
Wheatbelt Mental Health Service  
Woolworths







## Essential Personnel

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**[essentialpersonnel.org.au](http://essentialpersonnel.org.au)**



**@essentialpersonnelwa**



Disability<sup>™</sup>  
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