



Australian Government

Australian Taxation Office

ATO Vulnerability Framework Supporting people experiencing vulnerability

Easy Read

How to use this document

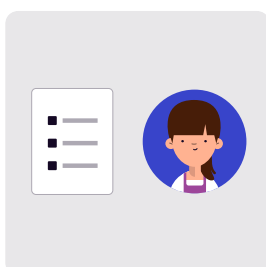


The Australian Taxation Office wrote this document.

We say ATO for short.

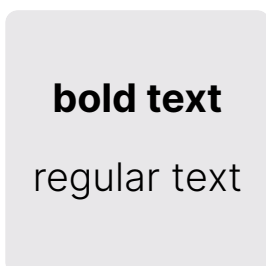


When you see the word 'we' it means the ATO.



We wrote this document in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



We wrote some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.

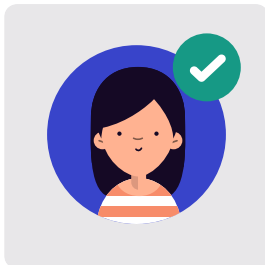
We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words and what they mean on [page 25](#).



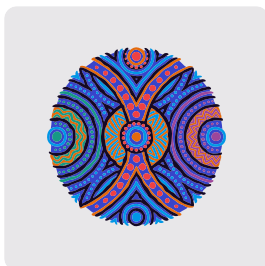
This is an Easy Read summary of another document.

You can find the other document on our website www.ato.gov.au/VulnerabilityConsultation



You can ask someone you trust for help to read this document.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the **Traditional Owners** of the land we live on.



Traditional Owners were the first people to live on and use the:

- Land
- Waters.

What is in this document?

How to use this document.....	2
What is this document about?.....	5
Our ideas to help	11
Our plan to help	13
Connect and help	16
Who we work with.....	19
Tell us what you think.....	21
Contact us	22
More help is available	24
Word list	25

What is this document about?

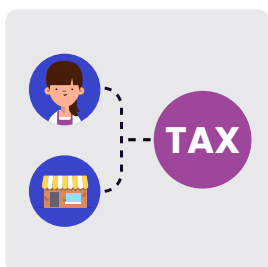


The ATO collects money called tax.

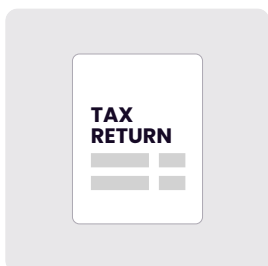


It is our job to collect tax from:

- people who are paid money
- a business that is paid money.



These people must do and pay their tax.



Doing your tax means you tell us how much money you are paid.



This helps us make sure we collect the right amount of tax.



We collect tax for the government.

The government uses tax to pay for things everyone can use.

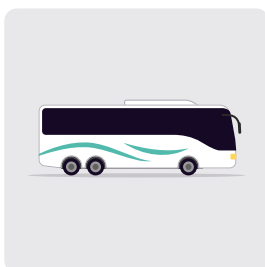
Things like:



■ doctors and hospitals



■ schools



■ roads, trains and buses.



This document is a summary of our **vulnerability framework**.



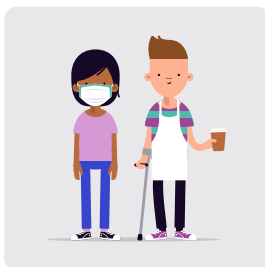
A **framework** is a guide.
It tells us what to do.



Vulnerability means you may be at risk of harm or being left out.
We call this **experiencing vulnerability**.



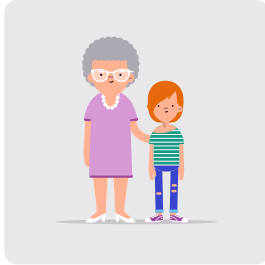
There are lots of reasons people can be experiencing vulnerability.
Reasons like:



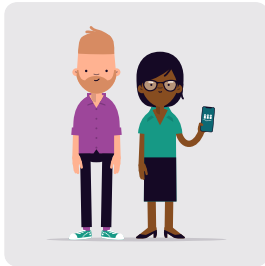
- they have health problems



- they have a disability



- their age



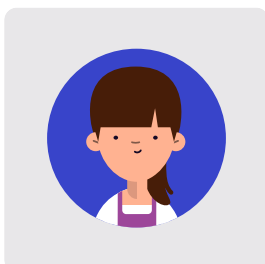
- English is not easy



- where they live



- they are not in a safe place.



Having one of these reasons does not always mean a person is experiencing vulnerability.



We help to make sure everyone can do their tax.

We try to:



- find the best way to help people



- do our job by collecting tax for the government.



People experiencing vulnerability might need more help to do their tax.



This document tells you our ideas about how we will give more help.



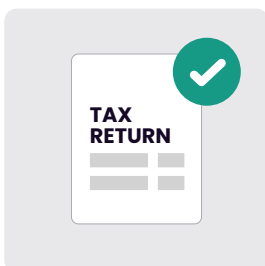
People experiencing vulnerability might need more help to:



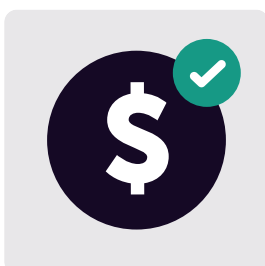
- contact us



- [get started with tax](#)



- [do their tax](#)



- pay their tax.

Our ideas to help



These ideas tell the ATO how to act.

There are 6 ideas that we use when people need more help with their tax.



We call them **principles**.

The 6 principles are:



1. **Equal** and **fair**

This means we treat everyone fairly and with respect.

We will help people in ways that work best for them.

We will listen and give you more help if you need it.



2. **Accessible** and **inclusive**

This means we make sure everyone can find the information they need about tax.



3. **Empathy** and **compassion**

This means we will be kind.

We will work to understand you.

We will listen and try our best to help you.



We want to make sure everyone feels:

- safe
- supported
- respected.



4. **Transparent** and **accountable**

This means we will be honest.

We will explain things in an easy way.

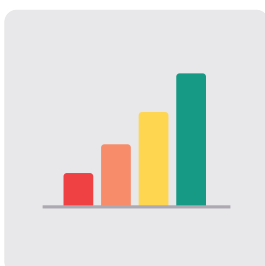
You can tell us if you think we are wrong.



5. **Private** and **safe**

This means we will not tell anyone else the things you tell us.

We will keep things you tell us about yourself safe.



6. **Keep improving**

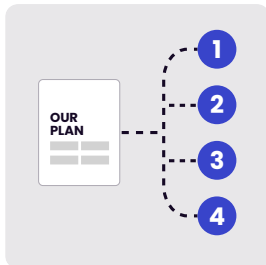
This means we will keep trying to do better.

If you tell us something does not work we will try to fix it.

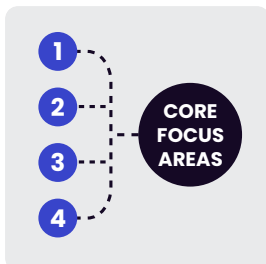
Our plan to help



We have a plan to help people who need more support.

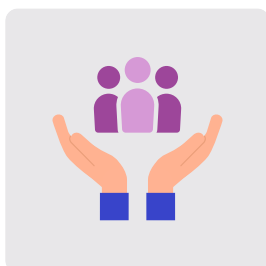


Our plan has 4 parts.



We call these parts **core focus areas**.

Our **core focus areas** tell you what we will do to help.



1. **Support**

We will:

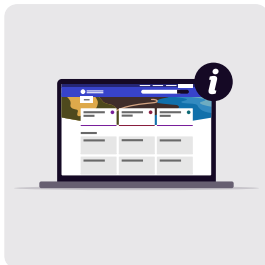
- be kind and caring
- tell you what help you can get
- give you support that helps you with tax
- make sure that help is quick and easy to get.



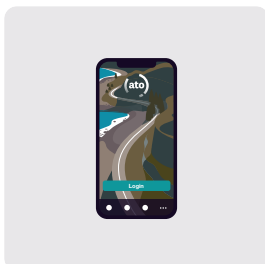
2. **Services**

We will help you use our services.

Our services are things like:



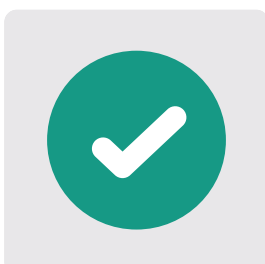
- our website



- our ATO app



- our phone helplines.



We will make sure our services are easy to use.

We will use different ways to explain tax to help you understand.

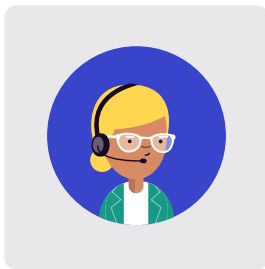


3. **Design**

This means we will think about new ways to give more help.

We will make sure these new ways are:

- safe to use
- easy to use
- helpful.



4. **Staff**

Staff means the people who work at the ATO.

We will:

- teach our staff the best way to help people experiencing vulnerability with their tax
- take care of our staff
- help our staff to do their best.

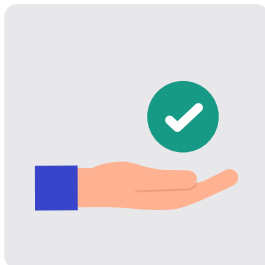
Connect and help



Connect means we want to:

- work with people who need more help.
- learn what they think.

We call this **engagement**.



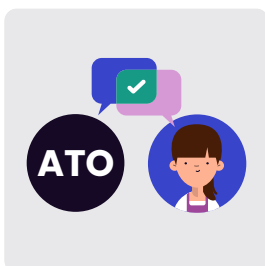
People need different help at different times.

We want to connect so we can give the right help.



We have a plan to connect with people and help them with their tax.

We call this our **engagement approach**.



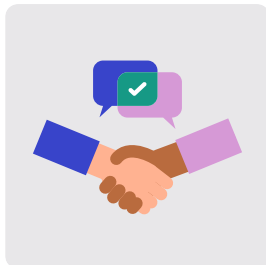
This means the way we connect with people and think about:



- what help someone needs with their tax problem

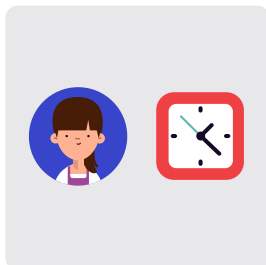


- when they need help with their tax problem.



These are the parts of our engagement approach:

- get help early
- need help now
- help to start.



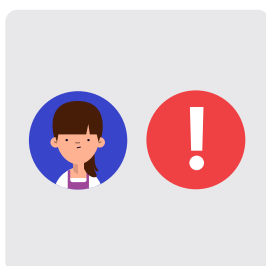
Get help early

Connect with us early.

Get help with your tax as soon as possible.

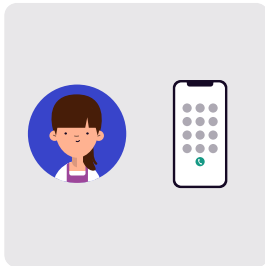
We may be able to help before there is a tax problem.

We may be able to stop a tax problem from getting worse.



Need help now

If you have a tax problem we may be able to help fix it.



Help to start

You might need help to connect with us.

We can help you if you have not contacted us in a long time.

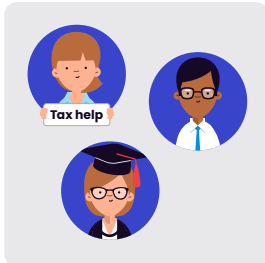
We can help you to get started again with your tax.

Who we work with



We made this framework with help from:

- **our partners**
- **industry experts**
- **advocates.**



Our partners are people who help others with their tax.



Industry experts are people who know a lot about tax.



They also know about vulnerability.

They tell us what extra help people experiencing vulnerability might need.

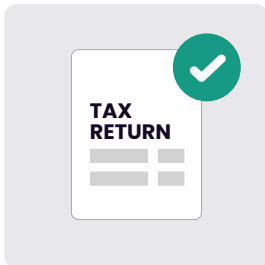


An **advocate** is someone who helps people who are experiencing vulnerability.

Advocates speak up for people and make sure they get the help they need.

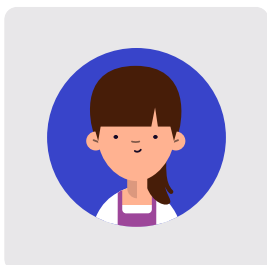


We will keep working with them to make sure we can always support people experiencing vulnerability with their tax.



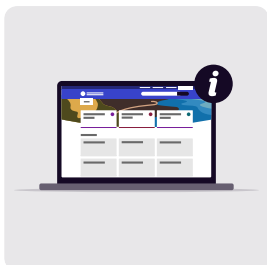
We know that people experiencing vulnerability may get help from **partners** and **advocates** to do their tax.

Tell us what you think

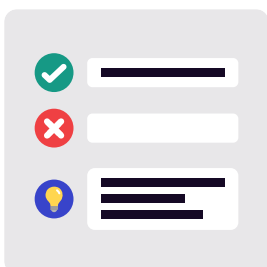


We want to know what you think about how we plan to give more help to people experiencing vulnerability.

Tell us what you think in an email.



We have questions on our website to help www.ato.gov.au/VulnerabilityConsultation.



You can:

- answer all of our questions
- answer some of our questions
- share other ideas that you think might help us.

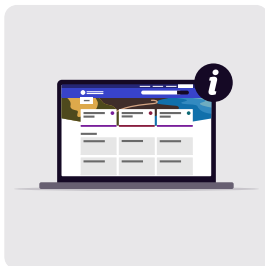


Send your email to VulnerabilityConsultation@ato.gov.au.



Tell us what you think by **Friday 18 July 2025**.

Contact us



You can contact us by email at
VulnerabilityConsultation@ato.gov.au.



If you need help to do your tax you can call us
on **13 28 61**.

Find out more at www.ato.gov.au/contact.



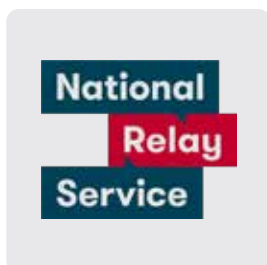
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
can call our Indigenous Helpline on **13 10 30**.



If you speak a language other than English,
contact the Translating and Interpreting Service
on their website www.TISnational.gov.au
or call **13 14 50**.

Tell them:

- the language you want to speak in
- ask them to call the ATO on **13 28 61**.

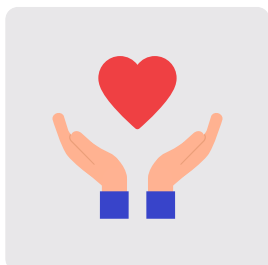


If you are d/Deaf or find it hard to hear or speak with people who use a phone, you can use the [National Relay Service](#) (NRS) for TTY users.

You can:

- Go to their website
www.accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs
- Call the National Relay Service on **13 36 77**
- Ask the Relay Officer to phone us on **13 28 61**.

More help is available



If you or someone you know needs help now, or this information worries you or them, free and private mental health support is available, contact:



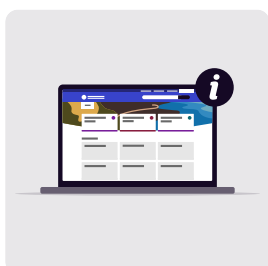
- Beyond Blue on their website www.BeyondBlue.org.au or call on **1300 224 636**



- Lifeline on their website www.LifeLine.org.au or call on **13 11 14**



- 1800 RESPECT on their website www.1800Respect.org.au or call on **1800 737 732**



Other organisations can give you help with health and wellbeing.

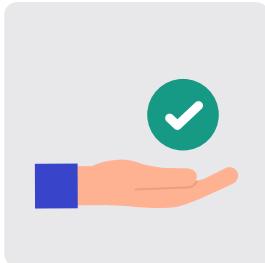
You can find out more on our website www.ato.gov.au/support

Word list



Accessible

This means we make sure everyone can find the information they need about tax.



Accountable

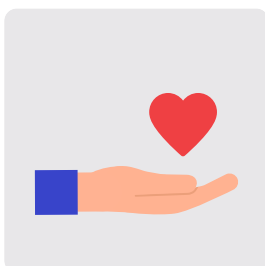
This means you can tell us if you think we are wrong.



Advocates

An **advocate** is someone who helps people who need support.

Advocates speak up for people and make sure they get the help they need.

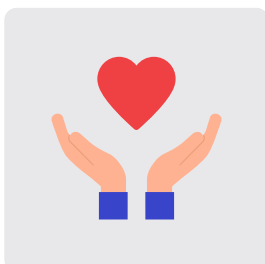


Compassion

This means we will be kind.

We will work to understand you.

We will listen and try our best to help you.



Empathy

This means we will work to understand you.



Engagement

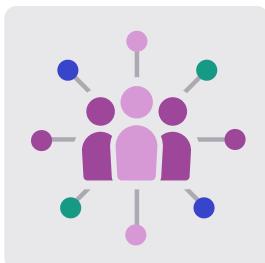
This means we connect and work with people who need more help.



Engagement approach

This means the way we connect with people and think about:

- what help someone needs with their tax problem
- when they need help with their tax problem.



Framework

A framework is a guide.

It tells us what to do.



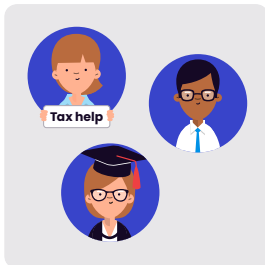
Inclusive

This means we make sure everyone can find the information they need about tax.



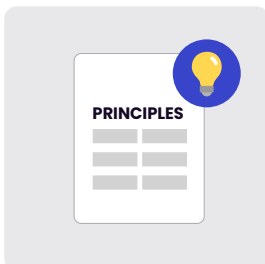
Industry experts

Are people who know a lot about tax.
They also know about vulnerability.
They tell us what more help people might need.



Our partners

Are people who help others with their tax.



Principles

These are important ideas that tell us
how to act.



Private

This means we will not tell anyone else
the things you tell us.



Staff

Staff means the people who work at the ATO.



Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners were the first people to live on and use the:

- Land
- Waters.



Transparent

This means we will be honest.

We will explain things in an easy way.



Vulnerability

This means you may be at risk of harm or being left out.