

Good *Access* is Good *Business*

A guide for
small business
and retailers



Mayor's Welcome

Welcome to Council's Good Access is Good Business Guide. As you are no doubt aware Moreland is a very rich and diverse community, and proud to be so!

Within the 16,000 plus businesses in Moreland a similar diversity exists. Unique and buzzing shopping precincts add flavour and individuality to Moreland's retail experience. As a business owner or operator you obviously want the maximum amount of business for your store.

This guide is designed to give you practical tips and suggestions to make your business accessible for all people.

The guide is just one way that Council will work in partnership with the business community to continue to develop a vibrant, sustainable and accessible business sector in Moreland.

I hope that you find it helpful and informative.

Cr Mark O'Brien, Mayor



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You could be missing out on potential customers

You may not know this, but there are over 3.6 million people in Australia that have a disability. That's nearly 20% (or one fifth) of the population. Together with their friends and families, the number of people affected by a disability is bigger still – and every one of them is a potential customer.

As a small business, quality service is one of the most important things you can offer. This guide aims to help you, the small



"It's about universal access for everyone. It not just about people with a disability, good access benefits the aged, people with prams and young children"

Debra Dean, Brunswick Resident and member of Moreland's Disability Advisory group

business owner, understand how to improve access to your goods and services for a large part of our community you may be missing out on – customers who have a disability.

In Moreland alone there are over 22,000 residents who have a disability to some degree. These residents along with their family and friends will make choices on where to live, shop and socialise based largely on how accessible a place is.

Additionally, Moreland is home to almost 25,000 people over the age of 65. Many of these residents have difficulty with mobility, sight and hearing. Though these residents may not identify as having a disability, an accessible business is likely to benefit them greatly.

Which customers are we talking about?

Providing good access to your business will benefit:

- people who are blind or partially sighted

- people with learning or intellectual disabilities
- people who are Deaf or hearing-impaired
- people with a physical disability who may use a wheelchair/scooter or walking frame or have arthritis
- people with long-term illnesses
- people with mental health or psychological difficulties, and
- people with an acquired brain injury

Good access also benefits:

- parents or carers of young children – particularly those with strollers or prams
- older people
- delivery people
- shoppers with heavy bags
- every customer – particularly when it's busy.

Can you afford to miss out on all this business?

Good access makes good business sense

As potential customers, these people will make choices about your business based on how easy it is to use.

If a person uses a wheelchair and there is a step at your front entrance, they, and the people who accompany them, will probably go to another business in your area which has a flat entrance or a ramp. If they find your staff unhelpful they probably won't come back to your business.

But if you make an effort to provide corridors that aren't cluttered with boxes that get in the way or cause falls, then people will appreciate the ease of shopping at your business. If you train your staff to be respectful – not patronising – then people with

a disability are more likely to become regular customers.

Remember: what you do to improve accessibility doesn't have to be extravagantly expensive – a combination of providing easier entry and improving staff training will go a long way to making your business more attractive to many people including people with a disability.

Meeting your legal responsibilities

Improving your access will also help your business to meet your legal responsibilities

In Australia, the law says that customers with disabilities should be able to access your goods or services just like any other customer. If a customer with a disability

cannot get into your building or cannot access your goods or services they could make a complaint of discrimination under either State or Territory anti-discrimination laws, or the Federal Disability Discrimination Act.

Making your business more accessible is also likely to make it safer for customers and staff and could have a beneficial effect on your public liability and workplace safety responsibilities.

For more information on your legal obligations see **Further Information** at the end of this guide.



Footpath Trading

In line with these Laws, Council has in place Local Laws regarding the use of footpaths for trading. A clear footpath is important for vision-impaired people who often use the front of buildings as a guide to the passage through shopping precincts.

Ensuring that there are no unexpected obstacles hindering the path of travel and keeping the path clear so that people in wheelchairs or people with other mobility issues have no trouble using the footpath, or gaining entry to your store, will assist you in meeting Councils requirements.

If you use the footpath outside your business for goods, signage or tables and chairs, then a permit is required and Councils, Civic Safety and



Amenity Branch can visit you and provide assistance and support to help you meet the requirements.

If you would like more information, please contact **Council's Civic Safety and Amenity Branch on 9240 1111** or visit www.moreland.vic.gov.au

Four ways to improve access for *all* your customers

1. Make it easy for people to find you

To attract customers who have a disability you can take simple steps to make your business easier to find and get to.

Advertise your advantages

- If your business is accessible, let people know. For example, if you have wheelchair access include this in your promotions and advertisements.
- If your business has wheelchair access, contact Council to obtain a universal access sticker



You can advertise your accessibility on Council's business register by visiting www.morelandbusiness.com or by contacting Council on **9240 1111**.

- Ensure external signs are clear and well positioned to help people with vision impairments or learning difficulties identify what your shop is.

Make the entrance easy to see

- Choose a color to distinguish the entrance of your business that contrasts well with the general environment. This will make it stand out for people with a vision impairment. Highly contrasting colours also make it easier to tell the difference between the immediate door surrounds and the doorway itself.
- If there are multiple entrances, make sure there are clear directions to where each entrance is.

Be aware of reflective glass in your shop front. People with a vision impairment often find this presents them with a confusing picture of reflections, light and shadows. One good solution is to put safety markings on the glass so people don't walk into it. This makes it easier to tell the difference between the window display and the doorway.

Avoid obstructions

- Ideally, remove dangerous obstacles such as advertising boards, displays or furniture from the entrance so that people in wheelchairs, older people, or people with a vision impairment don't have to risk falling over them.
- If you are permitted to have advertising boards, display items or furniture outside your business, make sure there is a clear pathway leading to the entrance.



Tip: think about your surroundings It also pays to look at the surroundings of your business. You will probably need to talk to Council about the following matters.

Carparks Think about making at least one customer car space wider for a person with a disability to use.

Pathways Make sure the path from the carpark to your entrance is accessible for a person using a wheelchair (e.g. wider and more even) and less slippery for someone older or using walking aids.

Lighting Would better lighting make carparks and pathways safer?

Hazards Make sure overhanging trees or signage do not cause a hazard to a person who is blind or vision impaired.

2. Make it easy for people to get in

In new buildings all customers, including people using wheelchairs, must be able to enter the shop independently but in many older buildings the main entrance may have one or several steps, or be difficult in other ways. Here are some ideas on how to make it easy for customers to get in to your business.

While many of these ideas are easy to put into practice, some may require technical

advice to ensure they are done correctly (see **Further Information** at the end of this guide).

Level access

- Ideally, get rid of steps and provide a level entry.
- If you can't provide a level entry, build a ramp.

Tip: If you are building your own ramp, you may need to contact Council to get advice and permission to do this. Keep in mind that if a ramp is too steep it cannot be safely used. To find out how long to make your ramp, multiply the height of your step by 14, that will give you the length of ramp that you need to be safe and meet the Australian Standard of 1:14. i.e: Step is 25cm high, $25\text{cm} \times 14 = 350\text{ cm}$ or 3.5 metres.

For advice on building an accessible ramp, contact Council's Urban Planning Branch or Building Surveyor on 9240 1111.

- If either of the above options are not possible for technical or financial reasons, consider moving the main entrance to another more accessible position.
- Remember to advertise any secondary entrance that may be more accessible.

Better doors and doorways

- Reposition the entrance door handles to an easier height.
- Make the door easier to open by adjusting it to be lighter to push, or installing an automatic door.
- Make the doorway wide enough to allow a person with a walking frame or someone who uses a wheelchair to pass through with ease.
- If the door has a lot of reflective glass attach safety markings so people do not walk into it.

- Make sure any doormats are secure and only use them if they can be made flush with the surrounding floor.
- Put in a handrail if there is a level change.

Clear sight lines

- If possible make sure there are clear sight lines between the entry and the counter so that staff are aware when a customer needs assistance to enter the premises or purchase goods.

"I have noticed that a lot of people using wheelchairs or scooters as well as parents with prams and elderly people will come to the shop as its easy to get into and do your fruit and vegetable shopping"

George Dacowich, Manager
Lygon Fresh, Brunswick.



3. Make it easy for people to get around

Ideally, once inside your shop or premises customers with disabilities should be able to find their way to all sales areas, browse and inspect goods, bring them to the cash desk or receive services in the same way as people without a disability.

The following tips are designed to assist you to better understand and meet the needs of customers with a range of disabilities.

For people who are blind or have vision impairments

- **Signs.** Make sure signs and product pricing labels are clear, well positioned and use high contrast colours. Ensure overhanging signs do not cause a hazard.
- **Information.** Ensure board menus in cafes or product information displays easier to read. Provide written menus or other product information in large print versions (e.g. 18 point Arial) or have staff read information out to customers. Consider the possibility of providing information such as menus in Braille.
- **Lighting.** Think about improving lighting, especially around service counters.
- **Layout.** Avoid having dangerously placed fittings and fixtures that can cause difficulties for customers who are blind.

Make sure your aisles provide a clear path of travel and do not have displays sticking out into them.

- **EFTPOS.** Provide electronic payment systems and EFTPOS machines that have the features that are user friendly for people who are blind.

For people who may have difficulty hearing

- **Noise.** Find ways to reduce the amount of background noise and turn down the music when necessary, or if required.
- **Hearing loop.** Investigate installing a 'hearing loop' or other system to assist people using hearing aids at counters, especially if there is a screen for the public at the counter. A hearing loop allows persons using a hearing aid with a telecoil switch to have a direct feed of sound to their hearing aid.

For people with mobility impairments

- **Aisles.** Make sure shopping aisles are wide enough (preferably 1.2 metres).
- **Cafes and restaurants.** Provide a clear path between tables, use available space efficiently and offer a little extra room for wheelchair users.
- **Counters.** Ensure at least part of your customer service area is at a height that is suitable for people using wheelchairs (750-800mm from floor level). Make sure that at least one of your checkout aisles is wide enough, has a lower checkout counter (750-800mm) and is *always* open.
- **Reach.** Try to place goods, particularly the most popular ones, within reach of someone using a wheelchair. If this is not always possible, make sure staff are trained to offer assistance.



- **Chairs.** If your customers need to wait, make a chair available for someone who may be older and frail, use crutches or have poor balance
- **EFTPOS.** Ensure that electronic payment systems and EFTPOS machines are on a long enough cord to pass over to someone using a wheelchair.
- **Surfaces.** Make sure the floor surface is free from trip hazards and is non-slip.

Should you be providing accessible toilets?

Where toilets are provided for the public (e.g. in cafes or in other situations where customers may be on the premises for a period of time) an accessible toilet should be provided where possible. Under building laws a unisex accessible toilet counts as a male and a female toilet.

If you do not have an accessible toilet make sure all staff know the location of the nearest accessible toilet and, if necessary, get approval for your customers to use it.

For information on your nearest accessible public toilets try www.toiletmapp.gov.au

If you decide to make your toilet accessible you should get technical advice on how to do so.

Also if you install an accessible toilet ensure that there is level path or ramped path to access the facility.

4. Make the most of customer service

When talking about 'improving access' it's easy to think only in terms of installing ramps, toilets and other fixtures. But one of the simplest and cheapest solutions is to change the way you think about customer service for people with disabilities. It's not difficult to train your staff on how to communicate effectively with all your customers and how to give practical assistance when it's needed.

For support and advice on communication contact Council's MetroAccess Officer on 9240 1111.

Tips for Good Communication

RESPECT

You and your staff should treat customers with disabilities as you do all customers – with respect:

- **Focusing on the person.** Treat each customer with a disability as an individual customer with their own likes and dislikes. Always focus on the person, not their disability. Always address the customer directly, not the other people who may be with them (such as a Deaf sign interpreter or carer/support worker).
- **Giving assistance.** Always ask the customer first if they want help;



do not assume they need assistance. Always accept the answer if the customer declines your help. If you have a conversation that will last more than a few moments with a customer using a wheelchair, bend to eye level or pull up a chair.

- **Asking questions.** And remember: ask customers with disabilities how they would like goods and services to be provided particularly where there are barriers to equal access.

COMMUNICATION

For people who may have a learning difficulty, an intellectual disability or brain injury:

- **Being clear.** Address the customer directly, listen carefully, speak clearly and check for understanding. Always use clear language without being patronising.

- **Allowing time.** Allow your customer time to ask questions and try not to rush them. Try not to overload people with an intellectual disability with information. Reassure your customer you are there to help if they forget the information.

For people who have a hearing impairment or are Deaf:

- **Lip reading.** Always face the customer so they can read your lips. Try to make sure there are no bright lights behind you that may limit their ability to see your lips.
- **Sound.** Use your normal tone of voice and volume. If possible, move out of the way of background noise.
- **Interpreters.** If your customer is there with a sign language interpreter always address your comments directly to your customer rather than to the interpreter.

- **Pen and paper.** Have a pen and paper on hand to help you communicate with your customer.

For people who have a vision impairment or are blind:

- **Using names.** Always identify yourself by name. If appropriate, ask for their name so you can address them directly and so that they know you are talking to them and not to someone else.
- **Giving assistance.** If a customer asks for assistance to go somewhere ask which side you should be on and offer your arm so they can hold just above your elbow.
- **Guide dogs.** Never pat or distract a guide dog or offer it food while it is in harness, it is a working animal under the control of its owner.

Finding alternative ways to provide service

The best way of attracting business and fulfilling your legal responsibilities is to make your business as accessible as possible. Where it is not possible to provide full access in the short term, you might also consider alternate ways of providing the same service. Here are some examples:

- A butchers shop might consider operating a telephone, mail order or local delivery scheme.
- A florist might have a call bell at the entrance and have staff put together an order and bring the goods to the front door or the nearest easy collection point.
- A hairdresser might consider offering a home visiting service for a customer with a disability.

- An estate agent might consider providing their service in an alternative, accessible location either by appointment or on a regular basis.

Alternatives such as these will not provide full equality for people with disabilities, but they will assist in reducing the chances of a complaint.



What's the best language to use?

If you are making the effort to make your business more accessible it is also important to make sure your staff and the signage you use is part of that effort.

Use signage that identifies:

- 'Accessible Toilet' not 'Disabled Toilet'
- 'Accessible Parking' not 'Disabled Parking'
- 'Accessible Entry' not 'Disabled Entry'

And always refer to:

- a *person with a disability* rather than a *disabled person*
- a person who *uses* a wheelchair rather than someone *confined* to one
- a person who *is* blind rather than a person who *suffers* blindness.

*Where to get
more
information*

**For more information on planning issues, building approvals
and local access requirements:**

Contact the Planning Officer, Building Surveyor or
MetroAccess Worker at Council phone 9240 1111.

**For more information on design ideas and technical
requirements contact an Access Consultant:**

Association of Consultants in Access Australia Inc
www.access.asn.au



For more information on legal issues and responsibilities:

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

Phone: 02 9284 9600 or 1300 369 711 (toll free)

www.hreoc.gov.au

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

Phone: 1800 134 142

www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

Standards Australia

for copies of the relevant standards

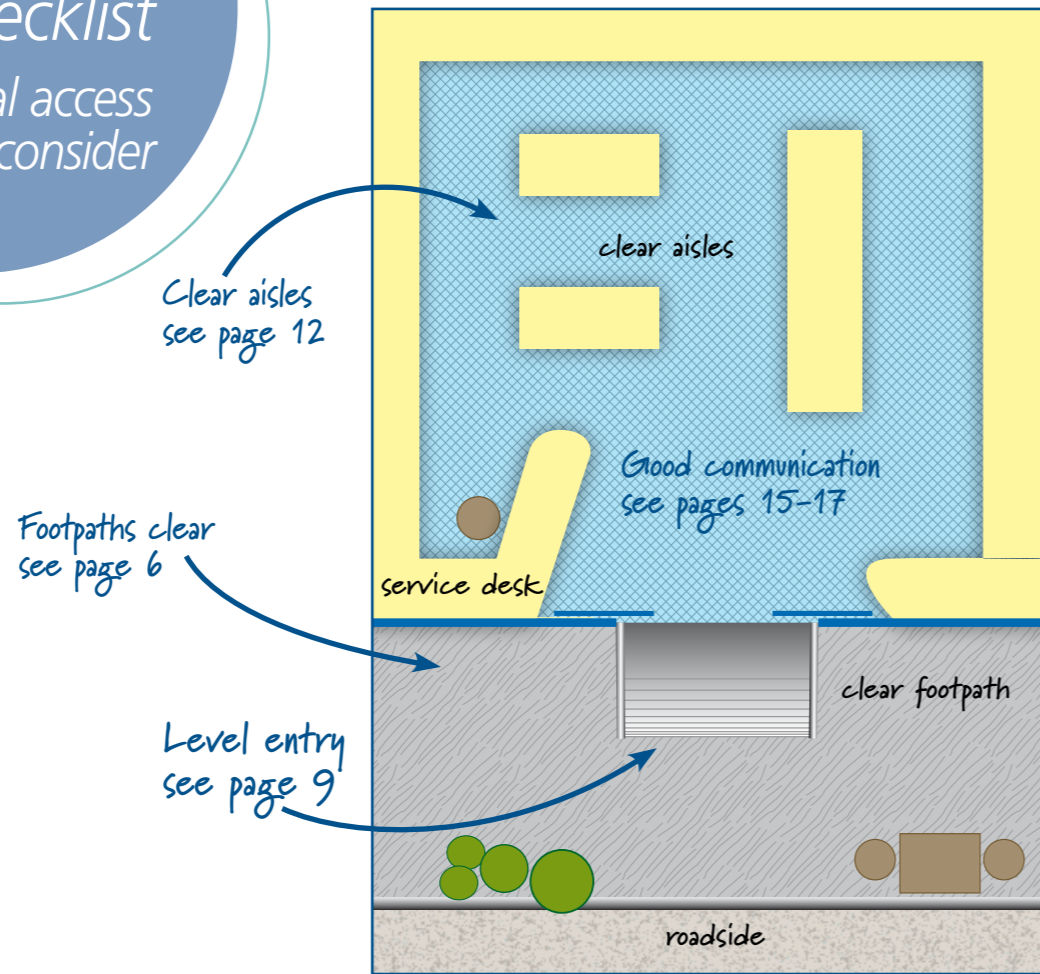
Phone: 1300 654 646

www.standards.com



Checklist

General access issues to consider



- Parking close to premises
- Public transport close to premises
- Clear signage of shop front and accessibility
- Clear pathway in and out of premises
- Good lighting for surrounds
- Provide level entry, e.g. no steps
- Wide self-opening or easy-to-open doors
- Shop entrance and doorway easy to find
- Clear sight lines between entry and counter
- Low counter heights for service area
- Clear and wide internal aisles
- Low height counters
- Slip resistant flooring
- Ensure signs and pricings are clear
- Provide alternative information for vision and hearing impairments
- Be mindful of noise levels
- Location of accessible toilet
- Provide customer service through staff using good communication
- Consider alternative ways to provide services

Translation

This Guide aims to help small business owners to understand how to improve the accessibility of your business to people with a disability, their family and friends. There are approximately 23,000 people in Moreland with a disability. This Guide provides practical information about how you can attract this large customer base to access your business. Information is provided in the Guide about physical changes you can make to your business premises and about other ways which will assist to make your business accessible to people with a disability.

For more information about this guide in languages other than English please contact the Community Development and Social Policy Unit on 9240 1111.

Guide Greek

Στ ε αυ τ υ τ υ δηγ υ είναι ηθησει μικρο επι ειρησεις να καταλα υν πως να ελιωσ υν την προ σ αση στην επι ειρηση τ υς σε ατ μα με αναπηρια, στις ικ γενειες και σ τ υς φιλ υς τ υς. Στ Moreland υπαρ υν περιπ υ 23.000 ατ μα με κλπ ια αναπηρια. Αυτ ε δηγ ε παρε ει πρακτικες πληρ φ ριες για τρ π υς με τ υς π ι υς μπ ρειτε να προ σελκυσετε αυτη τη μεγαλη πελατεια στην επι ειρηση σας. Παρε νται πληρ φ ριες σ τ ν δηγ αυτ για τις φυσικες αλλαγες π υ μπ ρειτε να κανετε σ τ ακινητ της επι ειρησης σας και για αλλ υς τρ π υς με τ υς π ι υς μπ ρειτε να ηθησετε για να κανετε την επι ειρηση σας π ι προ σ ασιμη σε ατ μα με αναπηρια.

Για περισσ τερες πληρ φ ριες σ εικα με τ ν δηγ αυτ σε αλλες γλωσσες εκτ ε της αγγλικης, μπ ρειτε να επικ ινωησετε με τη Μ νδα Κ ιν τικης Ανάπτ υς και Κ ινωικης Π λιτικης σ τ 9240 1111.

Città di Moreland

La presente Guida vuole assistere i proprietari di piccole entità commerciali a capire come migliorare l'accessibilità della propria attività commerciale a persone con disabilità, alle loro famiglie e amici. A Moreland vi sono circa 23.000 persone con disabilità. La Guida mette a disposizione delle informazioni pratiche su come attirare questa considerevole fascia di clienti ad accedere alla vostra attività commerciale. Le informazioni che troverete nella Guida prendono in considerazione eventuali modifiche pratiche che potreste apportare ai locali della vostra attività commerciale e altri modi in cui potreste rendere la vostra attività commerciale accessibile a persone con disabilità.

Per ulteriori informazioni riguardo alla presente guida in lingua non inglese, contattare l'Unità di sviluppo comunitario e di Politica sociale (Community Development and Social Policy Unit) al numero 9240 1111.

Mục đích của tập Hướng dẫn nhằm giúp đỡ cho những chủ nhân tiểu thương biết phương cách cải tiến để những người bị khuyết tật, gia đình và thân hữu có thể tiếp cận dễ dàng với doanh nghiệp của họ. Tại Moreland hiện có khoảng 23 ngàn người bị khuyết tật. Trong tập Hướng dẫn này có ghi các thông tin rất thực tiễn về cách thức để bạn có thể thu hút số lượng khách hàng lớn lao này tiếp cận được với doanh nghiệp của mình. Trong tập Hướng dẫn có các thông tin liên quan đến việc thay đổi ngoại hình cho địa điểm kinh doanh mà bạn có thể thực hiện và về các phương cách khác nhằm giúp những người bị khuyết tật tiếp cận dễ dàng với doanh nghiệp của bạn.

Muốn biết thêm thông tin về tập Hướng dẫn này bằng các ngôn ngữ khác ngoài tiếng Anh, xin liên lạc với Bộ phận Chính Sách Xã hội và Phát triển Cộng đồng qua điện thoại số 9240 1111.

ىلع قريغصلا قيراجتلا حل اصملا باحصأ قدع اسم ىلل لىلدلا اذه فدهي . مءح لاصرم ىلل مهى اقدصاو مدرساو نىقاعملا لوصرو نىسحت قىفكيك مهف اذه نل . دنالروم ىف ققاعلا نم نوناعي صخش فلا نورشو و قتال وحن لكل انه نم ريبكلا ددعلا اذه بنج قىفكيك لوح قىلمعلا تامولعمل رفوي لىلدلا قىداملا تاريخىقتل لوح تامولعمل لىلدلا رفوي امك . مكتح لاصرم ىلل نىابلا لىلع ىلع دعاست ىرخأ قرط لوحو مكتح لاصرم ىف اهب موقت نا عىطتست ىتلا . نىقاعملا لوصولا قل هس مكتح لاصرم

ءاجرلا قىنلىجنلا رىغ تاغللا ىف لىلدلا اذه لوح تامولعمل نم دىمئل (Community Development and Social Policy Unit) قىعامتجالا ساسلا و لىعامتجالا رىوطتلا قدحو عم لاصتالا فتاه ىلع 9240 1111 .

GUIDE TURKISH

BU KILAVUZ, KÜÇÜK İŞ YERİ SAHIPLERİNE, ÖZÜRLÜ KİŞİLERİN, AİLELERİNİN VE ARKADAŞLARININ İŞ YERLERİNDEN YARARLANABİLMELERİNİ GELİŞTİRME YOLLARINI KAVRAMALARINDA YARDIMCI OLMAYI AMAÇLAR. MORELAND'DA YAKLAŞIK 23.000 ÖZÜRLÜ KİŞİ VARDIR. BU KILAVUZ, İŞ YERİNİZDEN YARARLANMALARI İÇİN BU KADAR BÜYÜK TÜKETİCİ SAYISINI İŞ YERİNİZE NASIL ÇEKEBİLECEĞİNİZ HAKKINDA PRATİK BİLGİ SAĞLAR. KILAVUZDA SAĞLANAN BİLGİLER HEM İŞ YERİNİZE YAPABİLECEĞİNİZ FİZİKSEL DEĞİŞİKLİKLER, HEM DE ÖZÜRLÜ KİŞİLERİN İŞ YERİNİZDEN KOLAYLIKLA YARARLANABİLMELERİNDE YARDIMCI OLMAK İÇİN DİĞER YOLLAR HAKKINDADIR.

İNGİLİZCE'DEN BAŞKA BİR DİLDE, BU KILAVUZ HAKKINDA BİLGİ EDİNEBİLMEK İÇİN LÜTFEN, TOPLUM GELİŞME VE SOSYAL POLİTİKA BİRİMİ (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY UNIT)'Nİ 9420 1111'DEN ARAYIN.

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If you would like this publication in Braille, audio or in larger print please call Moreland City Council's MetroAccess Officer on **9240 2366**.

For information in languages other than English

Language Link

有關摩爾籛德市政廳
電話號碼的詳情 **9280 1910**

Per informazioni sul Comune
di Moreland telefonare a: **9280 1911**

Για πληροφορίες σχετικά με το
Δήμο Moreland τηλεφωνήστε στο **9280 1912**

للحصول على معلومات عن بلدية مورلاند
اتصلوا على الرقم **9280 1913**

Moreland Belediyesi hakkında bilgi
almak için aranabilecek telefon **9280 1914**

Nếu muốn biết thêm chi tiết về Hội Đồng
Thành Phố Moreland, xin quý vị gọi số **9280 1915**

Para mayor información sobre la
Municipalidad de Moreland llame al **9280 1916**

Za informacije o Općinskom vijeću
Općine Moreland nazovite **9280 1917**

Po informacije na temat Rady Gminnej
Moreland należy dzwonić pod **9280 1918**

All other languages

including 𑆑𑆒𑆓𑆔𑆕, 廣東話,

فارسی, Kurdi, Malti,

Македонски, Српски,

Somali, Tetum **9280 1919**



Moreland City Council

Moreland City Council

Ph: 9240 1111

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Info: www.moreland.vic.gov.au