

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Annual Progress Report 2021–2022





Access to meaningful employment

Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) continues to lead the public sector in this area and enhance our ability to provide accessible and meaningful employment.

The NSW Government aims to increase the representation of people with disability in the NSW public sector to 5.6%.



DCJ was recognised as a top performer for Access & Inclusion at the inaugural Australian Network on Disability (AND) 2022 Disability Confidence Awards.



The NSW Government funded \$484.3 million for housing and specialist supports for women and children experiencing DFV.

The delivery impacts a diverse group of stakeholders, including women and children experiencing domestic and family violence who may be living with disability.

What are we doing?

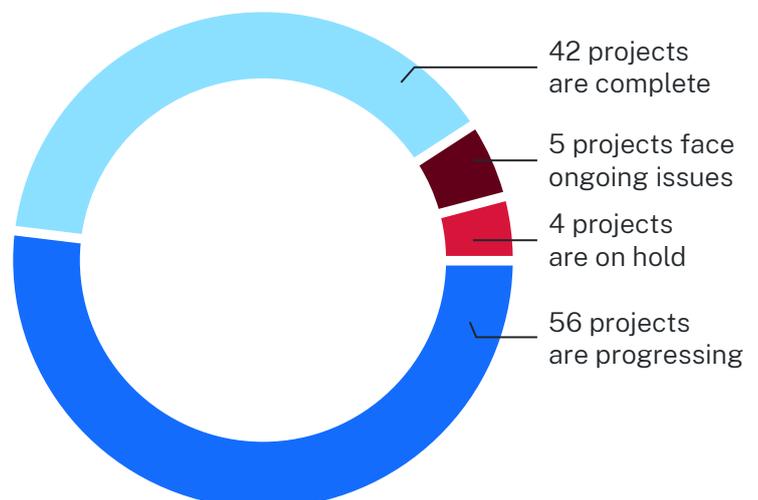
We are tracking the progress of the [DCJ Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2024](#) (DCJ DIAP).

The [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021-2025](#) (DIP) and associated [Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#) (DIAP) are the NSW Government's guiding documents for building inclusion for people with disability in NSW. The DIP has four focus areas for disability inclusion planning:

1. Positive attitudes and behaviours
2. Liveable communities
3. Access to mainstream services through better systems and processes, and
4. Access to meaningful employment.

What have we achieved so far?

- 42 projects are complete.
- 56 projects are progressing or ongoing as planned.
- A problem with 5 projects may exist with scope or delivery, or the initiative is no longer proceeding due to other priorities.
- Work is continuing on 4 projects, but may be on hold due to extenuating circumstances.



Facilitating the inclusion of our people and customers

Positive attitudes and behaviours

Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy

- DCJ's Corrective Services NSW division ran disability awareness training via Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy to give staff the skills and knowledge required to effectively interact with, and facilitate the empowerment of people with disability.
- The academy also runs specific needs training for case managers and delivered a Mental Health Awareness Program designed to increase a general understanding and awareness of mental health disorders, including symptoms and associated behaviour.

These initiatives are now implemented as business as usual (BAU) for all new Case Management Officers at intake, facilitated via Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy by a trained officer.

Incorporating Inclusive Design Principles

- DCJ's Corporate Services division ran an initiative with the aim of incorporating inclusive design principles into DCJ's internal audit work practices and templates.

The outcomes of the project saw raised staff awareness on the newly created Inclusion and Accessibility Design Principles, and enabled incorporation and application into DCJ's work practices, approach, documents and templates through the following activities:

- High staff attendance of in-house training (e.g. learning module on disability inclusion and accessibility).
- 'Continuous Improvement Program' session conducted on the Inclusion and Accessibility Design Principles on making reports more accessible.
- Development of checklists and toolkits based on the Inclusive and Accessible Design Principles designed to be incorporated into DCJ work practices, particularly when conducting stakeholder analysis.
- Review of staff templates to ensure they align with the Inclusion and Accessibility Design Principles.



Liveable communities

Screening tool for young Aboriginal people with disability

- DCJ developed a screening tool for young Aboriginal people with disability, mental health issues and experience of trauma who are in contact with DCJ's Youth Justice team.

Ongoing staff training and client screening has been achieved through the implementation of the following strategies:

- All Youth Justice Psychologists have been trained and accredited in Westerman Aboriginal Symptom Checklist Youth (WASC-Y & WASC-A) which is the first culturally and scientifically validated psychological test developed specifically for Aboriginal Australian youth. It identifies Aboriginal youth at risk of depression, suicidal behaviours, drug and alcohol use, impulsivity, anxiety, and cultural resilience as a moderator of risk.
- All young people in contact with Youth Justice now undergo screening for disability, mental health and experience of trauma.

Funding for housing and specialist supports for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence (DFV)

- Housing for people with disability has been a focus of DCJ through funding aimed at increasing the amount of affordable housing.
- On 19 October 2021, the NSW Government announced historic investment of \$484.3 million for housing and specialist supports for women and children experiencing DFV. The delivery and operation of new Core and Cluster refuges across NSW impacts a diverse group of stakeholders, including women and children experiencing DFV who may be living with disability. The aim is that both the 'core' services and 'cluster' accommodation are accessible for people with disability, which includes incorporating large living spaces, bathrooms and doorways, and ensuring benchtops and tables are adjustable for wheelchair users.

The Core and Cluster facilities will be procured, occurring over three tranches, with tranche 1 seeking to identify shovel ready Core and Cluster projects that can be operationalised by end of 2022. Stakeholder engagement was conducted, aimed at supporting stakeholder understanding, and gaining knowledge and insights to inform effective delivery of the new refuges. Feedback received included considering the needs of women and children with disability in relation to the refuge's physical design and service delivery.

Project

Upgrade CIMS to capture information relating to the disability and support needs of each young person

“Reliable data is now accessible to staff wherever the young person moves throughout the state, meaning we can now avoid unnecessary delays in referring for an NDIS package, a NDIS plan review or a change of circumstances.”

— Annika, Manager of Strategic Projects Unit, Youth Justice.



Access to meaningful employment

Stepping Into Internship Program

- The Corporate Services division of DCJ partnered with AND to implement the Stepping Into Internship Program. This program matches talented university students with disability with roles in business, with NSW Government being one of the partners.

Between June and August 2021, a successful applicant of the program completed 152 hours of paid employment within DCJ. This program is currently being rolled out across DCJ to provide more opportunities for university students with disability.

Kit Bag resources

- DCJ's Housing, Disability and District Services division developed a Kit Bag aimed at supporting staff with disability. The resources include a manager Kit Bag - a consolidated point of access containing the most essential resources on disability inclusion to actively foster a disability confident and disability inclusive environment. The employee Kit Bag is designed to equip employees with disability with the information and knowledge they need to navigate their rights in the workplace, and to support their individual needs.

A process has been established for new staff to be advised where the resources can be accessed during induction. In addition, a student flyer has been developed to ensure that students with disability feel confident talking to their supervisor about their needs during their student placement.





Access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Justice Advocacy Service

- DCJ funds the Justice Advocacy Service (JAS) which is run by the Intellectual Disability Rights Service. JAS supports victims, witnesses, suspects and defendants with cognitive impairment to navigate the justice system.

As of April 2022, the service has been extended until July 2025 and expanded to include court-based diversion in six local court sites: Parramatta, Penrith, Downing Centre, Blacktown, Lismore and Gosford. A court-based diversion service has been established in six local court sites to help increase applications for defendants with a cognitive impairment. The service will be operational from 1 July 2022.

Disability Taskforce

- DCJ's Housing, Disability and District Services division established a disability taskforce charged with reviewing all systems, processes, policies and frameworks around a disability modifications process. The taskforce made recommendations on improving that process for DCJ staff, Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC), service support agencies, and clients.

The following new processes have been introduced as a result of the implementation of the disability taskforce:

- A new form was created to act as a single entry point for clients to request home modifications, enabling the time frames of the exiting process to be structured and managed.
- A state-wide database has been implemented for local offices to track requests for modifications, produce reports on what is outstanding, and to identify barriers in the process.

Next steps



Collaboration Partnership

The NSW Government will continue ongoing collaboration and partnership between government departments, agencies and local councils to improve outcomes for people with disability.

Annual Review 2022-2023

The DCJ DIAP will be evaluated through an annual review in mid 2023, utilising an internal governance procedure to support this work.

The annual review will assist with determining priorities for the next iteration of the DCJ DIAP.

2024-2028 Action Plan

The next iteration of the DCJ DIAP will continue to focus on people with disability from diverse priority groups including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer + people
- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds
- Women and children with disability

Links to resources

DCJ Disability Inclusion Plan
bit.ly/NSWDIAP

NSW Disability Inclusion Plan
bit.ly/NSWDIAP

**Other Government Department
Disability Inclusion Action Plans**
bit.ly/DIAPRegister

Disability Inclusion Act 2014
bit.ly/DIALegislation

**Local councils Disability Inclusion
Action Plans**
bit.ly/DIAPRegister

