

Disability Council NSW Plan 2022 - 2024

Our responsibilities

The Council's main responsibilities under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* are to:

- **Monitor** the implementation of government policy
- **Advise** the NSW Minister for Disability Services on emerging issues relating to people with disability, and about the content and implementation of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan and Disability Inclusion Action Plans
- **Advise** public authorities about the content and implementation of Disability Inclusion Action Plans
- **Promote** the inclusion of people with disability in the community and promote community awareness of matters concerning the interests of people with disability and their families
- **Consult** with similar councils and bodies, and people with disability
- **Conduct research** about matters relating to people with disability.

Context for this plan

This plan takes into account and refers to the [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021 - 2025](#) (NSW DIP). The intent of the Council is to align its activities to extend and complement the commitments in the NSW DIP. The Council will also monitor the implementation of the NSW DIP and maintain a watching brief on the effectiveness of NSW agencies in delivering on their commitments.

The Council is cognisant of [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031](#) and intends to align activity with the Strategy wherever possible.

The Council will work closely with the NSW Minister for Disability Services throughout the year, particularly to respond to any opportunities that emerge.

Pillars for 2022-2024

The Council will use its lived experience, skills and commitments to focus on five pillars of activity in 2022-2024:

- Accessible communities
- Ensuring the voice of people with disability is heard
- Employment
- Justice and rights
- Housing.

Accessible communities

People with disability continue to face barriers accessing activities and services in everyday life. While recognising there have been substantial improvements over the years, this is still a live issue and a key focus for Council activity. This Pillar encompasses a broad view of access, including access to transport, services, facilities, and information.

Council commitments

- Meet with a metropolitan, regional and semi-regional local council (and key stakeholders) to discuss their Disability Inclusion Action Planning process
- Highlight examples of good practice by local councils to promote accessible communities
- Develop a campaign to improve local services and infrastructure
- Produce a review framework for assessing the development and delivery of NSW public authorities' DIAPs.

Voice

The voice of people with disability is not heard sufficiently or given appropriate weight generally, particularly concerning service design and delivery, and in policy and program development. The Council is interested in ensuring processes for seeking input and feedback are genuine so that the concerns of people with disability are heard and acted on immediately, particularly regarding issues or complaints about service delivery.

The Council is aware that the Australian Government is funding the development of Good Practice Guidelines for the Engagement of People with Disability, and is committed to engaging and communicating with people with disability in the development of those guidelines.

Council commitments

- Explore how to support the development of the National Good Practice Guidelines for the Engagement of People with Disability
- Consider adopting and promoting the national guidelines once they are developed
- Promote and monitor the inclusion of people with disability on Boards, including Government Boards, or Board Subcommittees focusing on client impacts and human rights for all organisations
- Improve networks for people with disability seeking to join Boards
- Consult with intersectional groups within the disability community to identify key issues and suggested solutions.

Employment

Employment is a critical issue for people with disability as a means to live full, satisfying, and independent lives. The Council will build on existing activities to continue to drive improvements in this area.

Council commitments

- Invite each NSW Government Cluster Secretary to a Council meeting to report on what their departments are doing to promote employment for people with disability and how they are measuring progress

- Ask the Chair of the Disability Employee Network in each NSW Government Cluster to provide an update to Council ahead of meetings with Secretaries
- Council Chair to meet with the NSW Cluster Secretaries Board to discuss how the Secretaries are supporting the employment of people with disability
- Explore NSW Social Procurement and how it promotes and supports the employment of people with disability and report to Council
- Meet with the Australian Network on Disability about their programs for encouraging private sector to employ people with disability Investigate disability employment targets for NSW businesses.
- Investigate opportunities to partner with advocacy agencies to promote opportunities to support the transition from school to work for young people with disability.

Justice and Rights

People with disability face multiple barriers in accessing justice, including courts and tribunals. Some barriers are practical (such as physical barriers in old buildings; no hearing loops) while some relate to the quality of support provided to people with disability in the justice system. This leads to people with disability, in particular people with intellectual disability, being over-represented in prisons. This is in part a symptom of a broader failure to ensure the legal rights and human rights of all people, including people with disability. These barriers exist not just in accessing justice, but travel along the justice pathway. People with disability in prisons, on remand and those subject to control or supervision orders have particular needs that are not always identified or properly accommodated.

Council commitments

- Work with DCJ on courtroom and tribunal physical and hearing assistive devices
- Review the DCJ Disability Inclusion Access Plan to identify gaps/opportunities to promote access to justice and the rights of people with disability
- Meet with the Secretary, DCJ and relevant Executive to discuss findings
- Advocate for policy and legislative changes so as to ensure full access to the justice system for people with complex communication needs.

Housing

Housing is critical to the wellbeing of everyone, and there is a chronic shortage of sufficient and affordable housing for people with disability. For those on statutory incomes (Centrelink benefits), rents consume an unsustainable proportion of income. Planning instruments (like Local Environment Plans made by local councils) can support and impede change, particularly in changing the settings to support affordable housing. This is a key issue where the Council will play a role in promoting and advocating for change.

Council commitments

- Host a round table with social housing developers and providers, Property Council of Australia and other property industry representatives, not-for-profit service providers and accessible housing advocates
- Consult with not-for-profit service providers to identify what support is required and develop case studies of success

- Develop a formal Council position and approach, informed by the round table and consultations with not-for-profit service providers, about successful models/case studies of housing for people with disability.

Responses to requests for input

The Council receives multiple requests for input into policy and program design, and comment on issues. There are more requests than the Council can address with the available resources. The Chair and the Secretariat triage incoming requests and work jointly to respond appropriately.

The Council will also identify some key themes and explore developing some positions on key issues that could be repurposed for multiple submissions or responses. In developing these positions, the Council will work with stakeholder groups so that the Council position is informed by sector views on those issues.