

DISABILITY POLICY

PREFACE

We aim to be an effective organisation. Having an access and equity program to make sure that our services are accessible to all members of the public and to disadvantaged groups in particular is one way of achieving this. It is essential that our office is accessible to anyone who needs our services and any barriers are identified and where possible eliminated.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline our commitment to improve our services to people with disabilities. It details strategies we have or will put in place to comply with our legislative responsibilities and with the Guidelines for Disability Action Planning for NSW Government Agencies.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Director Corporate is the nominated lead officer for our disability action planning. Each division/team has nominated staff to support this process. The Project Officer (Community Relations) is the project manager.

LEGISLATIVE/POLICY FRAMEWORK

Disability Services Act 1993

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

Guidelines for disability action planning by NSW Government agencies

NSW State Plan

DEFINITIONS

DAP Advisory Committee

The DAP Advisory Committee is the office wide advisory committee that serves as a consultation mechanism and provides advice/guidance to the office Disability Action Plan (DAP) planning process. The committee is chaired by Director Corporate, the nominated 'lead officer' for our office DAP development. Members of the Committee include representatives from the business.

Disability

There are a number of definitions of "disability" which appear in both state and federal legislation. The Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* contains the most widely used definition of "disability". This definition is broad-ranging and covers physical, sensory, intellectual and psychological disabilities. The definition includes:

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- total or partial loss of a part of the body
- the presence in the body of organisms causing or capable of causing disease or illness

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1

Related policies:

Access and Equity Policy, Disability Action Plan 2010-2014

File reference:

ADM/6759

This policy does not supersede any other policies.

- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought process, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour.

The definition includes a disability that:

- presently exists, or
- previously existed but no longer exists, or
- may exist in the future, or
- is imputed to a person.

Senior Officer Group

The senior management committee consists of the Ombudsman, Deputy Ombudsman (Public Administration and Strategic Projects), Deputy Ombudsman (Human Services), (also Community & Disability Services Commissioner), Deputy Ombudsman (Police and Compliance), Director Corporate and Director Strategic Projects.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Ombudsman is committed to achieving the outcomes for people with a disability set out in the NSW State Plan and Guidelines for Disability Action Planning by NSW Government Agencies. The accompanying action plan outlines our strategies to:

- identify and remove barriers to services
- provide information about our services in a range of accessible formats
- make our facilities and services accessible
- assist participation in public consultations, government advisory boards and committees
- increase employment participation of people with a disability in the NSW public sector
- use government decision making programs and operations to influence other agencies and sectors to improve community participation and quality of life.

The Ombudsman confirms that we are a level 2 planning agency under the Guidelines for Disability Action Planning by NSW Government Agencies. Our action plan reflects this classification.

The disability action plan is a working document. The Director Corporate has the authority to amend strategies and timeframes following consultation with the DAP Advisory Committee, and if appropriate, may refer issues to the Senior Officers Group. Amendments may be made following the review of our communication/information strategies being undertaken by our stakeholder engagement working party.

The disability action plan will detail the timeframes for implementation of each strategy.

The Director Corporate will report the progress of implementation to the Senior Officers Group at least quarterly. Progress with implementation will also be reported in our annual report.

OMBUDSMAN APPROVAL



Bruce Barbour

OMBUDSMAN