



ACT
Government

DISABILITY JUSTICE STRATEGY

Fourth Annual Progress Report

Community Services Directorate and
Justice and Community Safety Directorate

October 2023

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DISABILITY JUSTICE STRATEGY

Annual Progress Report 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Disability Justice Strategy 2019-2029 provides a strategy for addressing unequal access to justice in the ACT. It is designed to change how our justice system interacts with people with disability using innovative, consultative and responsive actions.

The First Action Plan (2019-2023), which sits under the ACT Disability Justice Strategy, sets out a range of actions intended to provide the foundations for change in the justice system.

The First Action Plan and the ACT Disability Justice Strategy along with an Easy English translation can be read here:

https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/disability_act/disability-justice-strategy

This is the Fourth Annual Progress Report (the Report) for the ACT Disability Justice Strategy 2019-2029. The Report summarises the progress made against each of the actions in the First Action Plan and provides further information about key actions.

This will be the final report against the First Action Plan. The Second Action Plan is currently under development. The Second Action Plan will be informed by a range of activities and reports.

For example, the Community Services Directorate undertook consultation with the disability community, families and carers about justice-related issues during the development of the ACT's proposed new ten-year Disability Strategy to support the ACT's commitments under Australia's Disability Strategy. Approximately 1,000 people expressed their views during those consultations. The results of that process, which were published in a comprehensive consultation listening report in May 2023, will also inform the development of the Second Action Plan.

The listening report and an Easy English consultation snapshot can be found here:

https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/disability_act/act-disability-strategy

Key themes for the Second Action Plan will also be shaped by the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

In addition, First Person Consulting recently completed an independent evaluation of the First Action Plan. That evaluation found that the ACT is making positive change for people with disability within the justice system and that attitudes, processes and practices are shifting in the right direction. Consistent with the findings of that evaluation, it is proposed that the Second Action Plan will build on the successes of the First Action Plan and focus the justice sector's efforts on targeted actions intended to improve justice access and outcomes for people with disability.

The achievements from the First Action Plan would not have been possible without the effort and commitment to change from justice sector partners. The progress and cultural change we have achieved would not have been possible without the ongoing support of the Disability Justice Reference Group¹ and government and community stakeholders.

ACT Government Directorates are also working together to develop other sector specific disability strategies. These strategies are expected to be released later in 2023 or 2024.

Governments at both the Federal and State and Territory levels are also working together to implement the National Disability Data Asset which will integrate, share and link deidentified data to provide a more complete picture of the needs of people with disability and the services they access. Participation in the National Disability Data Asset is expected to result in improved, evidence-based decision making to improve the experiences and outcomes of people with disability within the justice system in the ACT.

¹ The Disability Justice Reference Group provides guidance and governance of the implementation of the Disability Justice Strategy.

FIRST ACTION PLAN 2019–2023

The Disability Justice Strategy is a ten-year strategy. The strategy is an overarching plan, designed to inform and guide how more detailed work is formulated and acted on. It has three key goals (Figure 1) and five focus areas aimed at achieving those goals.

Figure 1 Goals of the Disability Justice Strategy



HIGHLIGHTS

The First Action Plan 2019-2023 under the ACT Disability Justice Strategy is based on a series of commitments and engagements made by agencies across the ACT to move towards greater equality before the law for people with disability. The First Action Plan sets out actions, each of which relates to one of the five focus areas identified as critical to achieving the goals of the Disability Justice Strategy. Each action identifies the outcome sought, including what it will look like for people with disability, and a break-down of the activities that will be undertaken over the first four years.

This section includes highlights amongst the actions achieved in the fourth year of implementation of the Plan. Summaries of all the actions within each focus area is outlined in the next section.

Actions 1.1 and 4.1 – Community of Practice

Focus Area 1 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION Focus Area 4 BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY	
Action	Outcome
A community of practice will be created through the phased introduction of Disability Justice Support Workers in key agencies. The networked members employed by a range of justice agencies will provide direct one to one navigation and support to individuals in those services and foster cultural change through internal expertise and advocacy.	<p>People with disability will experience the provision of practical supports and reasonable adjustments as they engage with justice agencies, to support them to navigate the system.</p> <p>Justice agencies will have increased confidence in supporting people with disability and making reasonable adjustment to enable access to justice.</p> <p>This action will mean there will be a core network of dedicated disability justice workers to support people with disability, their carers and supporters to navigate the justice system and receive necessary adjustments.</p> <p>Community of practice designed and established with two (2) dedicated justice agency staff in early 2020 building to eight (8) dedicated staff by 2023.</p>

Progress

The Community of Practice has proven to be a critical foundation action under the First Action Plan and has provided positive impact across two focus areas of the First Action Plan:

- Information and communication, and
- better service delivery.

In June 2023, ten disability justice support workers, referred to as Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs), were active in the justice sector as a result of the Strategy. This is an achievement beyond the initial target of eight DLOs by 2023 set in the First Action Plan.

Across 2022-2023, DLOs have been active at Legal Aid ACT, Child and Youth Protection Service, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Canberra Community Law, Victims Support ACT, ACT Courts and Tribunal, ACT Policing, and ACT Corrective Services within the Community and Custodial environments. The Community of Practice has been expanded, with temporary funding secured to establish a Disability Inclusion Advocate role within Domestic Violence Crisis Service and a DLO position within the Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT.

DLOs have continued to meet fortnightly as a Community of Practice to collaborate with each other and with other service providers. Members of the Community of Practice have worked together to support individuals to navigate the justice system more seamlessly and to identify and address systemic issues to improve access to justice for people with disability.

Within their organisations, DLOs have also continued to support individuals to navigate the justice system by:

- assistance to liaise with and access support services (e.g., accommodation, advocacy, alcohol and other drugs, child and family, cultural, disability-specific, education/employment, family violence, finances, food assistance, mental health, transport, trauma, victim-survivor, and social support services).
- supported advocacy within justice and social support systems to reduce the intersectional impact on clients and their supporters.
- implementing reasonable adjustments for people with disability
- providing education, advice and guidance to colleagues about best practice and reasonable adjustments, and
- working across agencies through the Community of Practice to ensure people with disability have access to appropriate adjustments and services during interactions with the justice system.

The case study below demonstrates how DLOs are working to improve outcomes for people with disability in the justice system.

Case Study

The Victim Support ACT (VSACT) DLO attended with a prosecutor from the ACT Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) to support a client in telling their family that they had been the victim of a violent crime. The client wanted support from the DLO to do this and to ensure their family had access to services and felt supported during the court process.

Through this collaborative approach, the VSACT DLO was able to provide direct trauma-informed support whilst the client disclosed the crime to their family. The DLO met the family in person and provided information on supports they could access through VSACT, including court support and therapeutic intervention.

The DLO worked alongside the prosecutor to ensure that the client's rights under the *Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime* were upheld, including access to aids and adjustment by suggesting a referral to the ACT Intermediary program.

Action 1.5 – Community Engagement

Focus Area 1 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	
Action	Outcome
Ongoing consultation is undertaken with people with disability and the community sector on the issues that impact their experience and ability to contribute as citizens.	<p>People with disability are central to the ongoing development of the Disability Justice Strategy. Formal and informal engagement throughout this action plan will ensure people with disability have their voices heard.</p> <p>Regular communication on progress of the strategy and consultation on evaluation in 2022.</p>

Progress

Consultation has been a key element of the delivery of most, if not all, actions under the First Action Plan. The 2022-2023 year saw an increased emphasis placed on engaging with people with disability, the disability community, and key government and non-government stakeholders.

In 2022, CSD consulted with the disability community, families and carers about justice-related issues during the development of the ACT's proposed new ten-year Disability Strategy to support the ACT's commitments under Australia's Disability Strategy. This included targeted consultations on topics relevant to the Disability Justice Strategy, such as Justice, Safety and Supported Decision Making. Approximately 1,000 people expressed their views during those consultations. The results of that process, which were published in a comprehensive consultation listening report in early-2023, will also inform the development of the Second Action Plan.

In July 2022, the Minister for Disability, Minister for Police and Emergency Services/Minister for Corrections, and the Attorney-General chaired a roundtable with key ACT government stakeholders who held commitments under the First Action Plan. The same Ministers hosted a further roundtable in November 2022 with disability community representatives and organisations to discuss the progress and future direction of the Disability Justice Strategy, with particular focus on the Second Action Plan. Both events provided an opportunity to engage with community and government stakeholders to highlight key achievements from the First Action Plan and consider emerging themes for inclusion in the Second Action Plan.

Justice agencies continue to consult with the community to identify, develop and refine projects and initiatives. In September 2022, the Child and Youth Protection Services engaged parents with disability, or parents of children with disability, who have experience of the ACT child protection system to enable them to participate in the development of the *Charter of Rights for Parents and Families*. The Charter sets

out shared expectations and responsibilities between Child and Youth Protection Service and families so everyone involved in keeping children safe knows what is fair and reasonable and how everyone can expect to be treated. This group of parents and families with experience of disability provided direct feedback into the development of the document, ensuring that the resulting Charter is disability informed.

The full and short versions of the Charter are available here:

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/children-and-families/child-and-youth-protection/charter-for-parents-and-families-involved-with-act-child-protection-services>

Action 2.1 – Justice Sector Education and Guidance

Focus Area 2 EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE	
Action	Outcome
<p>Disability justice specific ACT training resources are developed.</p> <p>Justice organisations undertake training and utilise resources developed.</p>	<p>This action will foster a disability informed and responsive legal and justice sector so that people with disability receive information, services and reasonable adjustments when they need them.</p> <p>Training packages and modules are developed and tested throughout 2019–20.</p> <p>Training commences in 2019 with an ongoing schedule of training over the life of the plan.</p>

Progress

Over the past year, the Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS), the Community Services Directorate (CSD) and justice agencies have applied considerable effort to increase knowledge and awareness of disability and the need to adapt processes to be more accessible and inclusive for people with disability. A previous project to develop a disability awareness training package for the justice sector highlighted the challenges associated with a single training option across diverse organisations and environments. For example, when supporting a person with disability, the needs of Child and Youth Protection Services case workers differ greatly from the needs of police officers working in general duties and correctional officers at the Alexander Maconochie Centre.

Many justice agencies have participated in education and training to upskill staff on how to respond to the needs of people with disability to achieve good outcomes. For example, in a move towards disability informed services, disability awareness training is now mandatory for all ACT Corrective Services staff. ACT Corrective Services is also planning to develop an e-learning package to enhance staff confidence when working with or responding to a person with disability. The development of this package has been presented to the ACTCS Disability Reference Group and will be informed by the lived experience of ACT Corrective Services staff and clients.

Canberra Community Law have emphasised the importance of providing disability awareness education for both internal staff and workers across the community sector. Throughout the year, some notable community and sector activities undertaken by Canberra Community Law included:

- Training staff within the Adult Mental Health Unit at Canberra Hospital about Canberra Community Law's Mental Health Justice Clinic.

- Providing *Working with Clients* training to community law students and Australian Government Solicitor graduates.
- Building community awareness by arranging the Priori-tea Mental health Morning Tea in collaboration with Mental Illness Education ACT and Guide Dogs ACT.

Initiatives like those above have contributed to positive change across the justice sector. Greater education and guidance within the sector has resulted in increased collaboration with DLOs and a greater willingness to implement tools to screen for disability and identified reasonable adjustments for services users. These indicate that long-term cultural change is occurring within the justice sector whereby agencies are making adjustments to cater for the needs of people with disability. While progress in relation to education and training has been made, further work is needed to fully embed this in all aspects of the justice system.

The Second Action Plan will continue to emphasise the importance of education and guidance for justice sector staff. Using the learnings from the First Action Plan and evaluation, the Second Action Plan will place greater focus on developing tailored training to meet the unique operating environments of justice agencies.

Action 3.1 – Screening and Identification

Focus Area 3 IDENTIFICATION, SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT	
Action	Outcome
Screening and Identification of disability for reasonable adjustments.	<p>This action will enable service providers and justice agencies to better identify people with disability to provide reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>Trial of screening tool in 2021.</p>

Progress

In year one of the Disability Justice Strategy, a tool was developed to support the identification of any reasonable adjustment requirements a person may have. The tool is designed to ensure justice agencies are aware of each person's needs when interacting with the justice system so they can take appropriate steps to make those adjustments to ensure the person understands their rights and responsibilities and can engage in programs and services.

CSD and JACS subsequently identified a variety of reasonable adjustments that can be implemented both immediately and longer term in the justice system.

For example, as part of the Third Person Support Trial, ACT Policing has embedded a Needs Identification Tool, based on the Washington Group questions², as part of the intake process to help identify where people with disability detained in custody at the City Watch House need reasonable adjustments. ACT Policing has reported the implementation of the questions has had a positive change in organisational culture when interacting with people with disability.

Between January 2022 and January 2023, staff at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre successfully trialled the Tool for Identifying Reasonable Adjustments with young people at the Centre. Work to integrate the Tool for Identifying Reasonable Adjustments into the client management system is ongoing. Integration would enable information to be shared quickly and securely between Child and Youth Protection Service, ACT Health, and Murrumbidgee School each time a young person enters the Centre.

² The Washington Group Questions, designed by the Washington Group, are an attempt to create an internationally comparable disability measure across populations living in a great variety of cultures and economic situations. Available via: <https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>

Action 4.6 – ACT Corrective Services Disability Framework

Focus Area 4 BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY	
Action	Outcome
An ACT Corrections disability framework is developed and implemented.	<p>This action will ensure that people with disability in custody or under supervision have access to supports and adjustments that enable them to be safe, participate in programs and reduce recidivism.</p> <p>Development of framework in 2020.</p>

Progress

ACT Corrective Services developed a draft Disability Framework in 2022 in collaboration with community stakeholders, staff and clients to better understand how to ensure detainees and offenders with disability have access to support and adjustments to facilitate better outcomes. The Disability Framework aims to provide a best practice guide for ACT Corrective Services staff when working with clients with disability in both custodial and community settings.

During consultations, ACT Corrective Services heard that adopting a disability-awareness and strengths-based approach was fundamental to systems and processes. In practice, this means ACT Corrective Services staff, systems and processes understand disability and can respond to people with disability, focusing on the strengths and abilities of the person.

The key principles underpinning the draft Disability Framework include valuing individuality, effective coordination and connection of services, respecting the rights and diversity of individuals and informing services through the lived experience of people with disability.

In order to place the client with disability at the centre of service planning and delivery, the Disability Framework identifies several strategies to be incorporated across all services provided by ACT Corrective Services where possible. These strategies focus on responding to each individual's needs, goals and values through empowerment and self-determination, flexible systems and processes and enabling equitable access to services and support. This response will be further supported through a broader approach of collaboration, staff capability, cultural awareness, continuity of care, and maintaining respect and dignity.

The Disability Framework is a roadmap for future service improvement within ACT Corrective Services and will be operationalised through the Integrated Offender Management Framework and the next ACT Corrective Services Disability Action and Inclusion Plan 2024-2026.

Action 5.2 – Evaluation

Focus Area 4 DATA, RESEARCH & REVIEW	
Action	Outcome
A formal evaluation of the strategy and the First Action Plan is undertaken in year 3 to inform strategy direction and Second Action Plan.	<p>This action will evaluate whether the strategy measures and actions are on track and delivering change.</p> <p>Evaluation to be undertaken in year 3 2022.</p>

Progress

An independent organisation, First Person Consulting, has evaluated the Disability Justice Strategy First Action Plan and a final report is expected in late-2023. The evaluation has focused on the implementation of actions and outcomes achieved under the First Action Plan, drawing on documents provided and interviews with government, non-government stakeholders, and people with disability, including some in detention.

The evaluation found that while implementation of a number of the actions under the First Action Plan were delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, most actions are now either complete or underway. The evaluation noted that each of the five focus areas in the First Action Plan have progressed significantly.

The evaluation highlights a number of factors that were crucial in supporting the delivery of actions from the First Action Plan. The Community of Practice and Disability Justice Reference Groups both provided a level of oversight of progress against the First Action Plan and assisted in identifying challenges and developing approaches to resolve these. Implementation of the Disability Action and Inclusion Plans was also valuable in generating buy-in from the justice agencies involved in the Disability Strategy and established environments for DLOs to progress critical, systemic-change work.

JACS and CSD will use the evaluation to inform development of the Second Action Plan.

SUMMARY OF ALL ACTIONS

Focus Area 1 Information and Communication

Focus Area 1 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION		
Action Plan initiative	Action to date	Commitments
<p>1.1 Community of Practice</p> <p>A community of practice will be created through the phased introduction of DLOs in key agencies. The networked members employed by a range of justice agencies will provide direct one to one navigation and support to individuals in those services and foster cultural change through internal expertise and advocacy. Community of practice is maintained and led by CSD and JACS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLOs are in place at Legal Aid ACT, ACT Corrective Services - AMC, ACT Corrective Services – Community Operations, Director of Public Prosecutions, Victims Support ACT, ACT Policing, Child and Youth Protection Services, Canberra Community Law and ACT Courts and Tribunal. • A community of practice comprising the DLOs, and others employed in similar roles across the justice system, is operating. The group meets fortnightly and works together as a network to support individuals in contact with the justice system and to address systemic barriers impacting people with disability. • Secured temporary funding for a Disability Inclusion Advocate role at Domestic Violence Crisis Service to 30 June 2025. • Secured temporary funding to recruit a DLO at Aboriginal Legal Service NSW / ACT through to 30 June 2024. 	<p>Lead: Community Services and Justice and Community Safety Directorates</p> <p>Includes: Partnership with relevant agencies and organisations including commitments from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions • Legal Aid • ACT Policing • ACT Corrective Services - AMC • ACT Corrective Services - Community Corrections • Child and Youth Protection Services • ACT Courts and Tribunal • Canberra Community Law

<p>1.2 Accessible Information</p> <p>All government agencies develop accessible information through a variety of formats to ensure people with disability are able to understand their rights, access information and better understand the justice system.</p>	<p><u>ACT Corrective Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has developed a suite of videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a short induction video for offenders taken into custody by the Court Transport Unit (a version of female detainees and a version for male detainees); a video of key information for offenders reporting to Community Operations; and a video outlining the visits process for visitors to the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC). A range of staff across ACTCS have completed plain and Easy English Training. <p><u>Canberra Community Law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fourth CCL Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) aligns closely with the ACT Disability Justice Strategy. Focus area 1 of the CCL DAIP relates to ensuring resources are accessible to all staff and clients. The DLO has worked during the current year to review, consolidate, and organise a central bank of resources to build the capacity of CCL staff in relation to disability. <p><u>ACT Policing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is currently developing accessible information in various formats to ensure people with a disability are able to understand their rights, access information and better understand the justice system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current ACT Policing DLO attended three Easy English training sessions in May 2023. Incoming DLO will undertake Easy English training as a priority in August 2023. Translation of key documents into Easy English now progressing following completion of training. A review of the ACT Policing website will be undertaken to identify existing information available for the public and for policing members. Gap analysis to be completed and creation of relevant content/information to be progressed. <p><u>ACT Courts and Tribunal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has implemented a trial of BindiMaps – a navigation and wayfinding tool that assists people to find an indoor location by either using voice 	<p>Lead: All ACT Government agencies</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Aid Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions ACT Courts and Tribunal Public Trustee and Guardian Human Rights Commission Justice and Community Safety Directorate ACT Corrections Child and Youth Protection Services Canberra Community Law Housing ACT Community Legal Sector.
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	<p>navigation or an interactive map. While it is useful for everyone, BindiMaps is primarily designed for people who are blind or visually impaired, supporting them to be able to independently access and/or evacuate a building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has created a 'Courts Assistance' pamphlet outlining supports available and key contact details for Court Assistance Officers. • Has also produced a range of easy-to-understand videos about court processes and assistance available to Court users. <p><u>Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several documents outlining various parts of the Court process have been tailored to suit different clients' needs, including simplifying language and adding photographs. • Documents developed by DLO, including plain English letters confirming meetings, now being used as the standard for information being provided by all Witness Liaison Officers. • Social scripts on giving evidence at trial, hearing and pre-trial evidence dates now readily available by contacting DPP Witness Liaison Officers. Scripts prohibited from being made public due to confidential information. <p><u>Children, Youth and Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bimberi Youth Justice Centre continues to work on translating the Bimberi Handbook into Easy English to assist young people at the Centre. All documents that young people have access to in the Centre have been updated to ensure they are in plain and accessible language. • CYPS is updating plain language versions of four 'Working Together for Kids' guides to accompany the Easy English versions. • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ developed plain English versions of documents for complainants which are accessible via the DPP website; ○ created social scripts on how to get to Court, what to expect when meeting with DPP and giving evidence at trial are accessible via the Witness Assistance team; ○ tailored court process documents to suit clients' needs; and ○ developed plain English versions of letters confirming meetings, which are now standard for information provided by all Witness 	
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	<p>Liaison Officers.</p> <p><u>Legal Aid ACT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has commenced a project to professionally translate key resources into Easy English. The project is expected to be completed within 2023. • Commenced a project to provide accessible, wallet-sized bail information resources. Expected completion in 2023. • Have developed brochures and posters to inform people about the role of the DLO and how to access support. <p><u>Human Rights Commission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim Support ACT (VSACT) staff participated in Easy English workshops and information sessions on how to translate documents and information into accessible formats. • The VSACT DLO has created training to increase client-facing staff capacity to write and communicate clients in accessible formats. • The Public Advocate have developed accessible posters, including Easy English infographics, for use in mental health units. These posters explain how the Public Advocate can assist people who are voluntarily and involuntarily admitted to a mental health unit. • The Disability & Community Services Commissioner (DCSC) has published a number of accessible materials, including posters, videos and public service announcements, to support people with disability and their carers to better understand the complaints process. <p><u>Public Trustee and Guardian</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have developed accessible resources and will be upgrading their website for improved access to information. 	
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<p>1.3 Supported Decision making</p> <p>Supported Decision Making (SDM) is understood and promoted across community and justice agencies. SDM provides an alternative way of ensuring a person retains autonomy and independence in their lives. It provides an alternative to substitute decision makers and guardians.</p>	<p><u>Public Trustee and Guardian</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continues to act as a resource and delivery community engagement related to improved understanding of decision-making rights and delivery of supported decision making. For further information on guardianship reform, see 4.8. <p><u>Children, Youth and Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of Supported Decision Making processes has commenced with the Tool for Identifying Reasonable Adjustments (TIRA) roll out at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, see 3.1 for further detail. 	<p>Lead: Office for Disability, Community Services Directorate</p> <p>Delivered by: Community disability advocacy partners and the Public Trustee and Guardian</p>
<p>1.4 Identification of intervention points</p> <p>Intervention points for information are identified and advice is given to problem noticers. Problem noticers are individuals and systems which are uniquely placed to engage early or proactively in the life of an issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The JACS and CSD have continued to progress work with the Community of Practice to identify intervention points in the justice system through case studies. 	<p>Lead: Community Services and Justice and Community Safety Directorates</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT Health Directorate Education Directorate Justice and Community Safety Directorate Community Services Directorate Community sector

<p>1.5 Community engagement and consultation with people with disability</p> <p>Ongoing consultation is undertaken with people with disability and the community sector on the issues which impact their experience and ability to contribute as citizens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Disability Justice Reference Group meets twice a year with additional out of session papers provided as required. • Communiqués are made public after the meetings and the annual report for the DJS is also released publicly. • The First Nations Justice Branch provided input to ensure appropriate engagement with the community on disability justice issues, including through attending the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Caucus meetings. • Public consultation with people with disability and other community members about justice issues occurred in July 2022 as part of the ACT Disability Strategy consultations. • A Ministerial Roundtable occurred with community members, disability advocates, and non-government organisations in November 2022 to support the development of the Second Action Plan. <p><u>Children, Youth and Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In September 2022, CYPS engaged parents with disability or parents of kids with disability who have experience of the ACT child protection system to enable them to participate in the development of the Charter of Rights for Parents and Families 	<p>Lead: Community Services and Justice and Community Safety Directorates</p> <p>Includes: All ACT Government agencies</p>
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Focus Area 2 Education and Guidance

Focus Area 2 EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE		
Action Plan initiative	Action to date	Commitments
<p>2.1 Justice Sector education and guidance</p> <p>Disability justice specific ACT training resources are developed.</p> <p>Justice organisations undertake training and utilise resources developed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Let's Talk Disability</i> and Easy English workshops continued to be available to staff and organisations across the justice sector. <p><u>ACT Corrective Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability awareness training has been assigned as mandatory for all ACT Corrective Services staff. Will develop a further online learning package based on the lived experience of staff and clients, contextualised to the ACTCS environment, to enhance ACTCS officer confidence when working with or responding to persons with a disability. <p><u>Canberra Community Law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational opportunities in collaboration with the community continue to be a focus, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the Mental Health Justice Clinic to nursing and allied health staff at the Adult Mental Health Unit in July 2022. Delivery of a 'Working with Clients' training in conjunction with CCL lawyers to Australia Government Solicitor graduates in August 2022. Collaboration with Rebus Theatre in the development of 'Just Hearing' performances which have been offered to ACT Government stakeholders. A Priori-tea Mental Health morning tea with Mental Illness Education ACT and Guide Dogs ACT. Provided education and guidance internally. In February 2023, CCL undertook an audit of staff needs in relation to disability. Feedback received has informed actions for 	<p>Participation from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Legal Aid ACT Corrections Child and Youth Protection Services ACT Courts and Tribunal Human Rights Commission Victims of Crime Commissioner Community Legal Sector Bimberi Youth Justice Centre Alexander Maconochie Centre Justice Health PCYC One Link Community disability advocacy partners.

	<p>future training and resource development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DLO has co-presented 'Working with Clients' training for CCL's community law students in both July 2022 and February 2023 and developed a sensory-modulation training for office-based CCL staff in May 2023. • The DLO supports CCL lawyers through advice, guidance and strategies in relation to clients requiring reasonable adjustments. <p><u>Human Rights Commission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSACT staff participated in Easy English workshops and internal information sessions on how to make documents and material more accessible. • The VSACT DLO has created and implemented a training to enhance the capacity of client-facing staff to write and communicate in accessible ways. <p><u>Legal Aid ACT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated internal training for staff to increase staff awareness and confidence when working with a person with disability. • Have Autism awareness training scheduled for the second half of 2023. • One-on-one support from the DLO to clients and their supporters, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guided tours of ACT Courts and Tribunal buildings. ○ Assistance to build client capacity and knowledge to assist them to navigate the justice system. ○ Development of tailored communication resources to support Court and Tribunal appearances and understanding of related documents. ○ Assistance with applying for Legal Aid. ○ Support with communication and resources, including communicating with lawyers. ○ Assistance to access appropriate support services via warm referrals and supported liaison. ○ Support at court, tribunal and legal appointments. 	
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<p>2.2 Better Practice Guide on Interactions with People with Disability</p> <p>A guide to assist ACT Policing in interacting with people with disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Policing (ACTP) completed development of the guide and incorporated ACTP-specific examples. • The Guide was reviewed by ACTP in early 2023. • Following internal approval, ACTP intends to publish the guide publicly on the AFP website per Freedom of Information – information Publication Scheme requirements. 	<p>Lead: ACT Policing</p> <p>Supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice and Community Safety Directorate • Community Services Directorate
<p>2.3 Supporting Victims to give evidence guidelines</p> <p>Guidelines on supporting victims with disability giving evidence are developed, disseminated and utilised.</p>	<p><u>Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social scripts on giving evidence at trial, hearing and pre-trial evidence dates now readily available by contacting DPP Witness Liaison Officers. Scripts prohibited from being made public due to confidential information. 	<p>Lead: Office for Disability, Community Services Directorate</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community disability advocacy partners • Public Trustee and Guardian
<p>2.4 Legal capacity guidance for legal profession</p> <p>‘Legal capacity guidelines’ are developed for legal practitioners to assist in identification of clients who may need additional supports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidelines and toolkit were publicly launched on 1 December 2020. This action is now complete. 	<p>Lead: Legal Aid ACT</p> <p>Supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice and Community Safety Directorate • Community Services Directorate • Public Trustee and Guardian
<p>2.5 Education outreach on rights of people with disability</p> <p>Disability focused rights outreach from the Human rights Commission is undertaken, targeting people with disability and the non-government sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSACT officers have regularly attended network meetings to share information about VSACT disability-specific services. VSACT delivers high-quality disability support and achieves good outcomes for clients with disability by fostering collaborative relationships with other service providers. • The DCSC has participated in a number of events promoting the vulnerable person complaints jurisdiction, which provides a complaint mechanism to address alleged abuse, neglect or exploitation of people with disability. 	<p>Lead: ACT Human Rights Commission</p> <p>Supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Services Directorate • Justice and Community Safety Directorate
<p>2.6 Implementation of Courts and Tribunal Training Tool</p> <p>Provide training for ACT Courts and Tribunal staff to improve their awareness of disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An e-learning module on disability rights and awareness was developed and made available to staff in mid-2022. The e-learning module is aimed at raising awareness of needs of people with disability and guidance in supporting court users with disabilities, including identifying reasonable adjustments that may be required. 	<p>Lead: ACT Courts and Tribunal and People and Workplace Strategy (Justice and Community Safety Directorate)</p>

<p>2.7 Development of best practice guide for Child and Youth Protection Services</p> <p>Child and Youth Protections Services develop a best practice guide for frontline workers. The guide includes best practice for how to support people with disability engaged with Child and Youth Protection Services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CYPS DLO presented regular, ongoing disability training to staff across CYPS, including child protection, youth justice and intake staff and as part of the Foundational Learning Program (the new staff induction program), to increase staff knowledge and awareness of disability and support the use of the <i>Working with families with disability best practice guide</i>. • Bimberi Youth Justice Centre developed and implemented training for staff around disability and reasonable adjustments. This has been implemented as part of the staff induction package and ongoing skill maintenance sessions. 	<p>Lead: Child and Youth Protection Services</p> <p>Supported by: Office for Disability, Community Services Directorate</p>
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Focus Area 3 Identification, Screening and Assessment

Focus Area 3 IDENTIFICATION, SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT		
Action plan initiative	Action to date	Commitments
<p>3.1 Screening and Identification of disability for reasonable adjustments</p> <p>Screening and assessment tools are sourced for use in both the services and justice systems.</p>	<p><u>ACT Corrective Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring a range of options and tools to assist in better understanding the prevalence of functional impairment among detainees at the AMC. This will inform advice to Government regarding future investment in resources and services to assist those who need it most. Progressing the development of functional screening questions for detainees entering AMC as a part of the induction stage in the Integrated Offender Management Framework. <p><u>Canberra Community Law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DLO has continued support lawyers to identify reasonable adjustment needs and facilitate other supports to clients with disability, where required. <p><u>ACT Policing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A screening tool based on the Washington Group questions is being used by the City Watch House at intake. Use of the questions enables earlier identification of people who may have disability and need reasonable adjustments while in the City Watch House. <p><u>ACT Courts and Tribunal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DLO utilises the Needs Identification Tool, based on the Washington Group questions, when engaging with court users with disabilities who may require reasonable adjustments and support to enable them to navigate the justice system. <p><u>Children, Youth and Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre successfully trialled the 	<p>Lead: Office for Disability, Community Services Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT Corrections Child and Youth Protection Services Legal Aid Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Victims of Crime Commissioner ACT Policing Community legal sector

	<p>TIRA with young people at the Centre between January 2022 and January 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TIRA has been embedded into CYRIS – the client information system. Integration will enable information to be shared quickly with CYPs, ACT Health and Murrumbidgee School at the time a young person arrives at Bimberi. • Bimberi also introduced training modules for staff related to identifying, understanding, and responding to disability and reasonable adjustment needs within a custodial setting. <p><u>Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked collaboratively with ACTP to improve information sharing around disability and reasonable adjustments for victims and defendants. • Internal systems to be updated for easier use of identifying disabilities and reasonable adjustments. <p><u>Human Rights Commission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSACT continue to ensure reasonable adjustments and an inclusive environment are central to service delivery. • The VSACT Client Services Team implemented reasonable adjustments within referral and intake processes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seeking the client's preferred method of contact. ○ Providing clients with accessible information about the appointment. ○ Flexibility in appointment times, for example, appointment times that fit around their daily routine either in person or over the phone. ○ SMS reminders for appointments and before a staff member calls the client. ○ Explaining consent procedures and providing Easy Read information. ○ Checking that the client understands information provided. • The Public Advocate uses screening tools to support intake processes for new clients/consumers and identify reasonable adjustments. 	
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	<p><u>Legal Aid ACT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed a review of the <i>Application for Legal Assistance</i> form, including making the form accessible online. Further reviews will occur in 2024 to increase accessibility. 	
<p>3.2 Referral for functional assessment</p> <p>A process for justice agencies to have ready access to functional assessments is established to inform service responses to people with disability through funding administered by Community Services Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A trial enabling access to funding for functional assessments for people with suspected disability who are experiencing a legal issue was launched in December 2021. Since launching, referrals have been received from Legal Aid ACT, ACT Corrective Services Community Operations, and Child and Youth Protection Services among others. 	<p>Lead: Office for Disability, Community Services Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT Corrections Child and Youth Protection Services Legal Aid Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Victims of Crime Commissioner ACT Policing Community legal sector
<p>3.3 Therapeutic assessment for Children in CYPS</p> <p>Therapeutic assessments are undertaken for children and young people engaged with Child and Youth Protection Services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Therapeutic assessments for children in Out of Home Care continued to identify and record disability status of children or young people in the care of the Director-General. 	<p>Lead: Child and Youth Protection Services and Community Services Directorate</p> <p>Supported by: Education Directorate</p>

Focus Area 4 Better Service Delivery

Focus Area 4 BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY		
Action Plan initiative	Action to date	Commitments
4.1 Community of Practice A Community of Practice will be created through the phased introduction of Disability Liaison Officers in key agencies. The networked members employed by a range of justice agencies will provide direct one to one navigation and support to individuals in those services and foster cultural change through internal expertise and advocacy. CoP is maintained and led by CSD and JACS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See 1.1 	Lead: Community Services and Justice and Community Safety Directorates Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Policing • ACT Corrections • Legal Aid • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions • Child and Youth Protection Services • ACT Courts and Tribunal • Canberra Community Law

<p>4.2 Disability Action and Inclusion Plans (DAIP)</p> <p>DAIPs are developed and implemented to improve access and participation of people with disability.</p> <p>DAIPs are active plans written by an organisation as a commitment to improve access and participation for people with disability.</p>	<p><u>ACT Corrective Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first DAIP was launched on 3 December 2020 and actions are well progressed. • The vast majority of commitments in the DAIP are on track to be completed by the end of 2023. • Under the DAIP, ACTCS has established a Disability Reference Group to provide advice to ACTCS on a range of disability related matters as relevant to ACTCS. • Work has commenced to develop the next ACTCS DAIP 2024-2026, due to be launched at the end of 2023. <p><u>Canberra Community Law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DAIP was finalised and registered with the Australian Human Rights Commission in September 2022. The DAIP was developed in consultation with a panel of people with lived experience of disability. An Easy English version of the CCL DAIP was finalised in February 2023. Both versions of the DAIP can be found via the CCL website. • In December 2022, the annual consultation forum on the CCL DAIP was held and attended by community and government agency partners. • A number of actions from the CCL DAIP have been progressed, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Disability Lived Experience Framework project. ○ An annual timetable of review to ensure CCL documents, resources, and policies are updated to include disability and inclusion. ○ An audit of staff disability training needs conducted in January and February 2023. ○ Building capacity of CCL staff through provision of resources relating to disability and advocacy. ○ Mapping of client contact points has been completed, and team-specific disability initiatives has begun. <p><u>ACT Courts and Tribunal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current DAIP is a standing agenda item at the monthly Executive meeting to provide regular reporting against action 	<p>Lead: All directorates</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Trustee and Guardian • ACT Courts and Tribunal • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions • Legal Aid • Canberra Community Law • Child and Youth Protection Services • Community legal sector • Canberra Health Services
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	<p>areas, ensure continued focus in key areas and delivery of actions and initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently developing their second DAIP to further this work and initiatives to support people with disability in accessing and navigating the court system. An internal Steering Committee will be established to oversee the implementation of the DAIP across ACTCT. <p><u>Children, Youth and Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A DAIP for Children, Youth and Families will be developed and incorporated into a whole-of-CSD DAIP. <p><u>Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have collected data from DPP staff relating to attitudes towards disability and reasonable adjustments in 2022. This information is assisting the DPP in the development of their DAIP. <p><u>Human Rights Commission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HRC developed a <i>Social Inclusion Plan</i> (SIP) in 2020, which included priorities and actions relating to people with disability. A new SIP was developed in 2023, which included commitments to increase understanding of accessibility needs, increase employment of staff with disability and to provide reasonable adjustments to staff and service users. The Public Advocate is represented on the ACTCS DAIP Steering Committee. <p><u>Legal Aid ACT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a DAIP continues – research is now complete, and action planning is currently underway. Has also worked towards improving the physical access to their office, with installation of sliding doors at reception to occur in the 2023-24 financial year. 	
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<p>4.3 Third person support trial</p> <p>A trial providing a third person independent advocate for individuals with disability when interaction with the justice system is implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this trial, a free legal service and early linkages to disability and other supports were offered to people detained in the City Watchhouse over the course of the weekend. • The trial was in operation from late 2021 to early 2023. • The trial found people taken into custody were reluctant to consent to referrals to legal service or other supports offered. • However, given the utility of the questions used to identify people who may have disability and may need reasonable adjustments, ACT Policing will continue to utilise the Washington Group questions at intake at the City Watch House to facilitate earlier identification of people who may have disability and need reasonable adjustments while in the City Watch House and subsequently. 	<p>Lead: Community Services and Justice and Community Safety Directorates</p> <p>Includes: Justice agencies and legal service providers</p>
<p>4.4 Specialist disability legal and forensic services</p> <p>An examination is undertaken of the necessity and feasibility of specialist disability services for legal issues and supports to people in the criminal justice system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing examination of a specialist service will be considered as part of the Second Action Plan. 	<p>Lead: Community Services Directorate and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes: Justice agencies and legal service providers</p>

<p>4.5 Intermediary Scheme</p> <p>The intermediary scheme will commence in January 2020 with a view to expanding in its scope in the third year, to include adults with a communication difficulty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT Intermediary Program continues to operate 24/7 to provide intermediaries at police interviews, court matters and at engagement with legal professionals across the ACT. • Intermediaries provide specialised advice at police investigative interviews, to lawyers, and at court, to facilitate the giving of evidence by vulnerable witnesses, so they can provide their best evidence. • Since commencing in 2020, 955 referrals have been received from justice agencies, 77% of which involve a child or young person under 18 years of age. • Over 99% of people referred to the Program have been matched to a suitable intermediary. • There was a 52% increase in referrals in 2022-23, compared with the 2021-22 financial year. This increase in demand highlights the positive impact intermediaries are having in these engagements. • Within the same period, there was a 72% increase in referrals received where an issue was identified as a barrier to communications. Identified barriers included physical, cognitive and psychosocial disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, language delays, and trauma.³ • By undertaking a communication assessment, intermediaries with relevant expertise provide tailored recommendations to police, courts and legal professionals on the best strategies for engagement with relevant witnesses to ensure they are able to provide their best evidence. 	<p>Lead: Victims Support ACT, Justice and Community Safety Directorate and Community Services Directorate</p>
<p>4.6 ACT Corrective Services Disability Framework</p> <p>A Corrections Disability Framework is developed and implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACTCS Disability Framework is developed and will be put into operation through the ACTCS DAIP 2024-2026 and the Integrated Offender Management Framework. 	<p>Lead: ACT Corrections and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p>

³ ACT Intermediary Program statistics as at 30 June 2023.

<p>4.7 Information Sharing</p> <p>The collection and sharing of personal information of people with disability, with consent, is improved to ensure relevant information is available in a timely way to better support people with disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This has been progressed through the Disability Justice Reference Group resulting in a consent-based approach to information-sharing. • Exploration of additional mechanisms to facilitate information sharing for the benefit of people with disability within the justice system will be explored in the Second Action Plan. 	<p>Lead: Community Services Directorate and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directorates • Justice agencies • Community sector
<p>4.8 Guardianship reform</p> <p>Explore opportunities to reform decision making laws in the ACT to provide greater options for supported decision making by people with disability.</p>	<p><u>Public Trustee and Guardian</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to the <i>Guardianship and Management of Property Act (1991)</i> came into effect in February 2023. These changes included consideration of whether a decision could be made with support prior to the appointment of a Guardian or Manager. 	<p>Lead: Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Courts and Tribunal • ACT Health Directorate • Public Trustee and Guardian
<p>4.9 Criminal justice diversion project</p> <p>An examination is undertaken of options for diversion from the criminal justice system for people with disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Disability Justice Reference Group established a working group to examine diversion. The working group met in February 2023 to discuss options for consideration in the Second Action Plan. • The identification of suitable diversion options or pathways from the criminal justice system for people with disability will be included in the Second Action Plan. 	<p>Lead: Community Services Directorate and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice agencies

<p>4.10 Cognitive impairment and mental health review</p> <p>Given co-morbidity of mental health and disability, a review is undertaken of current arrangements and options for reform and service delivery improvements are identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) has drafted a Position Statement on Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing Outcomes for People with Intellectual Disability. This Position Statement considers feedback provided through a review of current mental health services and targeted consultations. This Position Statement will align with the strategies and priorities of the Disability Health Strategy being developed by ACTHD. This Position Statement is expected to be released in the 2023/24 financial year. 	<p>Lead: ACT Health Directorate supported by Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Health Directorate • Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing • Canberra Health Services • Justice agencies • Community sector
<p>4.11 Continuation of Canberra Community Law's Socio-Legal Practice Clinic</p> <p>The clinic will continue to provide socio-legal services to residents in the ACT and surround who have public housing, social security or disability discrimination problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for CCL's Socio-Legal Practice (SLP) Clinic continues. Approximately 66% of SLP Clinic's clients identify as having a disability. Socio-Legal Practice Clinic - Canberra Community Law 	<p>Lead: Canberra Community Law</p>

Focus Area 5 Data Research and Review

Focus Area 5 DATA, RESEARCH AND REVIEW		
Action Plan initiative	Action to date	Commitments
<p>5.1 Data collection and publication project</p> <p>Data collection points and collection methods are examined and mapped to improve data capture and reporting with a view to annual statistical collation.</p>	<p><u>ACT Corrective Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have deferred the data collection project to ensure it aligns with strategic work occurring in the implementation of the Integrated Offender Management Framework and the development of the ACT Disability Strategy. <p><u>Canberra Community Law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continues to record disability data during triage through an internal case management system (CMS). In 2022-23, 61% of CCL clients disclosed a disability. In late 2022, CCL staff met to commence work reviewing disability categories within their CMS to ensure accurate data collection. <p><u>ACT Policing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City Watch House intake questions now include a modified set of Washington Group questions to improve the identification of identify people with disability. In addition, ACT Policing is transitioning to a digitised intake process at City Watch House, to capture and record data in a more timely and consistent way. <p><u>ACT Courts and Tribunal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DLO continues to collect data on disability, the reasonable adjustment requirements of court clients, and the number of interactions they have had with these clients. <p><u>Children, Youth and Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to improve the client information system's recording of disability and reasonable adjustments. CYF are seeking disability categories on the client information system be widened so more detailed disability information can be 	<p>Lead: Community Services Directorate and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justice agencies Chief Digital Office

	<p>captured; enabling more targeted reasonable adjustments and more meaningful reporting.</p> <p><u>Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DLO continues to record information regarding disability and reasonable adjustments for identified victims and defendants, attached to each matter on DPP program. • The DLO provides notes and de-identified case studies for the purposes of DJS data collection and reporting purposes. • DLO contributes data regarding disability and reasonable adjustments for the DPP annual report. <p><u>Human Rights Commission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSACT collects data on people identifying as having a disability using the services of the Victim Support Scheme. Data is also collected on the range of materials that are translated into Easy English. • DCSC collects a range of data on people with disability utilising or being a participant in the HRC's complaint process. <p><u>Legal Aid ACT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is currently undertaking an internal system review on data capture practices. 	
<p>5.2 Evaluation</p> <p>A formal evaluation of the strategy and the First Action Plan is undertaken in year 3 to inform strategy direction and Second Action Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An independent evaluation of the First Action Plan has been conducted by First Person Consulting. • The evaluation report highlights key successes from the First Action Plan and provides considerations for the development of the Second Action Plan. • The final evaluation report is expected in late-2023. 	<p>Lead: Community Services Directorate and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External evaluator
<p>5.3 Governance and Oversight</p> <p>Oversight of the strategy implementation and outcomes is undertaken by the Disability Justice Reference Group. Government oversight will be provided by the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Third Annual Report was released in September 2022. • The report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. • The Disability Justice Reference Group met in September 2022 and continues to provide oversight of the implementation of the Disability Justice Strategy. 	<p>Lead: Community Services Directorate and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p> <p>Includes justice agencies, relevant directorates and community sector:</p>

<p>senior leadership of the Strategic Board Human Services Committee comprising the Directors General of Health, Justice and Community Safety, Education and Community Services Directorates, and representatives of Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, Office of the Coordinator General for Family Safety and Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Trustee and Guardian • ACT Courts and Tribunal • Human Rights Commission • Victims of Crime Commissioner • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions • Legal Aid • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body • ACT Health • Education Directorate • Aboriginal Legal Service
<p>5.4 Ongoing Development of the Disability Strategy and action plans</p> <p>The Disability Justice Strategy and actions under the First Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed. This will inform the development of the Second Action Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the Disability Justice Strategy Second Action Plan continues. Consultation with the disability community and justice system stakeholders will be undertaken to inform actions in the Second Action Plan. • Timing of the Second Action Plan has been revised to allow time to consider recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. 	<p>Lead: Community Services Directorate and Justice and Community Safety Directorate</p>

NEXT STEPS

The First Action Plan has established solid foundations towards the goal to improve access to justice for people with disability in the ACT. Significant progress has been achieved across the five focus areas, including:

- nine dedicated Disability Liaison Officers actively working across the justice sector;
- increased collaboration between justice agencies via the Community of Practice to assist people with disability to more easily navigate the justice system;
- increased awareness of disability and reasonable adjustments within justice agencies as a result of education and guidance;
- critical resources and client-facing documents translated into Easy English and other accessible formats; and
- the development and implementation of Disability Action and Inclusion Plans across participating justice agencies.

Some actions, such as the Community of Practice and translation of critical information and resources into accessible formats, have become business as usual. Accordingly, the Second Action Plan is likely to focus on actions to build on the successes to date, to consider applicable recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission, and to address any concerns identified by stakeholders.

From consultations to date, the Second Action Plan will take a more person-focused approach in areas such as:

- Diverting people with disability from coming into contact with the justice system.
- Ensuring safe interactions for people with disability with the justice sector.
- Improving the experiences of people with disability – including First Nations people with disability and people with cognitive impairment – within the justice system.

Consultations with people with disability, the community, the Disability Justice Reference Group and government stakeholders will continue to inform actions during the development of the Second Action Plan.

2024 will also see the unveiling of a number of disability strategies and plans across the ACT, including the ACT Disability Strategy, ACT Disability Health Strategy, and the ACT Inclusive Education Strategy.

JACS and CSD will continue to work closely with people with disability, advocates, and other community and government stakeholders to continue to strive to meet the goals of the Disability Justice Strategy 2019-2029.



Community Services Directorate and Justice
and Community Safety Directorate

October 2023