

DISABILITY JUSTICE STRATEGY:

2026 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY DIRECTORATE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Justice and Community Safety Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

We respect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and their continuing culture and contribution they make to the Canberra region and the life of our city.

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INTRODUCTION

The *2026 Disability Justice Strategy Annual Progress Report* (the Report) outlines the progress made in the second year of the *ACT Disability Justice Strategy: Second Action Plan* (2024-2028) in advancing disability justice principles, and improving accessibility and addressing barriers in the justice system experienced by people with disability in the ACT.

Annual progress reporting monitors the implementation of the Second Action Plan and identifies emerging achievements and areas requiring further work.

An evaluation scheduled for 2027-28 will assess implementation and the impacts and outcomes of the Plan and will inform the next phase of the Disability Justice Strategy.

Over the remaining period of the Plan, agencies will continue to strengthen the evidence base required to support that evaluation, including through improved data collection and lived-experience feedback.

This report focuses on the progress made from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 through the Plan, which commenced on 28 August 2024. This report builds upon the previous five Annual Disability Justice Reports, the first four of which addressed the progress made under the *ACT Disability Justice Strategy: First Action Plan* (2019-2023).

The Strategy is based on the principles that equality before the law and access to justice are fundamental human rights,¹ people with disability are presented with additional barriers when accessing justice, and a justice system that provides equal access to justice provides a better system for the whole

community. The Strategy was designed for people with disability, their families and carers, the justice system and the service system, and recognises that early support can prevent, reduce and break the cycle of contact with the justice system.

National and international data shows that people with disability face disadvantages in the justice system, including:

- Over-representation as victims, particularly for women with disability experiencing sexual violence;
- Over policing – disability-related behaviours being misinterpreted as seen through a criminogenic lens; and
- People with disability are most likely to experience legal issues, such as accidents, consumer issues, credit/debit crime, employment, family, government, health, housing, financial, personal injury, and rights.

Development of the Strategy was informed by public consultation through the ACT Government's Yoursay webpage, online surveys and four public consultations held across venues in Canberra, as well as with key stakeholders across the disability and justice sectors, and members of the public individually.

The Strategy's overarching plan has three goals which reflect what was heard in consultations, and five focus areas that address the achievement of the goals. The three goals are:

¹ As expressed in Articles 12 and 13 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and section 8 of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

- 1) People with disability are safe and their rights are respected,
- 2) the ACT has a disability responsive justice system and
- 3) change is measured and achieved.

The Report serves as a mechanism to demonstrate how justice agencies in the ACT are progressing toward a more inclusive, accessible and equitable justice system for people with disability.

SECOND ACTION PLAN 2024-2028

The Second Action Plan consists of actions to be implemented over four years, and was developed in consultation with people with disability, key stakeholders and non-government stakeholders over a number of years. The Second Action Plan took into account intersectionality, the lived experience of people with disability, human rights, equality and non-discrimination.

The Second Action Plan includes commitments against the actions made by agencies across the Territory; to promote the rights and fulfill equality before the law for people with disability.

This Report summarises the actions of the relevant stakeholders across the five focus areas of the Second Action Plan:

- 1) Information and Communication
- 2) Education and Guidance
- 3) Identification, Screening and Assessment
- 4) Better Service Delivery, and
- 5) Data, Research and Review.

PROGRESS TO DATE

This report marks the midpoint of the Second Action Plan, providing an

opportunity to reflect on progress to date and identify areas for continued focus.

As of June 2026, the progress status of all 36 actions under the Second Action Plan shows:

- 19 actions are complete or ongoing,
- 15 actions are in progress and
- 2 actions are yet to commence.

In the Report, of the 19 completed/ongoing actions, 15 actions have been successfully implemented and incorporated into everyday operations. These actions are reported as 'ongoing' as they will continue to be monitored throughout the Second Action Plan.

Of the 2 actions reported as 'yet to commence', project planning and scoping is currently underway for action 5.6 (Review of culturally safe practices).

Action 5.5 (Evaluation), an evaluation of the implementation and outcomes of the Second Action Plan is scheduled to take place in the last year of the plan.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN LAST 12 MONTHS

During 2025-26, agencies continued to progress actions under the Second Action Plan, with progress spanning accessible

information, workforce capability, early identification of support needs, specialist assistance and broader service reform.

This work reflects an increasing focus on embedding disability-responsive practice into everyday service delivery, while also progressing targeted projects designed to address identified barriers to justice.

Key achievements included:

More accessible information and communication: Agencies expanded the availability of Easy English, plain-language and visual resources. The ACT Courts and Tribunal developed communication boards and commissioned accessible information about its Disability Liaison Officer service. The Director of Public Prosecutions developed choice boards, social scripts and storyboards for victims and witnesses, while Victim Support ACT progressed Easy English resources explaining the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime. ACT Policing also completed the redevelopment of its public website to improve accessibility.

Stronger disability capability across the justice system workforce: Staff across justice agencies completed training on disability awareness, neurodiversity, inclusive communication, trauma-informed practice and reasonable adjustments. This included targeted training for court and tribunal staff and members, Legal Aid ACT and Victim Support ACT staff, and completion of the National Disability Services *Let's Talk Disability* training by the Restorative Justice Unit.

Earlier identification of disability and adjustment needs: Agencies strengthened

screening, intake and self-identification processes to identify support needs earlier. ACT Policing implemented a disability screening tool in the ACT Watch House, embedding the Tool for Identifying Reasonable Adjustments at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, the ACT Courts and Tribunal updated forms to allow people to self-identify disability and adjustment needs, and ACT Corrective Services commenced work on a complex needs project to strengthen the identification and management of disability-related needs in custody.

Expanded specialist support and coordination: The number of ongoing Disability Liaison Officer positions across the justice sector increased to 11. The Disability Justice Community of Practice continued to strengthen relationships and referral pathways across government and community organisations. The ACT Courts and Tribunal and the Public Advocate also completed a duty advocate pilot, which assisted 115 people across 120 matters and demonstrated positive outcomes for court and tribunal users requiring additional support.

Alongside this, work commenced or continued to develop across a number of initiatives, including:

- developing a pilot to provide more coordinated support for young people transitioning from detention into the community;
- work to improve disability-informed policing and explore more accessible pathways to report crime to police;

- improvements to the collection and use of disability-related information to support service delivery and planning; and
- early work to support more culturally responsive and accessible justice services.

ACT Justice System are increasingly incorporating disability responsive practice into everyday service delivery. Together, these achievements demonstrate measurable progress, while laying the groundwork for further service and system development over the remaining two years of the Second Action Plan.

While a number of time-limited projects are still in progress, agencies across the

SUPPORTING ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH DISABILITY-INFORMED ADVOCACY

*Annika**, a woman with Autism, sought support from Victim Support ACT after experiencing difficulties navigating multiple parts of the justice system following her experience as a victim of crime.

Annika's communication style was highly detailed, factual and persistent, reflecting her disability-related needs. However, these characteristics were often misunderstood by services. Trusting that professional advice was accurate, she diligently followed each recommendation, becoming increasingly involved in a series of complaint and review processes. Annika's time was absorbed by navigating procedural systems that did not address the underlying concerns.

The Disability Liaison Officer worked with Annika over an extended period, advocating with multiple agencies to improve their understanding of Annika's communication and information-processing needs. This included explaining how Autism influenced Annika's communication style, addressing misunderstandings, and promoting more accessible service engagement.

In collaboration with ACT Policing and other stakeholders, the Victim Support ACT's Disability Liaison Officer helped establish a coordinated, disability-informed response. This resulted in a supported pathway for Annika to provide a formal statement about her experiences, with appropriate disability supports and trauma-informed police engagement.

The advocacy also contributed to broader practice improvements, reinforcing the importance of providing victims with direct contact details for relevant officers to improve accessibility and reduce reliance on general contact channels.

The case demonstrates how specialist disability advocacy can improve communication, strengthen inter-agency collaboration, and create more accessible pathways to justice for people with disability.

* This case study has been de-identified and the name has been changed to protect privacy.

REPORTING SUMMARY

FOCUS AREA 1: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Action	Status	Progress Update
1.1 Development of accessible documents and resources	Ongoing	Agencies developed a wide range of accessible resources, including Easy Read and plain language materials, communication supports and accessible digital content. Website accessibility improvements, culturally responsive resources, and increased use of co-design and lived experience input have strengthened access to services and justice processes while helping to embed accessibility as standard practice across agencies. • ACT Policing completed redevelopment of its public website, improving accessibility through compliance with WCAG 2.2 AA standards, responsive design, integrated accessibility monitoring, enhanced search functionality, and improved user experience. • ACT Courts and Tribunal commissioned accessible referral resources, including a referral form, brochure and video, and developed accessible communication boards to help people better understand court and tribunal processes. • Victim Support ACT progressed Easy English versions of the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime and associated resources, developed in consultation with people with lived experience and key stakeholders. • Legal Aid ACT translated key legal information documents into Easy English and worked with First Nations and multicultural liaison staff, and community partners, to ensure resources were culturally appropriate and accessible. • Domestic Violence Crisis Service developed Easy Read and captioned video resources, established an Easy Read library for staff, and equipped staff with communication boards and speech-generating devices to support clients with communication needs. • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions developed tailored communication tools, including choice boards, social scripts and storyboards, to support victims and witnesses with disability participating in criminal justice processes. • Restorative Justice Unit continued using Easy English guides, information videos and culturally appropriate resources to improve access for people with disability, including First Nations people.

Action	Status	Progress Update
		• Canberra Community Law translated a suite of brochures, fact sheets and its Disability Action and Inclusion Plan into Easy Read format. • The Disability & Community Services Commissioner published a number of accessible materials, including posters, videos and public service announcements, Easy English guide to making a complaint to support people with disability and their carers to better understand the complaints process and their rights under the <i>ACT Discrimination Act and Human Rights Commission Act</i>.
1.2 Accessible bail conditions	In Progress	Key initiatives included commencing legislative reform, the development of Easy English resources and the introduction of accessible bail condition materials to support informed decision-making, understanding of legal obligations and compliance with bail requirements. • ACT Government introduced amendments to the <i>Bail Act 1992</i> to require bail decision-makers to consider a person's disability or health condition, including its impact on their ability to understand their rights and obligations, make and communicate decisions, and represent their interests. • Legal Aid ACT developed and implemented an Easy English bail wallet card to support understanding and compliance with bail conditions, including the use of Easy English and audio-described formats. • ACT Courts and Tribunal developed accessible versions of bail conditions for both adults and children to support understanding of legal rights and obligations and improve compliance for people with disability.
1.3 Supported Decision-Making and Guardianship Reform	In Progress	The Government has undertaken policy work on options for a second stage of reforms which will seek to address systemic issues and reduce reliance on substitute decision-making. In the next reporting period the Government will consult with community stakeholders on a consultation paper and through targeted roundtable discussions. The consultation will seek feedback on measures to strengthen current approaches and reforms to better support people to make autonomous decisions about their own lives with appropriate supports.
1.4 Support Decision-Making Activities	Ongoing	The Office for Disability provided funding to the ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS) to support young people aged 15–17 residing in Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. The initiative assists young people to build, document and activate decision-support networks using a supported decision-making model, while also engaging their families and support networks.

Action	Status	Progress Update
1.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Reasonable Adjustment Rights project	In progress	Initial planning and scoping work has commenced on this project. Advice from an Aboriginal expert in the First Nations disability field has identified a need to reframe project language and concepts to be more culturally appropriate and accessible. The next stages of the project will involve consultation with ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to further understand the needs of the community and to develop appropriate information materials to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to understand their rights to reasonable adjustments.
1.6 ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy	Complete	In May 2026, the ACT Government launched the ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy 2026-2036 (Strategy), alongside the First Action Plan 2026-2028 (First Action Plan). The Strategy sets out a 10-year, whole-of-society approach to prevent violence, protect victim-survivors and create lasting cultural and systemic change. The First Action Plan outlines the Government's commitments for the first 2 years of implementation to drive early reform. In the 2026-27 Budget, the ACT Government has invested \$47.8 million over 4 years to implement the Strategy and First Action Plan. This includes \$44.2 million to stabilise and strengthen frontline domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) services, and \$3.6 million to strengthen system foundations. The Strategy and the First Action Plan reflect contemporary evidence and are informed by extensive consultation with victim-survivors, the DFSV sector, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, and other community organisations and government agencies. The Strategy recognises the distinct forms of violence experienced by people with disability and embeds the principle of being equitable, inclusive, intersectional and accessible. The principles guide the design and delivery of DFSV responses to better support people experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage, including people with disability. Through the First Action Plan, the ACT Government is committed to explore the potential development of a tailored DFSV response for people with disability (Action 1.8), and to consider opportunities to enhance the capacity of key workforces to better address and support people with disability who have experienced or are at risk of

Action	Status	Progress Update
		experiencing DFSV (Action 6.4). Work is underway to develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) to establish a consistent and robust approach to monitoring, reporting and evaluating initiatives under the Strategy. The MEF will be delivered in the latter half of 2026.

1.7 Self-Advocacy

Complete

Following the success of the initial pilot, funding was extended for a further 12 months to support the **ACT Down Syndrome and Intellectual Disability** (ACT DSID) Advocacy Reference Group. During this period, the group expanded its influence on systemic issues, policies and programs affecting people with intellectual disability, while ensuring the voices of people with intellectual disability and their carers were heard and reflected in decision-making.

Through the knowledge, skills and experience gained from participating in the Advocacy Reference Group, and with support from the group facilitator, individual group members have gone on to represent people with intellectual disability at various local and national fora such as:

- the Convention of States Parties at the United Nations in New York;
- ACT Government Disability Advisory Council,
- Inclusion Australia Our Voice Committee,
- Inclusion Australia Self Advocacy for Everyone Committee,
- Inclusion Australia Supported Employment Australia Project working group,
- Down Syndrome Australia Employment Ambassador program, and
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Advisory Council.

In addition to the work funded by this project, the group was also trained in the testing of Easy Read documents. They have been providing feedback to ACT Government and other community groups on the draft Easy Read documents and have been helping shape inclusive communication resources throughout our community.

The pilot project has demonstrated that the voices of people with disability are important and should be included as part of government policy. People with intellectual disability have the ability to advocate for their rights and their safety, educate the community on the needs of people with intellectual disability, and to help shape government and community policy.

FOCUS AREA 2: EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

Action	Status	Progress
2.1 Tailored Disability Education and Guidance for the Justice Sector	Ongoing	Agencies have undertaken a range of targeted disability awareness training, developed practical guidance materials, strengthened staff knowledge of reasonable adjustments and accessible communication, and embedded disability capability into induction, professional development and frontline practice. Collaboration between agencies and disability specialists has supported more inclusive, trauma-informed and person-centred service delivery across the justice system. • ACT Courts and Tribunal delivered disability awareness and capability training to ACAT members, registry staff, conferencing officers and frontline staff, and developed guidance materials and factsheets to support accessible and inclusive service delivery. • Community Corrections staff at ACT Corrective Services attended a presentation from the NDIS in March 2026 and an educational series and further specialised is being explored for 2026-27. • Legal Aid ACT provided regular training on disability awareness, inclusive communication and responding to disability disclosures, alongside workshops on de-escalation, trauma-informed practice, autism, ADHD and mental health. • Victim Support ACT delivered training on neurodiversity, sensory processing, communication accessibility and working with clients experiencing distress, and developed practical tools to support staff responses to clients with complex communication and support needs. • Domestic Violence Crisis Service delivered all-staff training on responding to clients with disability, updated internal guidance resources, and continued to incorporate disability awareness training into staff induction programs. • ACT Policing provided disability-related operational advice and guidance to police members and commenced development of disability-informed training resources, including fact sheets, guidance materials and educational resources. • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions joined the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme, promoted disability-related learning opportunities for staff, and continued specialist disability liaison support for prosecutors.

Action	Status	Progress
		• Children, Youth and Families staff regularly participate in training focused on disability and neurodiversity, including understanding impacts in custodial settings and capacity building to support to enhance reasonable adjustments within Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. • Restorative Justice Unit completed the National Disability Services Let's Talk Disability training and continued disability-specific professional development. • Canberra Community Law delivered disability and neurodiversity training, presented at sector conferences on disability inclusion, and published a fact sheet on disability rights at work.
2.2 Education outreach on rights of people with disability	In Progress	The Disability & Community Services Commissioner participated in a number of events promoting the vulnerable person complaints jurisdiction which provides a complaint mechanism to address alleged abuse, mistreatment, neglect or exploitation of people with a disability. Referrals in this complaint jurisdiction have increased over 2025/26 reflecting increased understanding of jurisdiction to help keep people with disability safe and well.
2.3 Introduction of Positive Duties	In Progress	The Disability & Community Services Commissioner undertook education and outreach on the implementation of the positive duty to provide reasonable adjustments which commenced under the <i>Discrimination Act</i> in April 2024, and the positive duty to take steps to eliminate discrimination which commenced for ACT agencies and business units in April 2025 and will commence for other duty holders in April 2027.
2.4 Workforce Capability Development Project	Ongoing	Domestic Violence Crisis Service continue to embed disability and trauma-informed training in staff induction and supervision practices. WWILD delivered domestic and family violence training for the ACT disability sector in 2025-26 to upskill disability sector workers in the identification of trauma, violence, exploitation and neglect. WWILD have made their domestic, family and sexual violence training and resources for disability support workers accessible for free on the WWILD website at https://wwild.org.au/online-learning/
2.5 Legal capacity guidance for legal practitioners	In Progress	Legal Aid ACT has commenced revising the Disability Action and Inclusion Plan information sheet for external lawyers to improve guidance on legal capacity.

FOCUS AREA 3: SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION

Action	Status	Progress
3.1 Identification of disability for reasonable adjustment needs	Ongoing	Agencies continued to embed disability screening, self-identification and intake processes into service delivery, while building staff capability to recognise barriers to participation and implement appropriate supports. These initiatives have improved the consistency of identifying support needs and enabled more tailored and accessible responses across the justice system. • ACT Policing developed and implemented a disability screening tool based on the Washington Group Questions within the ACT Watch House, supporting consistent identification of disability and reasonable adjustment needs at intake. • ACT Corrective Services commenced a Complex Needs Project to assess the current and future service needs of detainees with additional or complex needs. The project will inform the development of sustainable service delivery models, future operating requirements and resourcing needs to improve outcomes for detainees with complex support needs. • Children, Youth and Families embedded the Tool for Identifying Reasonable Adjustments (TIRA) into induction processes at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre and into the client information system, enabling early identification and sharing of adjustment needs. • ACT Courts and Tribunal updated ACAT application forms to allow self-identification of disability and reasonable adjustment needs and is developing a new Disability Liaison Officer referral form. • Victim Support ACT developed practical tools and guidance to assist staff to identify adjustment needs, communication barriers and reasonable adjustments, supported by specialist advice from the Disability Liaison Officer. • Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions strengthened intake and engagement practices to identify communication, access and support needs early, including improved information-sharing between agencies. • Domestic Violence Crisis Service embedded disability needs assessments into intake processes and implemented policies and procedures supporting reasonable adjustments for staff and clients. • Legal Aid ACT improved referral coordination processes and enhanced accessibility of client-facing environments to better support clients requiring reasonable adjustments. • Restorative Justice Unit commenced planning to improve collection of information relating to disability and accessibility needs as part of a review of client intake processes.

Action	Status	Progress
3.2 Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) assessment and screening	In Progress	In addition to the review of the induction and screening process and the Complex Needs Project, work continues to explore HASI screening within ACT Corrective Services processes to improve alignment with clinical best practice, reduce duplication, and strengthen pathways for identifying people with disability and complex care needs.
3.3 Assessment brokerage fund	Ongoing	The Government provides a limited assessment brokerage fund to assist people with a disability or suspected disability to access functional assessments where these are necessary to improve engagement with the justice system or to mobilise appropriate external supports. Over 2025-26, 11 referrals for functional assessments were approved and funded, including six referrals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Demand for assessments continues to increase among young people involved with Children, Youth and Families (CYF), including those entering Bimberi Youth Justice Centre and those on community-based orders. In response to this emerging trend, HCSD and JACS will continue to work closely with CYF and Bimberi throughout 2026–27 to support timely access to assessment services.

FOCUS AREA 4: BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY

Action	Status	Progress
4.1 Criminal justice diversion	In Progress	The Justice and Community Safety Directorate has initiated a research project on justice diversion options for people with cognitive and intellectual impairment. This project will inform the implementation of the ACT Government's response to Recommendation 8.21 of the Disability Royal Commission Final Report. It aims to identify and scope evidence-based options for small-scale, time-limited pilot programs to support people with cognitive and intellectual impairment to receive equitable justice services and divert them away from the ACT justice system. The Directorate has commenced a procurement process to engage an independent researcher to conduct research, provide policy analysis and recommend a feasible approach for a pilot program. This independent research will build on initial policy work conducted by the Directorate, contributing high level subject matter expertise to ensure an evidence-based approach and detailed scoping of the most appropriate options. Outcomes of this project will be reported in the 2026-27 Progress Report.
4.2 Build and expand on success of Disability Liaison Officers across justice sector	Complete	The number of Disability Liaison Officers across the justice sector has increased from the original eight positions stated in the First Action Plan, to 11 ongoing roles. The roles at the Aboriginal Legal Service, the Domestic Violence Crisis Service and Victim Support ACT provide invaluable expertise to the Disability Justice Community of Practice. These roles provide appropriate disability-informed supports are made available to people with disability engaged in the criminal justice system who are victims, victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, or identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
4.3 Improving Police Responses	In Progress	ACT Policing continues to strengthen its disability response capability through ongoing specialist support provided by the Disability Justice Liaison Officer (DJLO), increased engagement with the disability community, and the establishment of a second DJLO position through the reprioritisation of existing funding to enhance service delivery and organisational capacity. • The DJLO work collaboratively with Police members, individuals with disability, and their families to support complex matters involving interactions with the justice system. • The DJLO provides complex and individualised operational advice and guidance to Police members regarding disability, reasonable adjustments, effective communication strategies, and person-centred approaches.

Action	Status	Progress
		• The DJLO also undertakes client liaison and follow-up activities, provides information and support to people with disability regarding Police matters, and facilitates referrals to external agencies and support services where appropriate. • The DJLO has identified key trends relating to disability and interactions with policing and justice systems. Collaborative planning is occurring both within ACT Policing and across government and community agencies to address identified issues and reduce systemic barriers. • ACT Policing's Communications Team recently engaged with key community organisations representing people with disability. Feedback from these consultations increased understanding of the challenges some individuals experience when contacting police, communicating concerns, and navigating reporting processes. • Work is underway to scope and design alternative reporting pathways for people with disability. Consideration is being given to emerging technologies and accessibility features, including automated translation tools, voice-to-text functionality, and other communication supports that may improve accessibility and participation. • A second DJLO position has been established through the reprioritisation of existing funding to increase organisational capacity and strengthen ACT Policing's ability to support people with disability. Recruitment and onboarding activities are currently underway. There has been meaningful progress made in 2025-26 through enhanced support for people with disability, increased collaboration across agencies and community stakeholders, and the expansion of specialist disability liaison capacity. These initiatives are contributing to more inclusive, accessible, and responsive policing services for the ACT community.
4.4 ACT Policing's Better Practice Guide	In Progress	During the First Action Plan, ACT Policing partnered with the Office for Disability and NOUS Group to develop a <i>Better Practice Guide</i> (the Guide) to support Police members in effectively and positively interacting with people with disability. The Guide is intended to provide practical guidance, improve disability awareness, and support consistent application of inclusive and reasonable adjustment practices across policing contexts. The Guide was developed in consultation with the disability community and subject matter experts, providing ACT Policing with a comprehensive foundation for disability-informed practices. The progress of this action was identified as a key achievement for ACT Policing.

Action	Status	Progress
		As part of ongoing efforts to improve practices, the Guide underwent a formal review in early 2023 to ensure accuracy, relevance and alignment with operational requirements. As part of the review, ACT Policing's DJLO identified opportunities to improve the Guide's accessibility and practical application for operational Police members, including reducing content volume and strengthening its usability within frontline policing environments. The Guide is currently undergoing internal consultation to ensure it remains practical, relevant, and fit for purpose. Following internal consultation, ACT Policing and Office of the Disability will consult with the disability community to ensure the content reflects contemporary best practice and community expectations. It is intended that the updated Guide will be published on the AFP Intranet Vulnerable Persons portfolio alongside supporting educational resources to assist Police members in applying the guidance in operational settings. This current refinement process presents an opportunity to strengthen the operational value of the Guide and ensure ACT Policing members are equipped with practical, disability-informed guidance that supports positive interactions with people with disability.
4.5 Therapeutic Support Panel	Ongoing	The Therapeutic Support Panel continued to operate during 2025–26, supporting children and young people involved in, or at risk of, harmful behaviours, and their families. Established in March 2024 as part of the ACT's Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility reforms, the Panel provides access to therapeutic assessment, advice and interventions aimed at addressing unmet developmental, health and wellbeing needs. The Panel seeks to provide a therapeutic response to children and young people who engage in, or at risk of engaging in, harmful behaviours. The therapeutic response aims to identify unmet needs, including disability, to address the root causes of harmful behaviour and improve long-term social, emotional and wellbeing outcomes. During the reporting period, the ACT Government continued its investment in the Panel as a key component of its therapeutic response to harmful behaviours in children and young people.
4.6 Partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander community	In progress	JACS' First Nations Justice Branch are working with a local ACT-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprise has been engaged to create a video resource on ACT parole processes. Utilising an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander provider embeds the importance of intersectionality and aligns with Commissioning recommendations to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in the delivery of justice support services.

Action	Status	Progress
		Through a universal design approach, the development of this resource will ensure information is accessible to all members of the ACT community and that people with a disability are not disadvantaged in the parole processes. Preliminary planning has commenced to identify other partnership opportunities.
4.7 Community of Practice	Ongoing	The Disability Justice Community of Practice (CoP) continues to be a well-established and effective cross-sector forum that brings together justice, legal, advocacy and community organisations to improve outcomes for people with disability. During 2025-26, agencies demonstrated strong and consistent engagement through regular participation, information sharing, collaborative problem-solving and coordinated service responses. The CoP has strengthened relationships across the sector, enhanced referral pathways, increased disability-informed practice, and supported implementation of the ACT Disability Justice Strategy and related inclusion initiatives. Agencies also used the forum to identify and address systemic barriers, share best practice, improve accessibility, and develop more coordinated and person-centred responses for clients and service users.
4.8 Disability Action and Inclusion Plans	Ongoing	Participating agencies continue to develop, implement and renew their Disability Action and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs). Agencies are further embedding disability inclusion within organisational governance, service delivery, workforce capability and strategic planning. A DAIP workshop was delivered to key domestic and family violence (DFV) community sector organisations, including the Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre and the Multicultural Hub. Funding was provided to assist these organisations to develop their DAIPs.
4.9 ACT Intermediary Program	Ongoing	The ACT Intermediary Program continues to see demand grow from ACT Policing and ACT Courts for the involvement of intermediaries, with a notable increase in referrals received from the ACT Supreme Court of 18%. Approximately 65% of all referrals received by the Intermediary Program indicated a communication issue, other than young age, was present for the individual being referred. This includes consideration to needs including physical disabilities, learning disabilities, neurodiversity and cultural considerations. The Victim Support ACT Disability Liaison Officer referred multiple clients to the ACT Intermediary Program throughout the year and continued to work in close partnership with the program team.

Action	Status	Progress
		The Disability Liaison Officer has contributed to increasing awareness of the program across government and community sectors, supporting stakeholders to understand its purpose, eligibility, and referral pathways.
4.10 Effective support for Court users	Complete	In 2024-25, the ACT Public Advocate in conjunction with ACT Courts and Tribunal piloted a 6-month service initiative and research project. This stationed a 'duty advocate' at the courts in the morning, five days per week to enhance access to justice for vulnerable court users involved in protection matters, notably those who were young people and people with disability. The pilot was extended into the current reporting period, concluding in November 2025. In total, 120 legal matters were referred to the pilot program relating to 115 individuals. The project received overwhelmingly positive feedback from court users and other stakeholders with benefits including: • Improved experience and access to justice for vulnerable court users. • Matters diverted away from litigation, saving court, and likely policing and correctional costs. • Positive duty obligations better met. • Reduced likelihood of criminalisation for reasons of disability. • Criminal charges dismissed in one matter where breaches of interim Workplace Protection Order had led to significant time in custody. • Anecdotal reports from Courts suggests reduced workplace incidents involving clients referred to Public Advocate officer (issues involving registry and security staff). The research component of the project made recommendations for future servicing.
4.11 Youth Justice Throughcare	In Progress	During 2025–26, ACT Government progressed work to strengthen support for young people transitioning from detention back into the community. Effective throughcare is recognised as an important component of reducing recidivism, supporting rehabilitation and promoting successful reintegration into family, education, employment and community life. Planning has now commenced for a more contemporary and therapeutically based Throughcare pilot. It will provide more coordinated support for young people leaving custody and strengthen connections between youth justice, human services and community-based supports. The pilot will also help identify service gaps, improve

Action	Status	Progress
		understanding of the needs of young people transitioning from detention, and build the evidence base to inform future throughcare responses in the ACT.
4.12 Youth Justice	In Progress	During 2025–26, the ACT Government continued to progress youth justice reform with a focus on improving outcomes for children and young people, strengthening diversionary responses and reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system. Work continued to implement the ACT's Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility reforms through investing in service system reforms that provide therapeutic responses to children and young people engaging in, or at risk of engaging in harmful behaviours. Work included supporting two key initiatives: the Therapeutic Support Panel and the Safer Youth Response Service. These initiatives support children, young people and families to access therapeutic support to address unmet needs and reduce engagement with the criminal justice system. The ACT Government also progressed development of the next Youth Justice Strategic Plan, which will guide future reform across the youth justice system. Public consultation on the Strategic Plan is currently underway. Work commenced on the development of a new strategic purpose and model of care for Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, informed by recommendations from the Healthy Centre Review and Jumbunna Review. On 29 June 2026, the ACT Government hosted a forum with key stakeholders to begin the development of the new strategic purpose and model of care.
4.13 Canberra Community Law Socio-Legal Practice Clinic	Ongoing	Based on the independent evaluation undertaken of the Socio-Legal Practice Clinic in 2024-25, Canberra Community Law has developed an integrated practice framework to provide guidance to legal staff working with non-legal integrated support staff. The Socio-Legal Practice Clinic is in its 13th year of operation and is funded through the ACT Government, the Commonwealth Government and philanthropic organisations.
4.14 Women's Legal Centre internship	Complete	The Women's Legal Centre was supported by the Health and Community Services Directorate to provide an internship opportunity to women with disability in 2024/25.

FOCUS AREA 5: DATA, RESEARCH AND REVIEW

Action	Status	Progress
5.1 Data collection and analysis	Ongoing	Agencies continue to strengthen disability-related data collection, management and analysis to support evidence-based service delivery, and service and strategic planning. Key achievements included enhancements to client management systems, implementation of disability screening and referral processes, collection of data on reasonable adjustments and support needs, and improved reporting mechanisms. Several agencies are exploring system improvements to better capture information on the disability-related needs of service users, while others established processes to analyse client demographics, service outcomes and accessibility needs. Data gathered through service delivery continues to inform policy development, service improvements and implementation of the Strategy.
5.2 Improved information sharing	Ongoing	Information sharing and collaboration continues to be promoted through established governance mechanisms, networks and referral pathways. Notable achievements include: • The network of 11 Disability Liaison Officers continues to support people requiring reasonable adjustments, helping ensure supports are identified and in place for victims and witnesses throughout their engagement with the justice system. This cross-referral model has strengthened coordination and continuity of support; • ACT Corrective Services has commenced a transition of key client information from legacy systems into a secure CORIS environment which will support improved information management, accessibility and continuity of care. Information sharing arrangements continue between ACT Corrective Services and Canberra Health Services to provide coordinated responses for people with disability; and • ACT Courts and Tribunal are developing a working group to identify and discuss the needs and appropriate responses for Court users with additional needs and disability. A complex client database is also in development to compliment the working group, to ensure key staff across the organisation are aware of the needs of users who may require specific adjustments or a considered and consistent approach to their engagements with the court or tribunal.
5.3 Lived Experience Audits	In Progress	Planning is underway for lived experience audits to be undertaken within a justice service to support ongoing service reform and continuous improvement. Findings will help identify opportunities to strengthen reasonable adjustments and further embed adoption of inclusive practices across the service.

Action	Status	Progress
5.4 AMC Disability Data Project	In progress	ACT Corrective Services continues to strengthen disability data management following review of disability classifications. This includes a proposed update to disability-related alert classification in the Offender Management (CORIS) System to better align with contemporary definitions of disability. Consideration is also being given to the management of historical records to support data integrity and consistency across records.
5.5 Evaluation	Yet to commence	The evaluation of the implementation and outcomes of the Second Action Plan will occur in the last year of the plan. Legal Aid ACT surveyed clients to determine whether their services appropriately met their needs. The survey included questions relating to clients' personal, cultural, disability and lived experience and whether Legal Aid ACT was responsive to these. The survey report made several recommendations which are being considered and implemented by the Commission.
5.6 Review of Culturally Safe Practices	Yet to commence	This commitment relates to recommendation 9.3 of the Disability Royal Commission. Preliminary planning and scope setting has commenced and will include close collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and cultural advisers across ACT government. ACT Corrective Services has commenced development of a Cultural Model of Service to guide culturally responsive service delivery across corrections. The model is intended to support more culturally appropriate engagement and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including those with disability and additional needs, and will inform future service design and practice improvements
5.7 Governance and oversight	Ongoing	The Disability Justice Reference Group – comprised of representatives across government, disability and justice community sectors, and lived experience – continues to provide implementation oversight of the Strategy and action plans. The Government routinely monitors progress of the action plan each year and prepares publicly available progress reports in accordance with the <i>Disability Inclusion Act 2024</i> . Agencies continue to progress governance and oversight mechanisms for disability inclusion through enhanced leadership, governance structures, and policy development. Key achievements include: - establishment of working groups and steering committees to improve experiences and outcomes of service users with disability, - strengthened oversight of Disability Liaison Officer functions, and

Action	Status	Progress
		• commencement of disability-informed policy and procedural frameworks. Agencies have also focused on embedding best-practice principles such as accessibility, reasonable adjustments and trauma-informed approaches, laying the foundations for more consistent and inclusive service delivery.

