



People, Culture and Inclusion Disability Action Plan 2024–27

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Published December 2023
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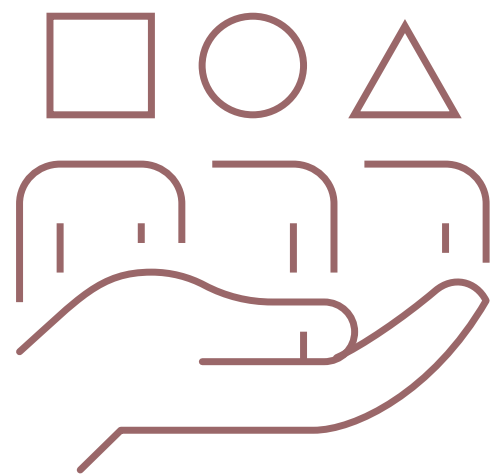


Acknowledgement of Aboriginal People and Country

In recognition of the deep history and culture of this Island, we acknowledge Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the original and continuing Custodians of the Land, Sea and Sky. We acknowledge and pay our respects to all Tasmanian Aboriginal People, all of whom have survived invasion and dispossession, and continue to maintain their identity, culture and Aboriginal rights.



We acknowledge, understand and embrace the prevalence of disability and people with disability in all their diversity. We acknowledge that people's experiences of living with disability can also be impacted by any other co-existing marginalised identity and experiences. We acknowledge the community that have paved and continue to pave the way to people with disability having their human rights recognised.



Message from Co-Chairs Ginna Webster and Deborah Byrne



We are pleased to introduce the People, Culture and Inclusion Disability Action Plan 2024–2027 (the Plan). This Plan will continue the Department of Justice's (the Department) work in reducing barriers for people with disability, both in the workplace and in accessing the services the Department provides to the Tasmanian community. The Plan is aligned with the Department's values of Respect, Accountability, Inclusivity, Collaboration and Integrity, and is strongly supported by the Department's Senior Executives who are committed to delivering the actions outlined in the Plan.

The Plan was developed in consultation with the Department's Disability Community Reference Group, the Australian Network on Disability and our staff. The feedback we have received has shaped the areas of focus within the Plan and we are incredibly grateful to all who contributed to its creation.

We would like to particularly thank members of the Disability Community Reference Group for sharing their expertise and lived experience. The insights, knowledge and guidance provided by the Group will help us to improve outcomes for the community and our staff. It is through the integration of lived experience, inclusion of diverse identities and the amplification of the work and voices of people with disability that we are able to create a comprehensive and strong framework for change. The commitment, collaboration and time the Reference Group has contributed to this work will create a better future for people with disability.

The Plan has a number of desired outcomes. With employment being identified as a key priority area during consultation, we aim to break down the barriers that people with disability face both in recruitment and in the workplace. We understand that increasing access to employment opportunities in our Department could be life-changing for some people with a disability. Creating inclusive workplaces provides benefits for everyone and allows us to deliver better services.

The Plan is all about accessibility and inclusion, ensuring those who access our services and our staff are able to access our services, information, communications and events. The Plan identifies measures we can take to ensure that people with disability can reach all our services and navigate the systems we administer.

The Plan will also focus on the importance and value of diversity within the Department and ensure our policies, procedures, data and tools support disability inclusion. We aim to improve the awareness and understanding of staff regarding disabilities and ensure our leadership is accountable for improving outcomes for people with disability.

It is important that we are able to measure our progress. When we have a clear understanding of the demographics and needs of our staff and clients, we will be in a better position to create workplaces and services that are accessible for everyone. Through data and analysis, we can track how our improvements impact staff and clients and ensure our work has maximum impact.

This Plan complements our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy 2023–2026, which aims to improve diversity within our workforce, foster an inclusive workplace culture, and ensure inclusive service delivery. As we implement actions within the Plan, we will continue to monitor our progress and adapt our actions to best align with our goals. The work within this action plan will be driven from the top, with visible leadership and accountability from our leaders.

Improving our workplaces for everyone requires a collaborative approach. We encourage all Department of Justice staff to play their part in bringing this Plan to life as we strive to provide diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces and services.

Our diversity, equity and inclusion vision for disability



Our diversity, equity and inclusion vision is to be responsive to Tasmania today.

We aspire to be a truly varied workforce that reflects the valuable differences within the Tasmanian population. Our diversity powers greater collaboration and innovation and inspires high quality service for all Tasmanians.

We are a genuinely inclusive organisation, where people work together effectively. Our workplaces proactively accommodate workplace adjustments, and everyone thrives professionally.

We will achieve our vision to be responsive to Tasmania today by focusing our efforts on the following strategic goals. The implementation of our Disability Action Plan supports this.

A diverse workforce

Improving the representation of diverse genders and people from diverse backgrounds in all positions.

Understanding and addressing any structural barriers (real or perceived) to employment and potential employment, due to personal circumstance or characteristics.

An inclusive workplace culture

To foster a workplace culture that is inclusive, collaborative and respectful, and supports the talent and diversity of our people.

Inclusive service

Be publicly recognised as a diverse and inclusive workplace that delivers respectful services which best meet the needs of the Tasmanian Community.

Desired outcomes

The desired outcomes for our Disability Action Plan are:

Measurement and accountability

- The collection and analysis of data allows us to see where we are and how we are progressing towards our outcomes.

Recognising and valuing diversity

- Demonstrated leadership and accountability in improving outcomes for employees with disability.
- Our tools, policies and procedures enable the inclusion of people with disability.
- The experiences and views of people with disability inform and shape our decision-making.

Employee experience, attraction and recruitment

- Our workforce reflects a diverse cross-section of the population, and our people are provided with opportunities, experience and career pathways.

Access and inclusion

- Information, communications and events are appropriate and accessible to people with a disability.
- Our workforce has the knowledge and capability to provide appropriate services, information and support to people with a disability.
- Our workplaces are safe and accessible.

Governance, collaboration and sponsorship

The experiences and views of people with disability inform and shape our decision-making.

The Department of Justice Disability Reference Group will provide insights from those with lived experience, bringing together a diverse range of views and opinions from a broad cross-section of the community and workplace.

Our Department of Justice Executive Sponsor is appointed by the Department's Agency Executive team. Our Executive Sponsor and Community Co-Chair will promote and support initiatives and efforts, provide strategic direction, and have oversight of the Department's overall performance in relation to disability.

Our language

Language is a powerful tool for changing community attitudes, promoting inclusion and fostering disability pride. Throughout history, people with disability have fought for changes to language that reflect their lived experiences and human rights. We know language is always changing, and we recognise that words are powerful and have different meaning for different people. We recognise that people with disability have different preferences regarding how they describe their disability. We also acknowledge that there is no universal conceptualisation of disability, which is perceived in culturally specific ways.

Person-first and identity-first language

We have chosen to use person-first language in the Department of Justice People, Culture and Inclusion Disability Action Plan. Person-first language puts the person before their disability – for example, ‘people with disability’. Person-first language was first used to emphasise a person’s right to an identity beyond their disability and as a way of addressing ableism. We know person-first language continues to be an important part of many people’s identity, particularly for many people with cognitive disability and those who self-advocate.

We also know that many people with disability prefer to use what is known as ‘identify-first’ language. Identity-first language puts a person’s disability identity before the person – for example, ‘disabled person’.

We recognise that many people with disability prefer to use identity-first language because they see their disability as a key part of their identity. They use identity-first language to show their connection to the disability community, demonstrate disability pride and emphasise that it is society that is disabling (in line with the ‘social model’ of disability).

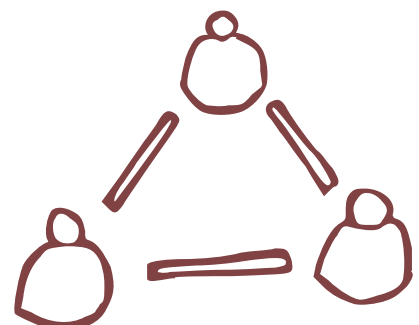
We recognise that identity-first language is important to the many people with disability who have advocated for the use of this language.

Some Tasmanians have told us they had a strong preference for identity-first language. We know that many people do not see autism as a disability but rather as a different way of seeing and interacting with the world.

Further to this, we know that many people in the Deaf community do not identify as people with disability but see themselves as a culturally and linguistically distinct group.

People’s different preferences about how language is used reflect the different ways people consider their identity, their experience of disability and the attitudes of their community.

We acknowledge people’s personal preferences and individual right to choose how their identity and experiences are described.



The social model of disability



This Action Plan uses Australia's Disability Strategy's definition of disability which aligns with the definition of disability included in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

People with disability include, but are not restricted to, those who have long-term physical, psychosocial, cognitive, intellectual and/or sensory impairments. People with disability have specific needs, priorities and perspectives based on their individual identities including their gender, age, sexuality, race and cultural background, and can face additional barriers and inequities when interacting with inaccessible communities and environments.

This is often called the social model of disability. The social model of disability is an important way of perceiving inequality because it views disability as stemming from communities, services and spaces that are not accessible or inclusive. In the social model of disability, it is society that places limits on a person, not their disability.

Ableism



Ableism is discrimination or prejudice towards people with disability. It can be described as the systemic and interpersonal exclusion and oppression of people with disability. Ableism can greatly impact the capacity for people with disability to participate in day to day life and activities.

Ableism interacts with other forms of discrimination, such as gender inequality, racism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and ageism. This creates multiple and intersecting forms of systemic discrimination for Aboriginal people, women, LGBTIQA+ people, multicultural people, older people and young people.

Our actions

1. Measurement and accountability

A key focus of this Action Plan will be on establishing an intersectional baseline in relation to the experiences of people with disability working at the Department.

Benchmarking through the collection and analysis of data allows us to see the current state of the Department and how we are progressing towards our outcomes. It allows us to facilitate change, look at new ways of doing things, learn from others and promote changes to practices and culture.

An outcomes-driven approach requires rigour around data collection and evaluation of the programs and services we provide.

Part of our plan will be to consider people in the external community who also engage with the Department and collate baseline data as to how the Department meets service needs.

1.1 Employee Survey: Initial design, baseline and measurement

- Aligned with other employee surveys and People Strategy initiatives to avoid silos and developed, released and implemented with consideration to maximise the response rate.
- Ensure survey/s are not only demographically based, but also intersectional to gain deeper insights
- Baseline results used to develop goals for future survey results
- Determine frequency of survey, type of information to be obtained, and identify resources required for analysis and reporting
- Undertake longitudinal analysis of survey results to measure progress.

1.2 What data and insights do we have?

In consultation with the different outputs of the Department, identify what data is already collected and determine what we would like to know so that we can target our efforts to better meet the needs of the workplace and disability community.

1.3 Service Provision Survey

Develop proposal for service provision survey to measure intersectional insights of clients' service experience with the Department. This needs to be informed by consideration of the data and insights we already have.

Action	Completion
1.1	October 2024
1.2	February 2025
1.3	June 2026

2. Monitoring and evaluating

Detailed reporting will be provided against the Action Plan, coordinated by Organisational Development and Design, and provided regularly to the Disability Reference Group. A summary of this report will be provided to the People, Culture and Inclusion Steering Committee.

2.1 Reporting on activity and progress to Disability Reference Group

A review will be conducted annually with the Department of Justice Disability Reference Group.

The review will focus on:

- the Department’s progress towards the outcomes outlined in this plan
- the success of data collection in identifying baselines and gaps
- amending the focus of reporting as required
- future direction and priorities.

2.2 Reporting of progress to the People, Culture and Inclusion Steering Committee

Reporting will provide greater insight into the impact of the action plan.

Action	Completion
2.1	End of each calendar year
2.2	End of each calendar year

3. Recognising and valuing diversity

There will be demonstrated leadership and accountability in improving outcomes for employees with disability.

3.1 Continued executive sponsorship of Disability activity

A member of the Department’s Agency Executive team will be appointed to lead our work in the key priority area of Disability. Executive sponsors promote and support our initiatives, provide strategic direction, and have oversight of the Department’s overall performance in relation to this plan.

3.2 Celebration of International Day of People with Disability

The United Nations observed International Day of People with Disability will be celebrated each year and used as an opportunity to raise awareness.

3.3 Awareness training

A proposal will be developed for an awareness training program for all Department staff. This will need to consider relevant content, accessibility and appropriate methods of engagement for various groups within our workforce.

3.4 Establishment of KPIs for accountability

Explore best practice in relation to measurement of inclusion of employees with disability in consideration of survey of workforce and develop a proposal for this work.

3.5 Process implemented for appropriate consideration of language and inclusion in existing policy, legislation and communications

Develop a process to ensure that the language and formats used in our policy, legislation and communications are inclusive and accessible.

3.6 Reasonable adjustments are embedded in our recruitment practices

Release of our Reasonable Adjustments Policy and continued implementation of the policy into our recruitment processes.

3.7 Employee/client engagement with reasonable adjustments for recruitment, current employees and visitors

Policies, procedures and tools are to be developed to support these actions.

Targeted resources are to be developed for managers.

3.8 Establish reporting mechanisms to capture ongoing requests and provision of reasonable adjustments

Development of mechanisms which will provide insights into the effectiveness of the Department's provision of reasonable adjustments.

Action	Completion
3.1	Ongoing
3.2	Each calendar year
3.3	Ongoing
3.4	February 2025
3.5	Ongoing
3.6	December 2026
3.7	Ongoing
3.8	November 2025

4. Employee experience, attraction and recruitment

Our workforce should reflect a diverse cross-section of the population and our people are to be provided with opportunities, experience and career pathways.

4.1 Continued review of employment programs and processes to ensure equal opportunity and success of reasonable adjustments processes across the Department

Improve the experience of those choosing a career with the Department through an ongoing focus on recruitment practice.

4.2 Investigate opportunities to celebrate and recognise what the Department is doing well to become an employer of choice for people with disability

Celebrate our successes and share them with the community to highlight the benefits of working for the Department.

4.3 Develop proposal on continued application of flexibility to job design within the Department

Flexible job design means that jobs can be structured to accommodate different needs, while still meeting the requirements of the Department. Flexibility will continue to increase the inclusive culture of our workplaces as our people will be better able to have their needs met.

4.4 Develop consistency in advertising regarding flexibility and adjustments available in our workplaces

Provide clear and consistent information about our jobs and workplaces to potential applicants. This will ensure that people considering a career with the Department have an informed understanding of what they can expect and whether an advertised role may suit them.

4.5 Develop a proposal and terms of reference for peer support network

Having consideration of existing networks within the State Service, develop a peer support network i to provide opportunities for connection between people with disability.

Action	Completion
4.1	Ongoing
4.2	Ongoing
4.3	January 2025
4.4	February 2026
4.5	February 2026

5. Access and inclusion

Information, communications, events and services are appropriate and accessible to people with disability.

5.1 Accessible and considered information provided throughout employment including information about access to reasonable adjustments

Our people will be provided information in various formats and in accessible ways to ensure all staff are aware of Departmental information and supports.

5.2 Review of policies nominated as priorities by the Department of Justice Disability Reference Group

Nominated policies will be prioritised and reviewed with feedback provided to the relevant area of the Department for consideration and implementation.

5.3 Plan of work for the inclusion of accessible information on the Department’s websites

Develop a plan for ensuring information published on the Department’s websites complies with Tasmanian Government requirements on accessibility.

5.4 The Department of Justice Disability Reference Group will continue to be a forum for advising the Department on relevant issues and initiatives

Seek input from those with lived experience and subject matter expertise to inform the design of the Department’s services and legislative reform.

5.5 Education and promotion of the benefits of employing people with disability

The Department will continue to educate the workforce on the benefits of a diverse workforce.

5.6 Provision of information to ensure people know their rights at work

Provide information on rights at work under relevant legislation, including the [Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Act 1998](#), and the Department’s Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

5.7 Review mandatory disability training and unconscious bias training options and make recommendations

This review will inform the future approach to disability training and unconscious bias training, with a particular focus on ensuring adequate consideration of training in best practice recruitment.

Action	Completion
5.1	December 2025
5.2	Ongoing
5.3	February 2025

Action	Completion
5.4	Ongoing
5.5	Ongoing
5.6	Ongoing
5.7	July 2024

6. Our workplaces and buildings are safe and accessible

A safe and accessible workplace is vital to all staff, and should be implemented with universal design and dignified access principles in mind.

6.1 Review of WHS procedures and policy

Our work health and safety procedures and policy will be reviewed to ensure they are inclusive of people with a disability and reflect universal design and dignified access principles.

6.2 Review of accessibility reports and process for actioning recommendations to ensure our premises are accessible

The review will provide recommendations on a process to ensure that accessibility reports are reviewed and actioned appropriately to enable people to access our premises equally.

Action	Completion
6.1	May 2025
6.2	June 2025

7. Legislation

We will secure a commitment that the Department will invite input on legislation the Department is drafting or reviewing.

7.1 Bring legislation before the Department of Justice Disability Reference Group

The reference group will be provided an opportunity to feed into the consultation process and inform legislation.

7.2 Improve engagement with community about relevant legislation

Provide forums for meaningful engagement in relation to legislation.

Review the existing engagement approach and implement identified for improvements.

Action	Completion
7.1	Ongoing
7.2	Ongoing

References



1. Australian Disability Strategy 2021–2023 – Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services) 2021
2. Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan (2022–2026)
3. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) – Australian Human Rights Commission
4. Equal Opportunity Tasmania
5. Diversity Council Australia
6. Australian Network on Disability
7. Department of Justice Strategic Plan
8. Department of Justice Information Security Policy



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