

A Whaikaha–Ministry of Disabled People logo with purple lettering. On the left is a QR code and underneath the words "scan for the NZSL name".



## **New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030**

**Summary of work to action the employment priority area**

## Introduction

The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030 (the strategy) has 34 actions across five priority areas of education, employment, health, housing and justice. During 2026:

- 13 actions will be delivered or started (implemented)
- 6 actions will be developed
- 12 actions will be scoped (planned).

This document is a 'change story' to explain:

- the goal for the employment priority area and the supporting actions
- when the actions will be done and by which government agencies
- the order for actions and the links between the actions
- the risks and challenges to doing the actions.

A change story for each priority area is on the Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People website.

Education: <https://www.whaikaha.govt.nz/about-us/our-work/new-zealand-disability-strategy-2026-2030/delivering-the-actions#scroll-to-1>

Short url: <https://shorturl.at/wKTw5>

Health: <https://www.whaikaha.govt.nz/about-us/our-work/new-zealand-disability-strategy-2026-2030/delivering-the-actions#scroll-to-3>

Short url: <https://shorturl.at/8YIE6>

Housing: <https://www.whaikaha.govt.nz/about-us/our-work/new-zealand-disability-strategy-2026-2030/delivering-the-actions#scroll-to-4>

Short url: <https://shorturl.at/fiijr>

Justice: <https://www.whaikaha.govt.nz/about-us/our-work/new-zealand-disability-strategy-2026-2030/delivering-the-actions#scroll-to-5>

Short url: <https://shorturl.at/2v9jr>

## **Employment change story**

In the employment priority area, there is a goal and 6 supporting actions. In 2026, 4 of the 6 actions will be delivered and 2 will be scoped.

The Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha (Whaikaha) is leading work on 5 employment actions with support from other organisations including All is for All, Business NZ, the NZ Disability Employers' Network and the Public Service Commission.

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is leading on 1 action with support from Whaikaha.

### **Goal for employment**

Disabled people will have meaningful career opportunities, equal to non-disabled people, and be valued the same way. Disability-confident employers will recognise disabled people's talents and expertise and will provide accessible and inclusive workplaces throughout the employment lifecycle.

### **Actions for employment**

To make progress towards the strategy's goal for employment, Government will do the following.

Enable and support disabled people to thrive in careers that match their interests and strengths:

1. Put information and guidance that helps disabled people to identify and match their skills and interests with job pathways in one place and make it accessible. This should include guidance for disabled people leaving school or education.
2. Review specialist employment supports, consulting with disabled people, to improve employment outcomes.

3. Work with disabled people, employers and employer networks to create mentor programmes – so disabled people can get career support from disabled professionals or employers.

Work with disabled people, employers and businesses to build disability confidence, capability and inclusion:

4. Work with disabled people and support providers to create a repository of resources. The resources will include knowledge, success stories and practical information – helping employers and employer networks support disabled people.

5. Work with disabled people, their whānau and supporters, employers and employer networks, to promote and enable the design of jobs and workplaces for disabled people. This means:

- inclusion of disabled people
- flexible working arrangements and reasonable accommodations
- assessing workplace accessibility.

Government agencies should lead by example in the employment of disabled people.

6. Create an awareness campaign for employers and employees. The campaign will include guidance on accessibility and inclusion, data and reports, and will highlight the positive impact of disabled people on workplaces.

## **When and how the employment actions are being carried out**

Whaikaha is leading work on all the employment actions except for action 2, which is being led by the MSD.

Work on **action 1** will begin in 2027. Whaikaha will plan how to create clear information and guidance for disabled job seekers, using what we learn from other work in 2026.

MSD's work on **action 2** has started. Analysis of employment supports was completed in 2025. Engagement with the disability and employment sectors will run through to mid-2026. The action will be put in place in stages from July 2026 and continue into 2027. This work needs to be done to support other employment actions, such as mentoring and employer outreach.

**Action 3** will begin by mid-2026. Whaikaha will plan a mentoring programme for disabled people, in partnership with disabled employers' organisations. The programme will be tested in the public service in late 2026, then made available to others in 2027.

A key part of **Action 4** was delivered in February 2026. The [oneinsix.nz](https://oneinsix.nz) website gives employers advice on hiring disabled people, including real stories, resources and practical information. It will be updated and improved over time.

Throughout 2026 Whaikaha will also work on **action 5** to :

- create a reasonable accommodations policy for the public sector
- create a policy that lets disabled public servants keep their reasonable accommodations when they change jobs within the public service.
- refresh the Accessibility Charter so it helps the public service work together on disability employment.

This work will be done with the support of the Public Service Commission. These projects will also need to be in line with government-wide digital change programmes.

**Action 6** will start in 2026 with a national awareness campaign on the benefits of having disabled people in the workplace. Action 6 is supported by action 4. Together, they deliver the 'what to do' and the 'why' and will support a 'community of practice' to sustain momentum.

## **Risks and challenges for the employment actions**

Key projects, for example the reasonable accommodations policy, in action 5 rely on changes to government digital programmes. Delays could affect the order of how these actions are put in place.

The website (**action 4**) and campaign (**action 6**) will be highly visible. Actions that come after these will depend on their success. This means they will need to be supported with ongoing work and improvements together with disabled people.