

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 housing 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
- 6 actions will be developed
- 12 actions will be scoped (planned)

This document explains:

- the goal for the housing 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>

Employment: <https://www.whaikaha.govt.nz/about-us/our-work/new-zealand-disability-strategy-2026-2030/delivering-the-actions#scroll-to-2>

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

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>

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>

Housing change story

In the housing priority area, there is a goal and 7 supporting actions. In 2026, delivery will start on 1 action, 1 action will be developed, and 4 will be scoped. One housing action will start in 2028.

Several government agencies will work together on the housing actions, including Kāinga Ora, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).

Goal for housing

Disabled people and their whānau have affordable, safe, healthy, secure, and accessible homes that meet their needs and support their independence.

Actions for housing

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

1. Develop, consult on and promote clear definitions of accessible homes. These will describe key features of different levels of accessibility (for example, from basic universal design through to fully accessible).

Clear definitions of accessible homes can support the development of voluntary guidelines for accessibility for residential dwellings (housing action 6).

2. Improve data matching between disabled people and social housing properties with appropriate accessible features that meet their needs.

This will help ensure disabled people and their whānau are prioritised to accessible properties.

Data matching will identify disabled people's housing needs and social housing that meets those needs. This is particularly important for those with high and/or complex needs. Data collected could inform future investment in the supply of social housing.

3. Identify any barriers to increasing supply of affordable, accessible houses in the private market and investigate how these barriers could be removed.

Understanding barriers to the supply of accessible housing will help target potential interventions to improve supply.

4. Review the housing modification system and look at ways to improve it.

Making the housing modification system more efficient could reduce current problems: inaccessibility of homes, increased costs and health and safety issues for disabled people, whānau and carers.

5. Collect and publish annual data on disabled people's housing needs, to compare with the housing being built in each region. This could help encourage the housing market to produce more accessible housing.

This will help to fill the gap in data on accessible housing and raise the profile of the demand for accessible homes. Data can also be used to measure progress in increasing the supply of accessible housing.

6. Develop voluntary national guidelines on accessibility for residential dwellings.

Guidelines would be based on the definitions for accessible homes in housing action 1 and would set out best practice guidance for how to build accessible homes.

7. Review the social housing system, including considering the diverse needs of disabled people and how these could be addressed.

When and how the housing actions are being carried out

Several of the housing actions are linked and/or depend on one another, or on the work programmes of different government agencies. This will affect the order of work for each action.

Action 1 to create and promote clear definitions on what accessible housing is, needs to be completed to make progress on action 6.

Action 1 will also support work on:

- action 3 to identify barriers to increasing the supply of affordable, accessible housing and how they could be removed
- action 5 to collect and publish annual data on disabled people's housing needs to compare with the housing being built in each region.

Improving data matching between disabled people and suitable social housing properties (action 2) and reviewing the social housing system (action 7) are closely connected. The response to **action 2** will be a key part of any review of social housing settings. However, action 2 will remain a separate action because of its importance to disabled people who need social housing.

Work on several actions is in the early stages of planning. Early thinking on these actions is below:

- **Action 3** will likely include a report identifying any barriers to increasing the supply of affordable, accessible housing and potential options to remove these.
- **Action 4** will form part of the overall work programme to strengthen disability support services (DSS). This work will include updating MSD's DSS Housing Modification Manual.
- **Action 5** will include a supply and demand analysis comparing available housing with disabled people's housing needs, a dashboard report featuring this analysis, and a process for updating the dashboard.

Work on **action 6** to develop accessible guidelines for residential homes will begin in 2028.

Several of the housing actions are connected to actions in the Office for Seniors' 'Better Later Life Action Plan' so will need to be in line with this work.

Risks and challenges for the housing actions

Action 5 is dependent on the availability of data, including the content of the Census Attribute Survey (CAS, commencing in 2027). What will be included in the CAS is still being decided and will affect the response to action 5. There is a risk that changes to Census and other data collection may mean that some information needed for the housing actions will not be available.

Data is not consistently collected on the accessibility of newly built housing. Better data on the supply of new accessible housing is needed to ensure the overall effectiveness of action 5. This is now challenging.

Actions also depend on other government work programmes (such as the social housing work programme). If programmes are delayed, this could slow progress. More broadly, housing – particularly housing affordability – is heavily influenced by factors outside of the control of the strategy, such as market forces and workforce availability.