



# **New Zealand Disability Strategy**

## **2026 to 2030**

### **Justice Change Story**



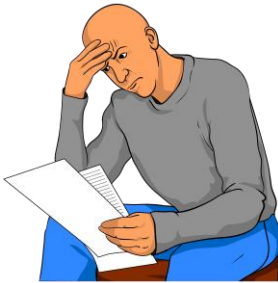
**Published: June 2026**

# Before you start



This is a long document.

It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.

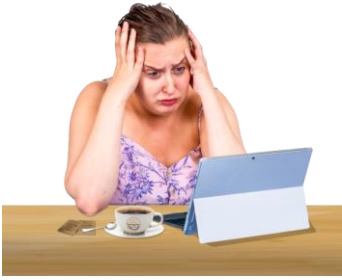


Some things you can do to make it easier are:



- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.





This document talks about abuse.

This information may upset some people when they are reading it.



This information is not meant to scare anyone.



If you are upset after reading this document you can talk to your:

- whānau / family
- friends.

NEED TO TALK?



free call or text  
any time

You can also contact Need to Talk  
by:

- calling 1737
- texting 1737.



It does not cost any money to call /  
text 1737.



If you do not feel safe call the police  
on **111**.

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## About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is about the **New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026 to 2030**.



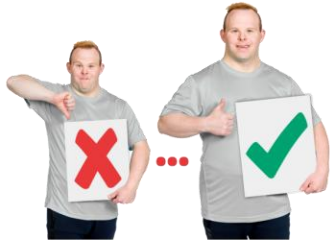
The **New Zealand Disability Strategy** says what the Government will do to make things better for disabled people in Aotearoa New Zealand.



In this Easy Read the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026 to 2030 will be called the **strategy**.



The **Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha** was in charge of writing the strategy.



## The **Ministry of Disabled**

**People – Whaikaha** works to make things better for disabled people by working with:

- the Government
- the community which includes:
  - disabled people
  - tāngata whaikaha Māori / Māori disabled people
- businesses.

In this Easy Read when we say **Whaikaha** this means the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha.

Where it says **we** this means Whaikaha.



The strategy has 5 **priority outcome areas**.



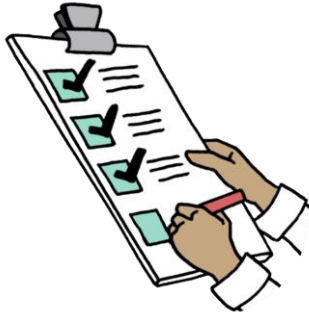
**Priority outcome areas** are the most important things the strategy will work on.



The priority outcome areas are:

- education / learning
- employment / jobs
- health
- housing
- justice which means things to do with the law.





Each priority outcome area has:

- a **goal**
- **actions.**



Here a **goal** is how we want things to be.



Here **actions** are things we will do to work towards meeting a goal.



This Easy Read is a **change story** for the justice priority outcome area.



Here a **change story** tells you:

- what the goal is
- what actions the Government will do
- who in the Government will do each action
- when the actions will happen
- what might stop the actions from happening.

You can find the other change stories in Easy Read on the Whaikaha website.

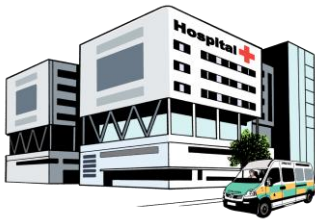
The link for the education change story is:

<https://shorturl.at/wKTW5>



The link for the employment change story is:

<https://shorturl.at/FJghF>



The link for the health change story is:

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



The link for the housing change story is:

<https://shorturl.at/fiijr>

# Goal for justice



The goals for the justice priority outcome area are to:

- protect the **rights** of disabled people
- make sure disabled people:
  - are treated fairly by the **justice system**
  - **can be part of the justice system**
- make sure the justice system:
  - is **accessible**
  - is **inclusive**
  - listens to people.



**Rights** are things that everyone should:

- have
- be able to do.



Some examples of rights are the right to:

- get married
- have a fair **trial**.



A **trial** is how a court decides if someone has done a **crime**.



A **crime** is something that breaks the law.

For example stealing things is a crime.



The **justice system** is all the parts of the Government that:

- make sure people follow the law like the Police
- punish people if they break the law like:
  - courts
  - prisons.

Here **accessible** means disabled people have what they need to easily:

- use things
- do things.

Here **inclusive** means that everyone can easily be part of the justice system.

# Actions for justice



There are 7 actions for the justice priority outcome area.

## Action 1



Make a plan for **safeguarding** disabled people who:

- are in prison
- live in homes paid for by **Disability Support Services.**



**Safeguarding** means doing things to protect people from **abuse and neglect** like making sure people can easily get help if someone is hurting them.



**Abuse and neglect** can be things like someone:

- hitting you
- calling you names
- taking your money
- not letting you have the things you need like food.

## Disability Support Services



**Disability Support Services** is the part of the Government that pays for supports for disabled people like:

- equipment like:
  - tools that support people to talk to other people
  - a cane for a blind person
- Carer Support so a person who cares for a disabled person can take a break
- Individualised Funding so disabled people can:
  - decide what supports they need
  - pay for their supports.



The plan will tell everyone what to do to:

- stop abuse and neglect
- tell people if abuse and neglect is happening
- move a disabled person who is being abused to a safe place.



## Action 2



Different parts of the Government will work together to find out more information about what crimes happen to disabled people.



The Government will find out information about:

- what crimes happen to disabled people who live in:
  - **residential homes**
  - **secure facilities**
- **cyberbullying.**





A **residential home** is a home for disabled people.

Staff in the residential home support the people who live there.



A **secure facility** is a place you are not allowed to leave like a prison.



**Cyberbullying** is when people use the internet to be mean to other people.

### Action 3



Make a plan for the Government to support disabled people early in their lives.



This will stop disabled young people from getting in trouble with the law.

## Action 4

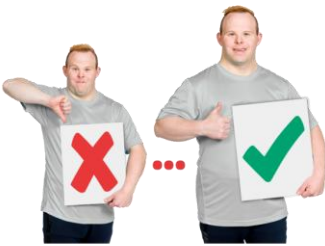


The **Law Commission** is doing a **review** of a law called the **Criminal Procedure (Mentally Impaired Persons) Act**.



The **Law Commission** is an organisation that:

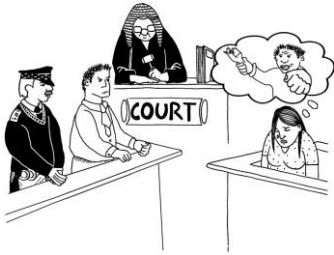
- does reviews of the law
- uses what it finds out in the reviews to tell the Government how to make the law better.



Here a **review** is when the Law Commission looks carefully at a part of the law to:

- find out if it is working well
- see if the law needs to change.





The **Criminal Procedure (Mentally Impaired Persons) Act** is a law that tells the courts what they should do when:

- a person has done a crime
- their disability means it would not be fair to punish them for the crime.



The review will look at how the Criminal Procedure (Mentally Impaired Persons) Act works with other laws like the:

- **Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation) Act**
- **Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act.**



## Action 5



When it has time the Government will look at how **family law** protects disabled people.



**Family law** is all the laws about things like:

- adopting children
- making decisions for you if you cannot make your own decisions
- sharing your belongings with your partner if you get divorced.



The Government will look at if family law needs to better:

- protect disabled people
- support disabled people.



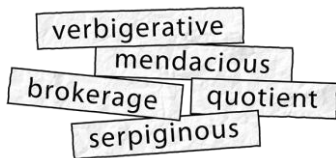
The Government will look at if it needs to be easier for people to do **supported decision-making**.



**Supported decision-making** is when a disabled person gets support so they can make their own decisions.



The Government will look at if family laws need to use **plain language**.



**Plain language** is language that everyone can easily understand.



The Government should also look at laws about human rights if it has time.



It should look at if these laws need to do more to protect people from **discrimination**.

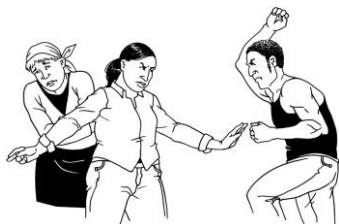


**Discrimination** is when people are treated unfairly because of things like:

- how old they are
- if they are a man / woman / someone of another gender
- if they are disabled.



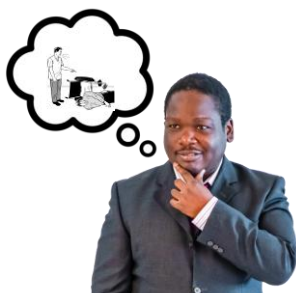
## Action 6



The Government is already doing work to protect people from **family violence**.



**Family violence** is when someone harms another person in their family.



The Government should think about protecting disabled people from family violence as part of the work it is already doing.



The Government will train people who work on family violence so they can support disabled people better.



## Action 7

Make a plan for training everyone who works in the justice system to:



- understand:
  - disability
  - **Deaf culture**
  
- work in a way that:
  - respects the **mana** of everyone
  
  - understands that some people have **trauma**.

**Deaf culture** means Deaf ways of doing things.



Māori believe that everyone has **mana** from the time they are born.

**Mana** is the spiritual life force / power that is found in all of the universe.

Having mana:

- means someone has a strong sense of confidence / knowledge about them
- might affect how other people see / think about them.



## Trauma is when:

- something bad has happened to someone in the past
- the bad thing that happened in the past means some things are harder for the person now.

For example a person who has trauma might not be able to stop thinking about the bad thing that happened to them.

The plan will mean more disabled people can work in the justice system.

The Government should think about if there need to be **mandatory professional standards** for people who work in the justice system.



## **Mandatory professional standards**

are rules about what everyone who does a type of job must do.

For example a mandatory professional standard for lawyers is that they must not lie in court.

# What work is happening on the actions?



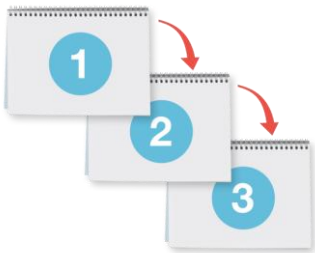
The Government is just beginning to do work on these actions.



The Government still needs to decide which part of the Government will be in charge of many of the actions.



For some actions the Government needs to look at what it is already doing.



This will support the Government to know what it needs to do next.



The Government needs to look at what it is already doing for actions:

- 1 about protecting disabled people from abuse and neglect
- 3 about supporting disabled people early in their lives
- 7 about training people who work in the justice system.



**Stats NZ** is already doing some work that will be useful for action 2 about what crimes happen to disabled people.



**Stats NZ** is the part of the Government in charge of collecting information about Aotearoa New Zealand.



More work on action 2 will happen once it is clear what work Stats NZ has already done.



The work on action 2 will probably start in 2027.



The actions can happen in any order.

There are links between some of the actions.



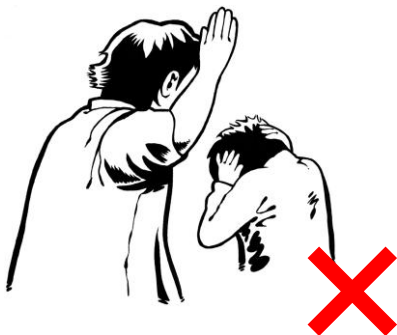
Action 1 about protecting disabled people from abuse and neglect is linked to actions:

- 2 which gives information about:
  - what needs to be in the safeguarding plan
  - if the safeguarding plan is working
- 7 as people need training on safeguarding.



Action 3 about supporting disabled people early in their lives is linked to actions:

- 6 about protecting disabled people from family violence
- 7 about training people who work in the justice system.





Together these actions will make sure disabled young people get support when they need it.

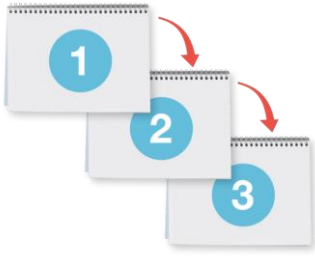
We need to do more planning for actions:



- 1 about protecting disabled people from abuse and neglect



- 2 about what crimes happen to disabled people
- 3 about supporting disabled people early in their lives.



This planning will support us to decide:

- what needs to happen next for these actions
- when work on these actions will happen.



The **Ministry of Justice** is in charge of action 5 about reviewing family law.



The **Ministry of Justice** is the part of the Government in charge of the justice system.



Work on action 5 has already started.



The Law Commission has done a review of the law about when people can make their own decisions.



This review has ideas about how to make it easier for people to do supported decision-making.



Reviews of other laws will happen when there is time.



**The Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention** is in charge of action 6 about protecting disabled people from family violence.



**The Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention** is the part of the Government in charge of doing work to stop:

- family violence
- **sexual violence.**



**Sexual violence** is when someone does something sexual to you when you do not want them to.



The Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention is working out:

- what work it needs to do on action 6
- who should do this work.





Some of the actions are linked to other work the Government is doing like work from:



- the **Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State Care**
- the **Dame Karen Poutasi Review**
- **Te Aorerekura.**



The **Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State Care** found out information about how people were hurt in **state care**.



**State care** is when the Government is in charge of looking after you.



The **Dame Karen Poutasi Review** found out information about what the Government does when it learns a child is being abused.



**Te Aorerekura** is the plan the Government has for stopping:

- family violence
- sexual violence.



The actions linked to other work the Government is doing are actions:

- 1 about protecting disabled people from abuse and neglect
- 5 about reviewing family law
- 6 about protecting disabled people from family violence
- 7 about training people who work in the justice system.





The Government can use the work it is already doing to support the work on these actions.



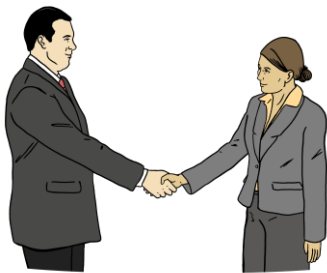
This will make sure the Government:

- does not do the same work twice
- runs services that work together.

## What might stop the actions from happening?



The Government has already decided which part of the Government will be in charge of some of the actions.



For the other actions different parts of the Government need to work together.



The Government still needs to decide which part of the Government will be in charge of these actions.

We will start working on these actions.



We have other work to do so we might run out of time to work on these actions.



Some actions might not happen if the parts of the Government working on these actions run out of:

- time
- money.



Some actions might not happen if the Government changes its mind about what things it wants to work on.



The Law Commission needs to do work on action 4.

This work is about reviewing the Criminal Procedure (Mentally Impaired Persons) Act



The Law Commission has already done work on action 5.



This work was about supported decision making.



The Government might also need to write new laws as part of these actions.



This means we do not know when these actions will happen.

These actions will only happen when  
the:



- Law Commission has time to work on them
- Government has time to write new laws.



This information has been written by the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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