



Overview of Queensland Government Disability Service Plans 2007–2010



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The *Disability Services Act 2006* took effect on 1 July 2006. The Act reaffirms that people with a disability have the same rights as all other members of the Queensland community. This includes the right to access government services.

Under the Act, every Queensland Government department is required to develop a Disability Service Plan. Disability Service Plans describe the way each department is working towards providing appropriate services and facilities for people with a disability, their families and carers.

In the plans, departments identify:

- issues regarding service delivery by the department to people with a disability
- the way these issues will be addressed
- how the department's plan complements the plans of other departments.

All plans must be published on each department's website. Each plan is unique, reflecting the size, scope and activities of the department to which it relates.

Whole-of-government common themes

Disability Service Plans provide a means of coordinating with other departments on disability service issues and progressing work at a whole-of-government level.

In the development of Disability Service Plans, six common areas of interest were identified. These areas of interest, outlined below, form the basis of most departments' plans.

- **Policies and procedures**
Ensuring policies, procedures and practices are inclusive, non-discriminatory and barrier-free for people with a disability, their families and carers.
- **Information and communication**
Ensuring information and communication relating to government services is accessible, inclusive and allows equitable opportunity for participation by people with a disability, their families and carers.





- **Attitudes and awareness of employees**
Increasing staff awareness to improve the development and delivery of policies, programs and services to people with a disability by building an organisational culture in which equity and diversity are valued, understood and actively pursued.
- **Physical access to public buildings**
Development of a standard set of requirements on physical access to public buildings.
- **Recruitment and retention**
Commitment to recruiting and maintaining a diverse workforce with all recruitment, career development and retention strategies inclusive and equitable.
- **Complaints**
Ensuring complaints mechanisms are accessible so that people with a disability can lodge a complaint regardless of their preferred communication mode.

Snapshot of disability service plan actions

Following is a snapshot of key actions from various departments' Disability Service Plans.

- Improve the legislative framework that governs decision making for people with impaired decision-making capability.
- Introduce Auslan as the language of instruction for deaf and hearing impaired students who require sign support in Queensland state schools.
- Establish links with Disability Services Queensland and disability service organisations to enable the department to increase the participation of people with a disability in safety education and awareness initiatives.





- Undertake, where requested, small business training programs for people with a disability.
- Establish an accessible tourism reference group that will use research findings to develop an accessible tourism action plan.
- Continue the implementation of wheelchair accessible taxis for regional Queenslanders by working with eligible taxi operators to achieve agreement on vehicle types and funding arrangements.
- Implement strategies to ensure inclusion of people with a disability and their families and carers in the decision-making processes of government, supported by the guidelines outlined in *Engaging Queenslanders: an introduction to working with people with a disability*.

- Support and promote the principles of the Queensland Government's *Carer Recognition Policy and Carer Action Plan 2006—2010* and include in appropriate departmental policies.
- Establish a departmental disability reference group to guide the department on issues relating to infrastructure development.
- Provide work experience placements as appropriate for tertiary students with a disability and job seekers with a disability from employment agencies/organisations.
- Conduct a survey of offenders with a disability in Corrective Services facilities to determine existing challenges and barriers to accessing generic services.





Evaluation and monitoring

All departments will provide an annual report on the implementation of their Disability Service Plan to Disability Services Queensland. The report will demonstrate progress and improvement against the performance measures in the plan.

An evaluation will assist in identifying the outcomes and benefits of Disability Service Plans across government as well as inform the development of future plans.

A Disability Service Plan must be developed and implemented at least once every three years.

In 2003 in Queensland:

- Approximately one in five people had a disability. A disability restricts the ability of a person to perform a range of tasks or participate in a range of activities in the area of communication, self care and mobility.
- The prevalence of all people with a disability (22 per cent) was higher than the national average (20 per cent).
- There were an estimated 158,700 people aged under 65 with a profound or severe core activity restriction.
- The prevalence of profound/severe disability for people under 65 years (4.8 per cent) was higher than the national average (3.9 per cent).

Further information

Visit www.disability.qld.gov.au to link to all Queensland Government departments' Disability Service Plans or phone 3247 3960.

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For information in alternative formats phone 1800 177 120 or email disabilityinfo@disability.qld.gov.au.

† Calls from mobile phones are charged at applicable rates.