

Accessibility Strategy Action Plan

September 2023

Office vision: *The Ombudsman is fully accessible to disabled New Zealanders and is regarded as leader in the area of accessibility.*

Goal 1: An accessible Ombudsman's office

Reduce barriers for disabled people accessing, using and learning about our services.

Key Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Disability Convention) Articles:

Article 9 – Accessibility, Article 21 – Accessible information

Action	Outputs and Outcomes	Action by (year)
Identify the various ways disabled people access and interact with the Ombudsman	Work with teams to identify the different ways the public interact with the Ombudsman (physical, digital and other)	1
Identify barriers to accessing and interacting with the Ombudsman	Commission an external auditor to conduct a physical accessibility audit for the Wellington and Auckland offices	1
Identify barriers to accessing and interacting with the Ombudsman	Commission a communications accessibility expert to audit the office	1
Identify barriers to accessing and interacting with the Ombudsman	Produce a schedule of modifications to remove or mitigate any identified barriers by teams and audits	1
Identify barriers to accessing and interacting with the Ombudsman	Commission an external accessibility website audit to ensure accordance with NZ Government web standards	1
Identify barriers to accessing and interacting with the Ombudsman	Audit information available on the website and produce a schedule to address identified gaps in key information that require accessible formats	1
Develop policies, procedures and practices to mitigate the barriers identified in the previous step	Analyse the results of the audits conducted in previous steps and develop a budget and timeline to implement the recommended steps to mitigate access barriers	2

Action	Outputs and Outcomes	Action by (year)
Develop policies, procedures and practices to mitigate the barriers identified in the previous step	Using the results of the public information audit, establish a policy including the minimum accessibility requirements of public information for non-Disability Rights Team resources (not retrospective)	2
Develop policies, procedures and practices to mitigate the barriers identified in the previous step	Pending the results of the website audit, implement the recommended changes to ensure it meets NZ Government web standards	2
Develop policies, procedures and practices to mitigate the barriers identified in the previous step	Using the results of the communications audit, implement recommended policies and procedures to ensure all public communications and information are accessible to disabled people	3
Develop policies, procedures and practices to mitigate the barriers identified in the previous step	Using the results of the physical accessibility audit, implement recommended policies and procedures to ensure disabled people can physically access and interact with the Auckland and Wellington offices.	3
Collect and analyse disaggregated data about disabled people to guide ongoing process improvement	Provide guidance on recording clients' accessibility information and responding appropriately. Implement any resulting changes to training	1
Collect and analyse disaggregated data about disabled people to guide ongoing process improvement	Ensure new process suites enable smarter recording and retrieving of disability information and are accessible to all users	3

Goal 2: An inclusive employment process

Provide opportunities for disabled people to obtain and maintain employment at our office.

Key Disability Convention article: Article 27 – Work and employment

Action	Outputs and Outcomes	Action by (year)
Identify potential or existing barriers for disabled people in recruitment and employment policies	Review recruitment policies and procedures to ensure an 'accessible pathway' for all candidates including disabled people	2
Identify potential or existing barriers for disabled people in recruitment and employment policies	Seek external stakeholder feedback on our recruitment and employment policies	3
Identify potential or existing barriers for disabled people in recruitment and employment policies	Survey staff to find out about their experiences during the recruitment process, and capture any suggestions for improvements	3
Develop and / or revise existing recruitment policies to ensure an equitable employment process	Create a fair and barrier-free employment process by eliminating any identified barriers in the interview and testing processes	2
Develop and / or revise existing recruitment policies to ensure an equitable employment process	Create a schedule of work to resolve any identified barriers from review and survey	2
Train hiring managers in accessible recruiting practices	Initiate a training programme to raise awareness and identify unconscious bias in employment practice and recruitment in relation to disability	2
Train hiring managers in accessible recruiting practices	Raise awareness and increase understanding of reasonable accommodation in our workplace	2
Ensure reasonable accommodation is understood and in place where needed	Find out (in an appropriate way) how many staff identify as disabled and gauge their thoughts on the reasonable accommodations (either existing or required)	2
Ensure reasonable accommodation is understood and in place where needed	Train all staff with regard to the principles and realities of reasonable accommodation, and how to request them	3

Action	Outputs and Outcomes	Action by (year)
Promote employment opportunities to disabled people	Target specific disability employment organisations and Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) to advertise roles	2
Promote employment opportunities to disabled people	Produce advertising material, role information and all relevant employment information in accessible formats	2
Promote employment opportunities to disabled people	Advertise accessibly including using social media platforms / website / intranet	2

Goal 3: Encourage disabled people to engage with our Office

Promote opportunities for disabled people to engage with our Office

Key Disability Convention article: Article 29 – Participation in political and public life

Action	Outputs and Outcomes	Action by (year)
Increase the awareness of the Ombudsman in the disability community	Develop an external engagement strategy to promote and encourage disabled people, their whānau and supporters, and representative organisations to engage with the Ombudsman	3
Increase the awareness of the Ombudsman in the disability community	Hold focus groups with the disability community around the country to ascertain their understanding of the Ombudsman through discussion and questioning.	2
Increase the awareness of the Ombudsman in the disability community	Analyse the responses to the surveys, determine topics, and develop resources to support the outreach programme	2
Increase the awareness of the Ombudsman in the disability community	Train facilitators to engage with disabled people in a meaningful, appropriate, and accessible way	3
Increase the awareness of the Ombudsman in the disability community	Consider and identify stakeholders who may wish to be involved in promoting and hosting Ombudsman training and information sessions to increase the knowledge about our services	2
Increase the awareness of the Ombudsman in the disability community	Establish a guide and checklist to meet the accessibility needs of disabled people and their support requirements when setting up information or training sessions to enable and encourage participation	3

Goal 4: Ensure the progress of the Accessibility Strategy Action Plan is monitored and reported on

Key Disability Convention article: Article 31 – Statistics and data collection

Action	Outputs	Action by
Create a timeline to report on the progress of the action plan	Produce a detailed ‘traffic light’ document to monitor progress and identify blockages and update quarterly to coincide with the internal Accessibility Strategy Working Group meetings	Ongoing
Reporting to the Disability Advisory Panel/Te Rōpū Kaiārahi Hauātanga	Update the Disability Advisory Panel/Te Rōpū Kaiārahi Hauātanga quarterly and seek advice as necessary as projects and activities are developed	Quarterly
Internal reporting	Update the Accessibility Working Group, Governance Group and the Disability Rights Integrity Group on progress using the monitoring document and highlight any blockages	Ongoing
External reporting	Outline the Accessibility Strategy Action Plan in the Ombudsman’s Strategic Intentions, formulate the measures of success, and report on the progress of the Action Plan in the Ombudsman’s annual report	Annually

[Document ends]