

Access Resource Kit

A guide to implementing your Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

With checklists for improved access &
inclusion for people with disabilities



making a difference

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While care has been taken by the Disability Services Commission in preparing this Access Resource Kit for public authorities, the Commission does not accept responsibility or liability for the results of specific action taken on the basis of this information nor for any errors or omissions.

Legal requirements in the area of anti-discrimination law are in the process of change. All actions taken by a public authority in reliance on the checklists remain the responsibility of that public authority.

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The contents of this kit are available to people with disabilities in alternative formats such as audio tape, computer disk, large print and Braille on request to the Commission.

They are available in electronic format from the Commission's website www.dsc.wa.gov.au.

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Overview

Background to Disability Access and Inclusion Plans

As members of our community, people with disabilities and their families and carers have the same rights as other people to access services within the community. These rights are built into State and Commonwealth legislation which make it unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability.

Public authorities in Western Australia have been required to have Disability Service Plans (DSPs) as part of the Disability Services Act (1993). DSPs have been in place since that time, and a great deal of progress has been made by State and Local Government towards ensuring that their services, buildings, and information are accessible to people with disabilities.

The Disability Services Act (1993) was amended in December 2004, and requires public authorities to develop and implement Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs). The requirements of DAIPs build on those of DSPs, so that people with disabilities can access services provided by public authorities in Western Australia in a way that promotes their independence, opportunities and participation in the community.

This Access Resource Kit was originally produced in 1996 by the Disability Services Commission to assist public authorities to identify access barriers and to implement appropriate solutions.

People with disabilities and their service providers have contributed valuable insights and information about the features that make a service accessible. State Government agencies and Local Governments throughout Western Australia have also contributed significantly to the development of the kit. ACROD and the Independent Living Centre joined with the Commission to form the project's steering committee.

The Western Australian Local Government Association has continued its support for this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan resource by endorsing the Kit.

The contents of the Kit were updated in December 2001, and again in 2006, to take into account changes in access standards and developments in website design. The Disability Services Commission will continue to update the contents of the Kit periodically.

Using the Access Resource Kit

The Access Resource Kit and Disability Access and Inclusion Plans

This Access Resource Kit (ARK) has been developed to assist Western Australian State Government agencies and Local Governments to improve access for people with disabilities to their information, services and facilities.

Under the *Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004)*, public authorities are required to prepare and implement Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs). This Kit has been designed to assist public authorities to implement, monitor and report on their plans.

The Kit contains information about the six key outcomes for people with disabilities that public authorities are asked to address in their DAIPs. It also contains checklists to assist with the identification of barriers to access and inclusion. Each checklist includes a section which enables the identified access barriers and proposed solutions to be easily incorporated into the DAIP planning process.

Contents

In addition to this brief overview, the Kit contains the following:

1. Planning for access and inclusion for people with disabilities

This part contains important information about the practical issues involved with the provision of access for people with disabilities.

2. Using the access and inclusion checklists

This part gives an overview of the access and inclusion checklists contained within this Kit. It outlines how the checklists are intended to be used.

3. Access and inclusion checklists

This part contains checklists that address each of the major access and inclusion outcomes identified within the disability access and inclusion planning process.

At the end of each checklist is an 'Issues and Actions' sheet, which may be used to list the identified access barriers and possible ways to overcome those barriers.

4. Appendices

This part contains the checklist definitions and information relevant to the legislative responsibilities of public authorities to provide access for people with disabilities. In addition it provides practical information on access resources. Part 4 also includes acknowledgments.

Access Standards - new works

The information contained in this Kit is intended to be used to identify access barriers to information, services and facilities. Those upgrading or planning new building work should directly consult the most up-to-date relevant documentation to access regulations and legislative responsibilities. At the time of updating the ARK, December 2006, this documentation includes the Building Code of Australia (BCA), the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA), the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's (HREOC) *Advisory Notes on Access to Premises* and the Australian Standards on Access (refer Section 4 for resource information).

Using the Kit

The checklists are designed so that they can be administered by public authorities' own staff.

It is intended, and strongly recommended, that each section is read in sequence. This is in order to provide readers with the information that they will need to enable them to use the checklists effectively.

Updating the Kit

This Kit was first published in June 1996 and updated in December 2001 and December 2006. Access requirements change as various legislative requirements, codes and Australian Standards are updated.

It is intended that this Kit will be further updated to reflect major changes. However, it is up to individual users, particularly those developing services, to independently check their legislative access responsibilities according to the most up-to-date codes and standards, as this is beyond the intended purpose of the Kit.

Feedback welcome

The Disability Services Commission welcomes your feedback on the contents of this Kit. A feedback form is included at the back of Part 4 and we look forward to your feedback for consideration when updating the Kit's contents.