

New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026–2030

Summary of employment goal and actions



About the Strategy

The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030 is New Zealand's third disability strategy. It sets out the Government's commitment to all disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori (Māori disabled people).

The Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha led the work on the strategy. Cabinet agreed the 5 priority outcome areas for the strategy. Content for the strategy was developed with input from disability groups, and by working groups made up of disability community members, sector experts, and officials from relevant government agencies. Public consultation was held on a draft of the strategy, then Cabinet agreed the final version of the strategy.

The strategy covers a 5-year period, from 2026 to 2030, to focus government agencies on meaningful and practical actions that will drive change for disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori.

The strategy includes:

- **A vision and principles** to set the direction for the strategy, and guide work across government for disabled people.
- **5 priority outcome areas** of education, employment, health, housing and justice. Each priority outcome area has **a goal** and **actions**.
- **A monitoring approach**, to measure government's progress delivering the strategy.

Summaries of each part of the strategy

People who want to read the full New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030 can find it on the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha website (www.whaikaha.govt.nz).

The Ministry has also produced summaries of each part of the strategy, for people who do not want to read the whole strategy. These summaries are:

- Vision, principles and other key information
- Goal and actions for education
- Goal and actions for employment
- Goal and actions for health
- Goal and actions for housing
- Goal and actions for justice



This document is a summary of the employment goal, how progress towards the employment goal will be measured, and the employment actions.

► Employment goal



The strategy has a goal for employment. The goal is:

Disabled people will have meaningful career opportunities, equal to non-disabled people, and be valued the same way. Disability-confident employers will recognise disabled people's talents and expertise, and will provide accessible and inclusive workplaces throughout the employment lifecycle.

► Measuring progress towards the employment goal

Progress on the goal for employment will be measured using these indicators:

- Employment rate for disabled adults (aged 15-64 years).
- Underutilisation rate for disabled adults (aged 15-64 years).
- Disability pay gap.

- Percentage of employed disabled adults (aged 15-64 years) who were satisfied or very satisfied with their job.
 - Percentage of disabled young people (aged 15-24 years) in employment, education, or training.
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What success in employment means

For disabled people, success in employment means:

- a) Disabled people will have meaningful **career, employment and self-employment opportunities, equal to non-disabled people**. They will be able to participate in all levels of the workforce equal to non-disabled people, and this will be accepted.
 - b) **Disabled people will thrive in employment or self-employment wherever they work** and live – whether they are urban or rural, in a workplace or working remotely.
 - c) Disabled people will have **access to supports and resources** that work for them. They will feel confident their needs during employment will be met and that employers can harness their potential.
 - d) Better work outcomes will give disabled people more **economic security, dignity, self-determination and choice** – and this will improve other outcomes, like health and housing.
 - e) Disabled young people will have the **supports and information they need to transition from education** and training, into work.
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Employment actions

The strategy has a set of actions for employment. The actions are:

Enable and support disabled people to thrive in careers that match their interests and strengths

1. Put information and guidance that helps disabled people to identify and match their skills and interests with job pathways in one place and make it accessible. This should include guidance for disabled people leaving school or education.
2. Review specialist employment supports, consulting with disabled people, to improve employment outcomes.

3. Work with disabled people, employers and employer networks to create mentor programmes – so disabled people can get career support from disabled professionals or employers.

Work with disabled people, employers and businesses to build disability confidence, capability and inclusion

4. Work with disabled people and support providers to create a repository of resources. The resources will include knowledge, success stories and practical information – helping employers and employer networks support disabled people.
5. Work with disabled people, their whānau and supporters, employers and employer networks, to promote and enable the design of jobs and workplaces for disabled people. This means:
 - inclusion of disabled people
 - flexible working arrangements and reasonable accommodations
 - assessing workplace accessibility.

Government agencies should lead by example in the employment of disabled people.

6. Create an awareness campaign for employers and employees. The campaign will include guidance on accessibility and inclusion, data and reports, and will highlight the positive impact of disabled people on workplaces.