

# Disability Policy

We are building an Aotearoa where disability is valued and disabled people<sup>1</sup> and whānau can live with dignity and autonomy, and the support we choose. The Green Party will fully implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in a way that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi, invest in disabled leadership and advocacy, prioritise the marginalised disabled communities most likely to be left behind, and create strong systems to ensure accessibility and equity.

## Vision

**Disabled people and whānau thrive in caring communities.**

## Values and Principles

Guided by the framework Te Pae Māhutonga, here are the foundations for our disability policy.<sup>2</sup>

- *Mauriora*: Learning and being grounded in our whakapapa and culture(s) is our inherent right. Decolonisation is our priority. We honour indigenous, collective, and strengths-based understandings of disability and the language chosen to reflect them.
- *Waiora*: Our wellbeing is bound up with te Taiao. Disabled leadership and wisdom are key pillars of environmental and climate justice. Our interdependence is key to the thriving of all life. We think intergenerationally in service of our mokopuna and emerging generations.
- *Toiora*: Disabled people are trusted and empowered to enhance our wellbeing and that of our communities. We address the inequitable conditions which result in disabled people disproportionately living in poverty, precarity, and experiencing violence and abuse. Being safe and a sense of belonging are crucial to disabled people's wellbeing.
- *Te Oranga*: We challenge ableism, along with systemic forms of violence, conflict, oppression, and discrimination. These hurt everyone but especially disabled people. We recognise and advocate for the inherent value and full inclusion of disabled people and the disability community individually and collectively. This often involves substantially shifting mindsets, government priorities, and ways of working. Disabled lives and wellbeing come before profit.

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<sup>1</sup> In this policy, "we" refers to *disabled people*, recognising a broad and diverse umbrella of disability, including physical, sensory, cognitive, developmental, psychosocial, neurodivergence, and chronic conditions, and understanding that disability is something that changes over time.

<sup>2</sup> This policy is built on the foundations of wellbeing from Te Pae Māhutonga, a Tā Mason Durie framework originally envisaged for orienting health promotion, based on the Southern cross star constellation. These foundations underpin the pathways to wellbeing set out below. (Durie, Mason (1999), 'Te Pae Māhutonga: a model for Māori health promotion', Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand Newsletter 49. [\[link\]](#) Used in this context with permission.)

- *Ngā Manukura*: While recognising the diversity of experience within our community, we affirm that embracing disability and disabled leadership can powerfully help counter prejudice, stigma, and shame, and lead to better collective outcomes. We honour the wisdom of our disabled elders and ancestors while creating space for rangatahi leadership.
- *Te Mana Whakahaere*: Upholding disabled people's self-determination individually and collectively is key to our liberation. Decisions are made directly at the appropriate level or in the appropriate sphere by those affected. We advocate for ways of working where "nothing about us without us" and honouring Te Tiriti go hand in hand.

## Strategic Priorities

The Green Party's strategic goals include:

*"A more connected, compassionate and equal Aotearoa"*

Actions in this policy that will help achieve this include:

- Fully implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Resource marae, hapū and iwi, and kaupapa Māori organisations to provide whānau hauā and tangata whaikaha with accessible pathways to te ao Māori and our whakapapa.
- Provide easily accessible and timely income support to meet all disability-related living and medical costs, regardless of relationship status and cause of disability.
- Ensure that we are all housed in safe, accessible, affordable housing in the community of our choice, while phasing out institutional group home settings and ending involuntary detention.
- Centre the design and evaluation of disability services on the Enabling Good Lives approach
- Uphold legal capacity for everyone, moving from legal capacity assessments to rights based systems of supported decision-making.

## Connected Policies

Disability spans most policy areas, including [Housing and Sustainable Communities](#), [Transport, Education](#), [Household Livelihoods](#) and [Workforce](#), [Health](#), [Justice](#), [Immigration](#), and [Climate Change](#). We honour the guidance in the [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#) Policy. Disabled people are part of every community, so this policy should be read together with our policies that focus on other marginalised or prevalent groups that are represented in our diverse community, including [Rainbow](#), [Women's](#), [Seniors](#), [Communities of Colour](#), [Tagata Moana](#), and [Rural Communities](#) policies.

## Policy Positions

### 1. [Tikanga](#)

#### *Our Vision*

Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi, our policy-makers collaboratively design our laws, policies, and systems, in ways that work for disabled people. Our diverse cultural identities and languages are

celebrated and thriving, and we can fully immerse ourselves in them. Interactions with public services effectively support our wellbeing.

### *Actions*

#### **A. Rights and Governance**

- 1.1. Fully implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- 1.2. Develop and implement enforceable accessibility and/or disability rights legislation that makes accessibility the norm.
- 1.3. Abolish laws and policies that permit discrimination against disabled people.
- 1.4. Invest in high-quality, ethical research and data-collection by, with, and for the disability community, to inform decision-making.
- 1.5. Include consideration of disabled people in regulatory impact assessments.
- 1.6. Resource initiatives that allow disabled people to confidently take part in democracy, including voting, understanding how government works, and engaging directly in decision-making.
- 1.7. Provide disabled migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees with equal access to human rights mechanisms.
- 1.8. Fund initiatives that promote disability rights as part of foreign aid.

#### **B. Language and Culture**

- 1.9. Resource opportunities to assist us in learning about and taking part in our communities and cultures, including culturally significant national public holidays and events.
- 1.10. Improve captioning and audio description in underserved languages.
- 1.11. Resource and incentivise training for reo Māori - NZSL interpreters.
- 1.12. Resource the ongoing development and promotion of te reo turi and te reo Māori text-to-speech voice(s).
- 1.13. Resource marae, hapū and iwi, and kaupapa Māori organisations to provide whānau hauā and tangata whaikaha with accessible pathways to te ao Māori and our whakapapa.

#### **C. Public Services**

- 1.14. Provide public service staff with resourcing and training to meet access needs and counter ableism.
- 1.15. Integrate and simplify disability-related government systems.
- 1.16. Operate using a high-trust model that recognises disabled people as experts in their own lives, while making support and services available when needed.
- 1.17. Embed cultural safety across all disability policies, services, and supports.

## **2. Rangatiratanga**

### *Our Vision*

We feel able to show up in the world as our whole selves and have confidence in who we are. We resource whānau, hapū and iwi assertions of tino rangatiratanga for tāngata whaikaha Māori me whānau hauā. Our strengths and leadership are respected and we are supported to lead in our communities. Disabled people's organisations are in a position to support our leadership, visibility, skills, and connection within our community:

### *Actions*

#### **A. Tino rangatiratanga Māori**

- 2.1. Enable rūpu of tangata Whaikaha Māori and whānau hauā to:
  - Set their own priorities and ways of working in alignment with tikanga Māori; and
  - Be recognised, when they want to be, as equal partners who choose their own representatives for meaningful involvement in determining Crown legislation and policy in relation to disability and te ao Māori.
- 2.2. Resource kaupapa Māori disability-related supports and services within whānau-centred models (e.g. Whānau Ora) and disability-related pathways to enable Māori to choose which pathway they prefer.

#### **B. Leadership**

- 2.3. Prioritise the meaningful involvement of disabled people, whānau and our representative organisations in the development, implementation and monitoring of all legislation and policy we consider relevant to us.
- 2.4. Embed diverse disabled leadership throughout all of the public sector, especially in senior management roles.
- 2.5. Provide resources that enable disabled people to take on leadership roles within the community and government, including extending the election access fund to local elections.

#### **C. Disabled People's Organisations**

- 2.6. Resource disabled people's organisations to achieve their purpose.
- 2.7. Enable a diversity of disabled people's organisations to input into government policy and decisions, prioritising the involvement of those most impacted.

## **3. Manaakitanga**

### *Our Vision*

We collectively prioritise taking good, holistic care of each other. An integrated cross-agency support ecosystem enables us to live with dignity and be part of our communities. Government recognises the diversity of lived experience and need in the disability community, and resourcing is readily available to meet the extra financial costs of disability. Our communities, living situations, State "care" systems, and disability supports and services prevent and minimise violence, abuse and neglect, and are responsive when these do occur.

### *Actions*

## **A. Community Services**

- 3.1. Work with diverse communities to establish and implement best practices for delivering services and policies that reflect people's full lived experiences.
- 3.2. Require and resource mainstream services to be accessible to disabled people.
- 3.3. Centre the design and evaluation of disability services on the Enabling Good Lives approach.<sup>3</sup>

## **B. Targeted Supports and Services**

- 3.4. Provide easily accessible and timely income support to meet all disability-related living and medical costs, regardless of relationship status and cause of disability.
- 3.5. Remove disparities in access to support based on cause of disability, ensuring eligibility is based on need, not just diagnosis.
- 3.6. Establish human-rights-based processes for determining and allocating support, with accessible and transparent mechanisms for review and appeal.
- 3.7. Fund navigational and peer support services.
- 3.8. Provide good working conditions and a living wage for all support workers.
- 3.9. Fund respite options and appropriately value the role of whānau and close supporters.
- 3.10. Fund access to NZSL interpreters and tactile interpreters.

## **C. Stability and Justice**

- 3.11. Ensure that we are all housed in safe, accessible, affordable housing in the community of our choice, while phasing out institutional group home settings and ending involuntary detention.
- 3.12. Resource transitional supports and services for moving into or out of care, and through different life stages.
- 3.13. Prioritise community programmes and facilities over incarceration in the justice system, provide reasonable accommodations, mental health services, and inclusive rehabilitation opportunities to prisoners, and coordinate continued care upon release from prison.

## **C. Safety**

- 3.14. Equip mainstream violence and abuse prevention services to be accessible and responsive to disabled people.
- 3.15. End the use of seclusion, while ensuring the safety and support of both disabled people and staff.
- 3.16. Develop and implement a quality assurance framework across all publicly funded disability services and "state and faith-based care" providers.

## **4. Hononga ki te taiao**

### *Our Vision*

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/about-egl/egl-approach/principles/>

We can access and nurture the natural world, deepening our relationships with the taiao. We plan accessibly and inclusively for a low-emissions future. The spaces we live, learn, work, and play in are accessible to us, and we can get around easily.

#### **A. Access to Nature**

- 4.1. Extend accessible outdoor paths and facilities, including on public conservation land.
- 4.2. Provide funding for assistive equipment, modifications, and skill-building that supports outdoor activities and learning.

#### **B. Climate Resilience**

- 4.3. Prioritise disabled input and leadership locally and nationally within policy and communication about climate risk and adaptation.
- 4.4. Resource a coordinated approach to disability in emergency management, including a national disability emergency management strategy.
- 4.5. Uphold disabled people's needs and dignity within waste minimisation measures.

#### **C. Accessible Spaces**

- 4.6. Make the Total Mobility scheme fit for purpose, including by nationalising it and increasing the availability of mobility vehicles.
- 4.7. Ensure infrastructure and transport decarbonisation measures minimise negative accessibility impacts for disabled people and prioritise those that increase accessibility across the entire journey.
- 4.8. Require new public buildings and infrastructure to follow universal design standards.

## **5. Ōritetanga**

### *Our Vision*

We, with the support of people of our choosing when appropriate, have autonomy, equal recognition before the law, and are in charge of decisions about our lives. We can receive information and communicate in ways that are most accessible to us. Disabled people and whānau can rely on accessible, timely, and affordable healthcare, mental health and addiction support, and palliative care, without fear of judgement. Decision-makers uphold our human rights and actively facilitate our participation in all areas.

### *Actions*

#### **A. Self-determination**

- 5.1. Uphold legal capacity for everyone, moving from legal capacity assessments to rights-based systems of supported decision-making.
- 5.2. Uphold the rights of disabled parents to care for their children.

#### **B. Information and Communication**

- 5.3. Ensure all publicly available and requested information is provided in accessible formats.

- 5.4. Resource augmentative and alternative forms of communication that enable day-to-day interactions.
- 5.5. Uphold the principles of the NZSL Act.
- 5.6. Legislate accessible media requirements with quality-assurance standards to increase captioning, NZSL interpretation, audio-described content, and accessibility of websites and apps.

### **C. Healthcare**

- 5.7. Provide disability and health-related diagnosis pathways that are adequately resourced, efficient, knowledgeable, and dignifying.
- 5.8. Ensure the health system understands and addresses ableism, and that all staff are trained to work respectfully and effectively with disabled people.
- 5.9. Uphold our rights to bodily integrity and self-determination within the health system.
- 5.10. Take a precautionary approach to end-of-life choice that upholds the dignity, autonomy, and right to life of disabled people.

### **D. Education and Employment**

- 5.11. Require all schools to provide learning access centres, use Universal Design for Learning approaches, and collaborate with disabled people and whānau to plan and provide for our learning.
- 5.12. Ensure financial access to tertiary and community adult education, including removing the lifetime cap on the Training Support Fund.
- 5.13. Develop and implement a comprehensive, rights-based national disability employment strategy covering skills development, recruitment, pay, and working conditions.

### **E. Arts, Sport and Recreation**

- 5.14. Equitably resource accessible sport and recreation opportunities, including high-performance pathways.
- 5.15. Resource organisations that assist disabled people to access the arts, and facilitate disability-led artistic initiatives.