

Public participation checklist

This document contains checklists. If you require the checklists in an alternative format please contact the Access and Inclusion Branch on 9426 9200.

This checklist relates the following Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Outcomes:

Outcome 5 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

Outcome 6 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

Public participation checklist

Contents

Aim

Examples

Reasons for checklist

Using this checklist

Public Participation checklist

Issues and actions

Public participation checklist

Aim

- To identify and remove the barriers that prevent people with disability from accessing existing grievance mechanisms and from having input into the decision-making, consultative and quality assurance processes that are available to the community.

Examples

Decision-making, consultation, quality assurance and grievance processes provide opportunities for people to participate in government processes and democratic systems. Examples of these processes include:

- consultative processes including public meetings, workshops and surveys
- decision-making processes including local and state government elections, council meetings and advisory councils/bodies
- grievance mechanisms including customer complaints and appeal mechanisms
- quality assurance processes including customer feedback and customer service councils.

Reasons for checklist

Decision-making, consultation, grievance and quality assurance processes are often key elements in services offered by public authorities. These processes allow members of the public to have input into the management and operation of the public services they receive. Therefore, it is essential that people with disability are given the same opportunities as other members of the public to fully participate in these processes.

Consultation is an essential part of the development of government policies, programs and services. People with disability need to be able to participate in consultative processes. These may include general consultations with the community, decision-making processes such as advisory committees, and quality assurance processes. Including people with disability in consultations will enable the development of services, programs and facilities that are inclusive of the whole community.

The West Australian public sector is committed to a service culture that focuses on customers' needs and as outlined in many Customer Service Charters, public authorities are implementing a regular process of customer consultation.

Actions in support of inclusive consultations include:

- making information available about planning and decision-making in simple clear language or in alternative formats where requested
- ensuring that venues where public consultations are held are physically accessible both inside the building and outside it

Public participation checklist

- knowing the particular communication needs of customers and responding appropriately, for example, providing an AUSLAN interpreter, a hearing loop or displaying Better Hearing Kits
- providing options for giving information during consultative processes, like a choice between verbal or written presentations.

A checklist, “Creating Accessible Events”, was developed by the Disability Services Commission to assist planning consultative events (see Outcome 1).

People with disability, their families and carers are a specific stakeholder group and must be able to access grievance mechanisms. Flexible complaint processes assist people with varying abilities to outline their concerns in a variety of different means. The accurate and timely identification of grievances assists service improvement, often to the benefit of all service users.

Flexible complaint processes may include making information available about planning, decision-making and grievances in simple clear language or in alternative formats where required. Some people with disability may not be able to submit a complaint in writing unless they have assistance. Provision of an interpreter or a support person may be appropriate for some complainants.

Reviewing grievance policies and procedures is an important means of ensuring that state government agencies clearly communicate with people with disability, their families and carers.

Accessible complaints processes can also assist the provision of positive feedback or advice about how good services can be made even better.

Guiding principles for complaints handling based on Australian and International Standards

1. Visibility – Information about how and where to complain should be well publicised to customers, personnel and other interested parties.

2. Accessibility – The complaints handling process should be easily accessible to all complainants. This includes readily accessible information about the process, flexibility in the methods of making complaints and special arrangements and/or support for complainants with specific needs (including interpreters).

3. Responsiveness – Receipt of each complaint should be acknowledged to the complainant immediately. Complaints should be addressed promptly, complainants should be treated courteously and kept informed of the progress of their complaint through the complaints handling process.

4. Objectivity – Each complaint should be addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner through the complaints handling process.

5. Charges – Access to the complaints handling process should be free of charge to the complainant.

Public participation checklist

6. Confidentiality – Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant should be available where needed, but only for the purposes of addressing the complaint within the organisation and should be actively protected from disclosure, unless the customer or complainant expressly consents to its disclosure.

7. Investigation of complaints – Every reasonable effort should be made to investigate all the relevant circumstances and information surrounding a complaint.

8. Customer-focussed approach – The organisation should adopt a customer-focussed approach, be open to feedback including complaints, and should show commitment to resolving complaints by its actions.

9. Resolution of complaint – Following an appropriate investigation, the organisation should offer a response, for example, correct the problem and prevent it happening in the future. The decision or action taken regarding the complaint should be communicated to the complainant as soon as the decision or action is taken.

10. Accountability – The organisation should ensure that accountability for and reporting on the actions and decisions of the organisations with respect to complaints handling is clearly established.

11. Continual improvement – The continual improvement of the complaints handling process and the quality of services should be a permanent objective of the organisation.

Paraphrased from the Australian StandardTM
Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations (AS ISO 10002-2006).

More information is available from the Commission's website at [www.disability.wa.gov.au/For Service Providers/Complaints Management](http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/For%20Service%20Providers/Complaints%20Management).

Using this checklist

This public participation checklist can be used to consider the accessibility of the following:

- consultation processes
- grievance mechanisms
- decision-making processes
- quality assurance processes.

Public participation checklist

If there is difficulty understanding any of the terms, please refer to the Checklist Definitions in Part 4. You may wish to use a separate copy of the checklist to assess each public participation process.

Public participation checklist

Service: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

1. Is there public involvement in the nominated service through the following? (Please tick)	Yes	No
Consultation processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grievances mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision-making processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. If YES to any, please describe public involvement:

Consultation processes

Grievance mechanisms

Decision-making processes

Quality assurance processes

Public participation checklist

Information about public participation

3. Please list written information (eg pamphlets, newsletters, press releases, minutes of meetings) which is about or is part of the following processes for this service:

Consultation processes

Grievance mechanisms

Decision-making processes

Quality assurance processes

	Yes	No
4. Is this information produced in a way that is clear and easy to understand? (Refer to information checklist)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is this information printed so that it is clear and easy to read?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are people advised that this information can be made available in alternative formats on request? (eg large print, computer disk, audio recording and Braille?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. If yes, how are they advised?		
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
8. Are any of the following provided to assist customers with disability to access this information? (Please tick).		
Direct staff communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Public participation checklist

	Yes	No
Better Hearing counter card	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Auslan sign language interpreter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone typewriter (TTY)/TTY National Relay Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email/internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please list):		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
9. How are people aware of this assistance?		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

Public participation events

When arranging venues for public meetings, the following questions should be considered to ensure that all members of the public have the opportunity to attend and participate.

For questions 1–7 refer to Buildings and facilities checklist – general access for Buildings and Facilities sections.

	Yes	No	N/A
1. Do public transport set-down areas and car-parking adjacent to the facility address the access needs of people with disability? See Public Transport/Car-parking section	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is there a continuously accessible pathway to the facility? This includes pathways/ramps, kerb ramps/crossovers, external stairs and external signage? See External Access section	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is the entrance to the facility accessible to people with disability? See Entrances Checklist section	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Public participation checklist

	Yes	No	N/A
<p>4. Are the general access requirements of people with disability taken into account in the public areas within the facility? This includes stairs, dining/canteen internal signage and emergency exits and evacuation.</p> <p>See Interiors—General section</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>5.If there is a lift in the facility, does it have suitable access for people with disability?</p> <p>See Lifts section</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>6.Do the toilet facilities cater for the access needs of people with disability?</p> <p>See Toilets section</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>7. Are any utilities provided to the public able to be used by people with disability? (These utilities include telephone, dining/kiosk, drinking fountains and vending machines)</p> <p>See utilities section.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>8 Have the communication needs of people with disability been considered? For example:</p>			
Audio loop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Auslan sign language interpreter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. When public participation events are organised, what mechanisms are used to advertise this process? (Please tick.)	Yes	No
Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio announcements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posted newsletters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio announcements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper advertisements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Public participation checklist

Other (Please list):		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
	Yes	No
10. When public participation events are advertised, are people requested to notify relevant staff of any access requirements that they may have so that appropriate arrangements can be made? For example Auslan sign language interpreter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Issues and actions

The preceding checklist identified a number of issues. Where you have answered “NO” this may identify areas for consideration. This table is intended to provide a summary of actions that will increase or improve access for people with disability.

Issues	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for achievement	Provided for in Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (Yes/No)

The actions identified above should be transferred into the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) (where this has not already been done).