



Lobbying the NSW Attorney General and the Premier for the help and support people with cognitive disability need when they get caught up in the criminal justice system.

What is the issue?

People with cognitive disability are at risk in the justice system as victims of crime, witnesses to crimes or accused of crimes. The NSW Government must fix this.

Why are people with cognitive disability in the justice system at risk?

Justice Advocacy Service (JAS)

If you have an intellectual disability or another cognitive disability like autism or acquired brain injury then you need specialist support if you come into contact with the police and the courts.

The Justice Advocacy Service (JAS) is run by the Intellectual Disability Rights Service and provides support to people with cognitive disability who are victims of crime, witnesses or accused of crimes. JAS helps people understand what is happening and exercise their rights. The NSW Government has not committed to the funding of JAS beyond June 2021 this year.

This is a critically important statewide service and we want the NSW government to confirm it will continue.

Diversion programme to keep people out of jail

The NSW Government cut funding on June 30 last year to the Cognitive Impairment Diversion Program (CIDP). This was a valuable program which helped keep people with cognitive disability (including intellectual disability) out of prison.

People with cognitive disability need a fair go in the justice system!

This programme went a step further than JAS. It worked really well to link people into the supports they needed for a good life and to keep out of trouble with the law. This meant magistrates did not need to punish people and send them to jail but rather helped them get the supports they need.

We urgently need a new diversion programme in NSW.

We know the Department of Communities and Justice recognised the importance of a programme like the CIDP and the value of extending it to more courts. Now we need them to act on this.

Why do we need to lobby the NSW Attorney General and the Premier?

JAS and CIDP are funded under Justice NSW. The NSW Attorney General, Hon. Mark Speakman heads up Justice NSW and we need him to get these programmes funded in the June 2021 budget.

We want the Attorney General to know that there is support for these programmes across NSW.

One of the Premier's priorities is to reduce reoffending. JAS and CIDP helps to achieve this priority and so it is important you contact the Premier to tell her funding this programme is important for her to achieve this goal.

Contact the NSW Attorney General

Please either call or email The NSW Attorney General, Hon. Mark Speakman.

Make sure the phone call or email is courteous and that you include your name and address.

The phone number of the Attorney General's office is **(02) 8574 6390**

Use the form on [this link](#) to send the email.

Make sure you say that you want the funding for JAS to continue and for a diversion program like the CIDP to be funded in the June 2021 budget.

Contact the NSW Premier

Please email or call the Premier, Hon. Gladys Berejiklian.

Make sure the phone call or email is courteous and that you include your name and address.

The phone number of the Premier's office is **(02) 8574 5000**

Use the form on [this link](#) to send the email.

Make sure you say that you want the funding for JAS to continue and for a diversion program like the CIDP to be funded in the June 2021 budget.

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You can use some of the points below or your own points and examples.

It can be long or short.

What you can say on the phone or in your email:

- I want the NSW Government to continue to fund the Justice Advocacy Service (JAS).
- JAS helps people with cognitive disability understand their rights in the justice system and get a fair go. Please do not cut this funding.
- I am concerned that the NSW Government cut funding to the Cognitive Impairment Diversion Program (CIDP) in June last year.
- This was a valuable program which helped people with intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and other cognitive impairments stay out of prison, get support and move on positively with their lives.
- CIDP was successfully keeping over two thirds of its participants out of prison through diversionary orders. I want a new diversion program funded.
- It also enabled participants to get the funding and supports they are entitled to through the NDIS to live better, healthier and safer lives.
- The Disability Royal Commission is showing so many cases where diversion would have been better for the person and the community.
- I want a diversion program for people with cognitive disabilities funded across NSW.
- These programs are in line with the Premier's Priority to reduce reoffending.
- I want these programs funded in the June 2021 budget.



We would love to know how you go.

If you send an email please send us the response you receive from the Attorney General.

Please send to advocacy@cid.org.au

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