

# Disability Action Plan

## Introduction

### The Disability Duties

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the Historical Institutional Abuse (HIA) Redress Board is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties').

1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, the Redress Board is required to submit to the Equality Commission a **disability action plan** showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

1.3 As President of the Redress Board, I am committed to the effective implementation of the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to effectively implement this plan and, where appropriate, develop objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into our corporate and annual operating plans.

### The Disability Action Plan

1.4 The purpose of this Disability Action Plan is to set out what the Redress Board will do to fulfil its obligations in respect of its disability duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. We are committed to fully implementing the duties and will allocate the necessary resources to ensure that this plan can be effectively implemented and, where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into the Redress Board Annual Business Plan.

1.5 The Redress Board will put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and that this disability action plan is effectively implemented. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to all staff and to providing the necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan.

## **Functions**

1.6 The Redress Board was established on 31 March 2020 and is responsible for receiving and processing applications for compensation from those who experienced abuse while a child and while resident in an institution in Northern Ireland between 1922 and 1995 subject to sections 3 and 4 of the Historical Institutional Abuse (Northern Ireland) Act 2019.

## **Public Life Positions**

1.7 The Redress Board believes that it is important that people from a wide range of backgrounds become engaged in all aspects of public life. The Northern Ireland Executive Office (TEO) is responsible for the appointment of Redress Board non-judicial members and appointments are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI) and appointed by the First Minister and deputy First Minister: Appointments are made on merit, and applications are welcome from all sections of society.

1.7 The Executive Office produces the “All Aboard” news-sheet which provides advance information on forthcoming public appointment vacancies. The current issue of All Aboard can be downloaded from <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/all-aboard>

1.8 Redress Board judicial members are appointed by the Office of the Lord Chief Justice (OLCJ).

## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

1.9 The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy, developed centrally through the Department of Finance, applies to all aspects of working life and is implemented fully within the HIA Redress Board.

## **Recruitment Policy and Procedures**

1.10 Recruitment for HIA Redress Board administrative staff is undertaken centrally by the Department of Finance. NICS Recruitment Service participates in recruitment fairs to promote the Civil Service as an equal opportunities employer.

## **Training**

1.11 Equal Opportunities training for Northern Ireland Civil Servants is provided by the Centre for Applied Learning and supplemented by training from external providers when appropriate. The Centre for Applied Learning also provides a “Disability Awareness for Frontline Staff” e-Learning course which aims to increase their knowledge of disability. The training is available to staff at all grades who deal with the public.

## **Monitoring and Review**

1.12 We will monitor our progress through an annual report, which will be published on our website and provided to the Equality Commission. We will carry out a five yearly review of this plan. A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission and our five year review of this plan will be made available on our website [www.hiaredressni.uk](http://www.hiaredressni.uk).

1.13 Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan and the point of contact within the Redress Board will be:

Name: Ciaran Purvis  
Address: Headline Building, 10-14 Victoria Street, Belfast, BT13GG  
Telephone number: 02890569139  
Email: [ciaran.purvis@hiaredressni.uk](mailto:ciaran.purvis@hiaredressni.uk)

1.14 If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact the above person to discuss your requirements.

Mr Justice Huddleston

**President to Redress Board**

## REDRESS BOARD DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2022-2026

The measures which the Redress Board will take over the period of this disability action plan, together with performance indicators or targets, are set out below.

Measures	Performance Indicator / Target	Current or Proposed Action	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>To promote awareness and understanding of issues faced by people with a disability and to ensure staff have the necessary skills to help promote a culture of positive attitudes.</p>	<p>100% of administrative staff to complete mandatory training within two weeks of start date.</p>	<p>As part of the Redress Board induction programme, <b>all staff must</b> complete the following Northern Ireland Civil Service e-learning training:</p> <p><b><u>Unconscious Bias</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define what Unconscious Bias is.</li> <li>▪ Explain how Unconscious Bias can impact in the workplace.</li> <li>▪ State ways to tackle Unconscious Bias.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Disability Awareness for Frontline staff</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define disability in relation to the Disability</li> </ul>	<p>Within <b>two weeks</b> of start date and every <b>three years</b> thereafter.</p> <p>Specific individual training to be identified at annual Performance Agreement</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Services</p> <p>All line managers</p>

		<p>Discrimination Act;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understand how disability discrimination can occur;</li> <li>▪ Identify barriers for people with disabilities accessing services, and;</li> <li>▪ Explain appropriate positive language and etiquette to be used when providing services to people with disabilities.</li> </ul>		
	Promote at least two specific days/weeks per year (such as mental health awareness week)	Review online materials from the voluntary sector to decide which events to promote each year.	Annually	Head of Corporate Services
	Hold at least one Corporate Social Responsibility event for Redress Board staff, to participate in working with disabled people, during the lifetime of this plan.	Liaise with DoJ colleagues to identify a suitable event	October 2023	Head of Corporate Services

<p>To set out our commitments to disability equality in our annual Business Plan</p>	<p>Dedicated section in Business Plan in respect of disability equality</p>	<p>Our annual Business Plan will set out our commitment to the implementation of the disability duties and other requirements under DDA legislation.</p>	<p>Every April from 2022</p>	<p>Secretary to the Redress Board</p>
<p>To encourage more people to apply for public appointments and Redress Board administrative roles.</p>	<p>Establish a baseline in the first year of the plan and seek to have an increase in disabled applicants applying for board and administrative positions by 2026.</p>	<p>To liaise with TEO, to review how appointments to the Redress Board are published to ensure that any unnecessary barriers are removed.          To request that TEO ensure interview panel members have received training on DDA, disability awareness, and unconscious bias.          Ensure any internal NICS administrative vacancy notices encourages applications from disabled people.          Ensure all requests from NICS HR to accommodate transfer from staff requiring Reasonable Adjustments are given due consideration</p>	<p>In line with NJM Board member competitions           In line with NJM Board member competitions           As vacancies arise           As vacancies arise</p>	<p>Secretary to the Redress Board</p>

<p>To support the NICS work experience scheme for people with disabilities.</p>	<p>To accommodate at least one work experience placements within the lifetime of this plan.</p>	<p>The number of Redress Board participants within the NICS work experience scheme for people with disabilities will be recorded.</p> <p>Managers will review which roles are suitable.</p>	<p>Every March from 2022</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Services</p>
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