

Justice Advocacy Service

About the service

The Justice Advocacy Service (JAS) supports young people and adults with cognitive impairment in contact with the NSW criminal justice system, including as victims, witnesses and suspects/defendants to exercise their rights and fully participate in the process.

The service uses an individual advocacy approach by arranging a support person to be with victims, witnesses and suspects/defendants when they are in contact with police, courts and legal representatives.

JAS is delivered by the Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS).

The service is available across NSW including in rural, regional and remote areas, and concentrated in NSW Police Area Commands, Police Districts and around central court locations.

Seven core functions

1. Supports for suspects/defendants with cognitive impairment in police custody 24 hours/7 days per week.
2. Supports for victims and witnesses with cognitive impairment when in contact with police and court.
3. Supports for people with cognitive impairment attending court in person or via audio visual link from a youth justice or correctional centre.
4. Supports for people with cognitive impairment attending legal appointments, including in custody legal appointments.
5. Training for Justice agency staff on working with people with cognitive impairment in contact with the criminal justice system.

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6. Capacity building and peer mentoring for people with cognitive impairment in contact with the criminal justice system.
7. Free legal advice from a trained solicitor for suspects with cognitive impairment in police custody.

Eligibility

JAS is available to victims, witnesses and suspects/defendants in contact with the NSW criminal justice system who may have a cognitive impairment. A potential client **does not need to provide evidence of cognitive impairment to access the service.** If police, court, legal representatives, correctional officers or other stakeholder suspects a person may have cognitive impairment, a referral can be made by calling JAS. **More information about making a referral is available in the *Justice Advocacy Service Making a Referral Fact Sheet.***

As per the *Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act 2020 (NSW)* cognitive impairment includes (without limitation) any of the following:

- ✓ intellectual disability
- ✓ borderline intellectual functioning
- ✓ dementia
- ✓ acquired brain injury
- ✓ drug or alcohol related brain damage, including foetal alcohol spectrum disorder.
- ✓ autism spectrum disorder.

For more information
Visit the website
www.justiceadvocacy.org.au
Email JAS
intakeJAS@idrs.org.au

Call JAS
1300 665 908

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