



National Legal Aid stands with people with disability to call for changes to proposed NDIS reforms

30 July 2026

National Legal Aid (NLA) today used a Senate Inquiry into the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill 2026* to call for significant changes to the Bill to avoid potential negative, life-changing consequences for people with a disability.

In giving evidence to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee on Thursday, NLA Executive Director Yvette D'Ath, representing Australia's eight Legal Aid Commissions, said that in their current form, the reforms would significantly limit access to the NDIS and change how the scheme operates by creating complicated legal tests, greater ambiguity and inconsistency, and removing critical safeguards.

Each year, Legal Aid Commissions provide approximately 1.7 million instances of legal assistance. This includes specialist legal assistance to people seeking to appeal NDIS decisions at the Administrative Review Tribunal.

As the largest providers of legal assistance to people with disability across Australia, Legal Aid Commissions, stand with people with disability, their families, communities and disability representative organisations to raise their concerns, including about the limited incorporation of lived experience expertise in the proposed reforms.

"Access to the NDIS will be removed for many people the system was designed to support. Many participants will be less likely to get the supports they need and the costs and responsibility for care will be unfairly shifted onto families and informal supports, as well causing further impacts for already overstretched health and justice systems. This is further exacerbated by the fact that legal assistance providers and disability advocates are already significantly underfunded to help people navigate the NDIS system," Ms D'Ath said.

"The reforms will mean participants will have fewer options to review decisions and experience more barriers to ensuring decisions made under the NDIS reflect their support needs," said Sam Sowerwine, Associate Director of Economic and Social Rights at Victoria Legal Aid, who also appeared for NLA at the hearing.

“These reforms risk moving further towards a system where the most marginalised people are left behind.”

NLA made extensive recommendations in its [submission to the Senate Committee](#) in June, supporting considered and tested law reform grounded in lived experience, fairness and accountability.

Before the Senate Committee, which is due to report on 14 August, NLA highlighted five areas of concern in relation to the Bill including that:

- 1 The proposed reforms will mean permanence will no longer be about whether a person has a lifelong impairment but if they can show they have exhausted all treatment options. This could push people into treatment that has little impact on their functional capacity just to prove eligibility at potentially significant costs to individuals, their families and the health system.
- 2 Automated plan renewals and barriers to reassessments would lock people into existing plans and make it much harder for people to ensure their plan meets their current support needs.
- 3 The cost and responsibility of care will further shift onto families, carers and informal supports, entrenching disadvantage and increasing pressure on participants and households.
- 4 More unfair debts will be created while denying participants review rights, going against the hard-earned lessons from Robodebt.
- 5 Despite the recent amendments, the revocation and suspension provisions still risk excluding many people in need including those experiencing homelessness, family violence or hospitalisation.

NLA highlighted to the Committee, that the NDIS must remain true to its purpose: supporting people with disability to live safe, connected and meaningful lives in the community.

“This Bill should not proceed without significant changes,” said Ms D’Ath.

For comment, please contact National Legal Aid on via
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