

Justice Advocacy Service

About the service

The Justice Advocacy Service (JAS) will provide support to victims, witnesses and suspects/defendants with cognitive impairment in contact with the NSW criminal justice system to exercise their rights and fully participate in the process. The service will be available to both adults and young people with cognitive impairment.

The service will use 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 will be delivered by the Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS).

The service will be available across NSW including in rural, regional and remote areas, and concentrated in NSW Police

Area Commands, Police Districts and around central court locations.

The service will begin to rollout from 1 July 2019 and will be available at all locations by 30 August 2019. **A full list of rollout dates and locations is available in the [Justice Advocacy Service Rollout Information for Police Stations and Court and Legal Locations Fact Sheets](#).**

The service will have seven core functions:

1. Supports for suspects/defendants with cognitive impairment in police custody.
2. Supports for victims and witnesses with cognitive impairment when in contact with police.
3. Supports for people with cognitive impairment attending court.

4. Supports for people with cognitive impairment attending legal appointments.
5. Training for Justice agency staff on working with people with cognitive impairment in contact with the NSW criminal justice system.
6. Capacity building and peer mentoring for people with cognitive impairment in contact with the NSW criminal justice system.
7. Free legal advice from a trained solicitor for suspects with cognitive impairment in police custody.

Eligibility:

JAS will be available to victims, witnesses and suspects/defendants in contact with the NSW criminal justice system who may have a cognitive impairment. A potential client will not need to provide evidence of cognitive impairment to access the service. If police, court or legal representatives believe the person may have a cognitive impairment, a referral can be made by calling JAS on **1300 665 908**.

More information about making a

referral is available in the *Justice Advocacy Service Making a Referral Fact Sheet*.

As per the *Mental Health (Forensic Provisions) Act 1990 (NSW)* cognitive impairment includes (without limitation) any of the following:

- a) intellectual disability,
- b) borderline intellectual functioning,
- c) dementia,
- d) acquired brain injury,
- e) drug or alcohol related brain damage, including fetal alcohol spectrum disorder,
- f) autism spectrum disorder.

For more information

Visit the website

www.justiceadvocacy.org.au

Email JAS

justiceadvocacy@idrs.org.au

Call JAS

1300 665 908