

This leaflet provides information about the Ombudsman's role under the Disabilities Convention.

## Contacting the Ombudsman

Free phone: 0800 802 602  
[www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz)

**Email:**  
[info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz)



**Post:**  
PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143

**Fax:**  
(04) 471 2254

**Office enquiries:**  
8:30am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday

**Wellington**  
Level 7, 70 The Terrace, Wellington 6011

**Auckland**  
Level 10, 55-65 Shortland Street, Auckland 1010

**Christchurch**  
Level 2, 138 Victoria St, Christchurch 8013

### Other Ombudsman leaflets include:

Making complaints about government agencies,  
Making or complaining about requests for official information, "Whistle-blowing": a guide to the Protected Disclosures Act, Making complaints about prisons and Community Corrections, Monitoring places of detention, and The Ombudsman: who we are.

**Ombudsman**

Fairness for all

# Fair treatment for people with disabilities



Office of the Ombudsman  
Tari o te Kaitiaki Mana Tangata

# What is the Disabilities Convention?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights agreement that New Zealand signed up to in 2007.

The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.

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## Monitoring the Disabilities Convention

States must have one or more independent mechanisms to “promote, protect and monitor” progress in implementing the Convention.

In New Zealand there are three independent mechanisms:

- the New Zealand Convention Coalition (a group of national disabled people’s organisations)
- the Human Rights Commission
- the Ombudsman.

The independent mechanisms work together to:

- develop a framework for monitoring implementation of the Convention
- advocate for specific issues important to disabled people
- provide advice on legislation, policy and practice affecting disabled people
- report to the United Nations and to Parliament.

# What is the Ombudsman’s role?

The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about the administrative conduct of state sector agencies which affect disabled people.

When investigating a complaint the Ombudsman considers whether the agency has acted reasonably and fairly. This includes looking at whether the agency has taken the principles of the Convention into account.

The Ombudsman acts independently and impartially, and aims to recommend reasonable solutions. The Ombudsman does not investigate every complaint, and must establish that they have the power to investigate, and that an investigation is necessary.

The Ombudsman can also initiate investigations without receiving a complaint, particularly if there is an issue of wider concern that needs to be addressed.

# Contact the Ombudsman

If you believe a state sector agency has acted unreasonably or unfairly in a way that affects disabled people, you can contact the Ombudsman by phone, email, letter or fax (details overleaf).

If you want more information about the role of the three independent mechanisms, ask us for the pamphlet “Making disability rights real”. This pamphlet is also available in braille.