

## Annual Report 2022/23 – at a glance

### This document is about

- the Office of the Public Advocate
- the things the Office does
- what the Office did this year
- what might make it harder in the future for the Office to do its work.

### The Office of the Public Advocate

- protects adults who can't make decisions for themselves because of some kind of illness or injury to their brain, known as a decision-making disability (some people are born with a decision-making disability and other people may get a disability later, from an accident or illness)
- looks into reports of concern about other people harming or taking advantage of a person with a decision-making disability
- makes decisions for people with a decision-making disability, when a guardianship order is made by the State Administrative Tribunal that makes the Public Advocate the guardian (the guardianship order says what kind of decisions the guardian can make and might include things like where the person lives, who they live with, what activities they do and what medical care they have)
- does its best to improve life for people with a decision-making disability
- teaches people about what the Office does, who can make decisions for people with a decision-making disability and how to protect people with a decision-making disability.

## This year we

- looked into 2,746 matters about adults with a decision-making disability who might have had someone trying to harm them or take advantage of them or their money
- were appointed as guardian for the first time, for 737 adults with a decision-making disability
- made decisions for the people we were guardian for, which was 3,351 people on 30 June 2023
- held 21 information sessions about what the Office does and how to help protect people with a decision-making disability
- helped 4,518 people who contacted the Office's advisory service for information
- had 97 staff positions (at 30 June 2023), and spent \$13,768 million to protect people with a decision-making disability.

## What will happen in future years?

There are more people getting older in Western Australia, which means there are more people with dementia, as well as other brain injuries and illnesses.

More people with decision-making disabilities means there will be more work for the Office of the Public Advocate.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is also meaning more people need a guardian appointed and sometimes the only person who can be appointed is the Public Advocate.

The Office has to keep finding ways to manage more work so that it can keep helping all of the people who need help.

## How to contact us

If you:

- have a question about someone with a decision-making disability and think they might need a guardian (a person to make decisions for them about where they live or what medical care they have), or an administrator (a person to make decisions for them about their money)
- are worried about the safety and welfare of someone with a decision-making disability, or
- want to know what you can do to plan for a time when you might not be able to make decisions for yourself

call the Office on **1300 858 455** between 9am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.