

Response to question on notice

Questions on Notice Paper No 9

5 September 2025

Question No. 535

Peter CAIN MLA: To ask the Minister for City and Government Services -

1. What policies govern Access Canberra's acceptance or refusal of banknotes for in-person transactions and how do these policies align with obligations to provide equitable service to people with vision impairments or other disabilities.
2. What considerations were given to accessibility and inclusion when deciding to remove banknote acceptance at Access Canberra shopfronts, particularly for residents who rely on physical currency to manage their finances.
3. What training or professional development is provided to Access Canberra front-line staff to support customers with cognitive impairment, vision impairment or other disabilities.
4. What is Access Canberra's current protocol for referring customers with disabilities to external agencies (such as Australia Post) to complete standard government transactions.
5. What steps is the ACT Government taking to ensure that Access Canberra services remain accessible and inclusive for all Canberrans, including those who rely on assistance from family members, carers or support persons to conduct transactions.

TARA CHEYNE MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Access Canberra is committed to supporting customers with services and transactions. This includes options for how people undertake services and transactions, including payment.

Service Centres have been cashless for a number of years:

- Gungahlin, April 2015
- Woden, February 2017
- Dickson, August 2019
- Belconnen and Tuggeranong both 2020

Being cashless has enabled a more inclusive and open layout across the Centres, with a focus on collaborative service delivery, and the removal of enhanced physical security which is required in cash environments (such as security guards, anti-jump counters and counter to ceiling barriers).

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This layout has supported the spaces being seen as culturally safe, inclusive, dementia friendly accredited, and supportive to Canberrans with additional needs or requirements.

Alternate payment methods are discussed with customers including payment by cash which is available at Australia Post for customers. Most transactions can also be completed online or by phone which many customers with disability find convenient for themselves and carers, as it reduces a need to physically attend a Service Centre.

2. In July 2020 the Cashless Canberra project was established. The project works toward embedding the benefits of cashless service delivery practices that were adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, while acknowledging the need to consider policy issues and risks associated with cash as a legal tender and ensuring the availability of options for vulnerable people in the community who rely on cash.

During the project, targeted research on the lived experience of vulnerable Canberrans transacting with the ACT government was commissioned. This found that a small subset of vulnerable Canberrans may be impacted by the removal of cash payment options.

The project determined that, the potential impacts on human rights in terms of privacy and equity could be reasonably addressed by retaining access to cash payment options such as:

- Australia Post (vehicle-related renewals and infringements, rates, land tax, various conveyance duties, repayment loans and levies)
- Post Bill Pay, BPay
- Direct debit and/or bank transfer, and
- Cheque (accepted at selected service centres around the ACT)

Access Canberra regularly engages with community stakeholders and organisations on its service delivery, and through them shares information to their clients and customers on services, transactions including payment.

3. All Access Canberra Service staff receive Hidden Disabilities Sunflower training to support people with a hidden disability. Staff wear a supporter pin to show they have completed the training. Customers can wear a sunflower lanyard or pin to alert they might need extra help, understanding, or more time, staff receive dementia awareness training, are trained in supporting customers to use Auslan live translation services, undertake de-escalation, situational awareness and communication training.
4. Customers can choose to make payment through a number of channels, including Australia Post. Australia Post is widely used by government agencies for in-person transactions, making it a familiar and accessible option. The number of customers attending Service Centres seeking to pay cash is very low, noting this arrangement has been in place for up to a decade at some Centres. Staff work to support customers to understand options to support their needs.

5. Access Canberra has a range of accessibility options available including:

- Bookable appointments, which enables customers to book a time to attend with a carer or family member and not have to wait for service. In addition, a call option is available prior to the appointment that the customer can choose to have with Service Centre staff, where transactions can be discussed in advance (such as documentation to bring) which assists in making the process seamless on the day
- Access Canberra has recently published a series of 'Visual Stories' on its [website](#), which outlines in simple English, with images, what a visit to a Service Centre, or a call to the Contact Centre is like. This can support customers to prepare and feel comfortable for a visit and can also be used by carers
- Wheelchair access and accessible parking
- Quiet hour - making it easier for customers who need a quieter environment to complete their transactions supporting neurodivergent customers
- Auslan interpreting Services - Auslan interpreting is available at Access Canberra Service Centres. The video interpreting service is provided by Convo Australia. Customers can scan a QR code with their own device and connect with an Auslan interpreter at no cost
- Other Accessibility Support – can be found on the Access website [Accessibility - Access Canberra](#)
- Inclusive & Accessible Services Co-ordinator – recruitment has just been completed for Access Canberra's Inclusive & Accessible Services Co-ordinator with a responsibility for supporting making Access Canberra's services more accessible and inclusive for the ACT community

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Tara Cheyne MLA
Minister for City and Government Services

Date: 3/10/25