



Disability Policy
Research Program

kids
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network



réseau pour
la santé du cerveau
des enfants

Disability Policy in Canada: Provincial and Territorial Report

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Prepared by: Brittany Finlay, Samuel Ragot, Lucyna M. Lach, and
Jennifer D. Zwicker

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Disability Policy in Canada Provincial and Territorial Report was commissioned by Kids Brain Health Network (KBHN), and developed in collaboration with researchers from the Disability Policy Research Program (DiPo) and McGill University. The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of disability policy across Canadian provinces and territories. This report can serve as a baseline against which future progress in policy changes can be assessed, or at least understood.

In this report series, we aim to be as comprehensive as possible by including all policy related to persons with disabilities in each province and territory. We acknowledge that this report reflects a point in time assessment of disability policy. As such, information and links will likely change over time as governments and policy change. All information included in this report is accurate as of the date of publication. To maximize the accuracy of this report, it has been reviewed and verified by individuals with expertise in and/or lived experience with disability policy across Canada.

In an effort to be comprehensive while also succinct, we chose to apply a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria to the disability policy tools included in this report. The focus in this report series is to include legislation, plans of action, advocacy/awareness initiatives, tax programs, and services that support children and adults who have disabilities that are permanent and present from birth or that develop in early childhood. This includes neurodevelopmental disabilities and physical disabilities, deafness and hearing impairments, and blindness and vision impairment. We do not include policy tools that exclusively provide support to individuals that develop disabilities later in life, for example due to accidents or workplace injury. In some cases, there are policy tools that are accessible to all citizens and so are not explicitly designed for persons with disabilities and their families. We refer to these programs as 'blended' and include them in our analysis as they may be relevant to persons with disabilities and/or have unique

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eligibility criteria for them. This is particularly important in provinces and territories that do not have policy tools and programs specifically designed for persons with disabilities to highlight other avenues through which they can receive support.

We chose to focus this report on children and adults with disabilities, and do not include programs that support seniors (65 years of age or older) with disabilities. The caveat to this is that we do include programs that support seniors if they also support adults under the age of 65 years with disabilities. This report is also focused on current government-funded or administered programs. We include some non-profit and community organizations that administer programs on behalf of government, but acknowledge that there are many more that we do not mention that are instrumental to the provision of support for individuals with disabilities across the country.

With respect to education, this report includes legislation and government directives relating to inclusive education, as well as outlines the bodies that are responsible for administering inclusive education, when available. We also include specific government funding streams or government-funded programs that support inclusive education. We do not include specific programs administered by school boards or other entities.

Measuring Up

In this report, we provide information about the experiences of parents and caregivers when applying for and accessing disability programs, as well as information that emerged during the research process or from our peer reviewers. This information is provided in “Measuring Up” boxes throughout the report. Our intent in including this information is to provide additional context regarding the realities of accessing the policy tools outlined in this report and to give a voice to those with lived experience. It is important to note that these perspectives reflect opinions and experiences of a select group of individuals and may not align with the experiences of all individuals within a given province or territory.

Parent and caregiver experiences were sourced from a study completed by our team, which involved conducting an online survey and follow-up interviews with participants across Canada. We provide more information about the individuals we spoke with during this study on the following page.

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499 Survey Participants **81** Interview Participants

English Speakers: 93%
French Speakers: 7%

14% Spoke more than one language in their home

Average age: 42 years
Range: 22-70 years

Average age: 11 years
Range: 0-30 years

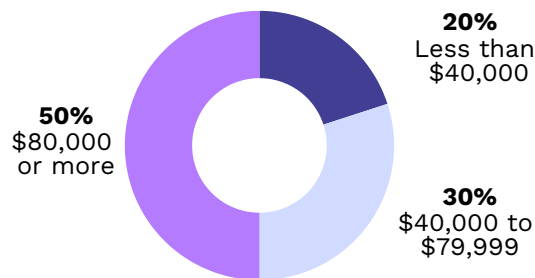
Males: 8%
Females: 91%
Non-binary: 1%

Males: 68%
Females: 31%
Non-binary or other: 1%

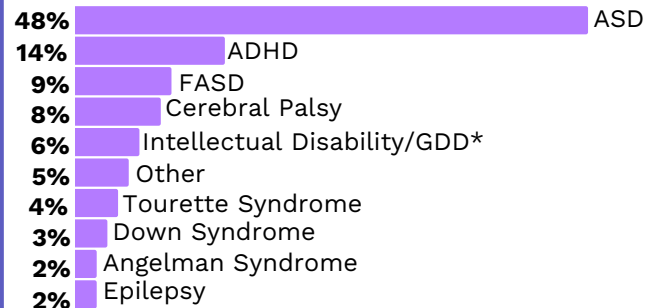
Participants

Youth

Household Income



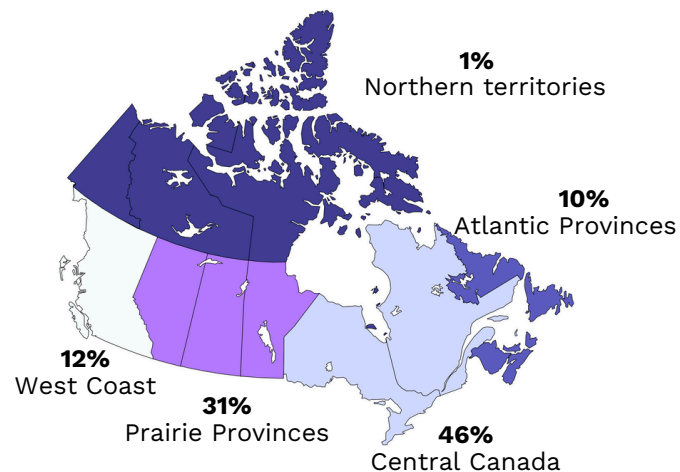
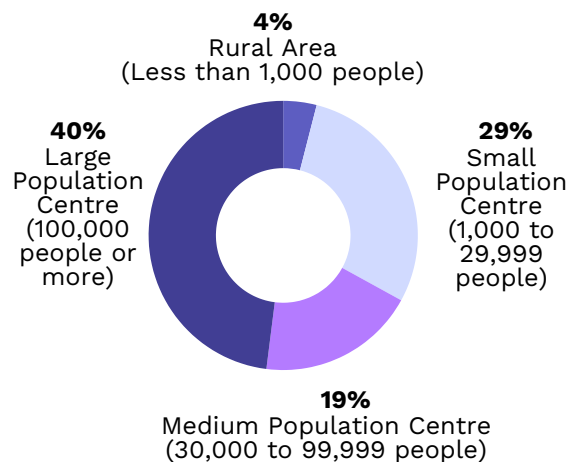
Primary Diagnosis



40% Have more than one diagnosis

*GDD = Global Developmental Delay

Location



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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of the families that shared their experiences with our team and all of the community peer reviewers that provided insightful feedback on this report. The creation of this report would not have been possible without their contributions.

Peer Reviewers

- Kathleen O’Grady, QUOI Media and Concordia University
- Hajer Chalghoumi, Kids Brain Health Network
- Logan Wong, IDEAA Perspectives Training & Consulting
- Philip Ney, Inclusion Alberta
- Nilima Sonpal-Valias, Alberta Council of Disability Services
- Shino Nakane and team, Autism Society Alberta
- Erika Cedillo, Inclusion BC
- Michelle Hewitt, Disability Without Poverty
- Michael Prince, University of Victoria
- Tim Stainton, University of British Columbia
- Brenda Lenahan, BC Complex Kids Society
- Melissa Graham, Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities
- Leanne Fenez, Abilities Manitoba
- Ken Pike, Inclusion New Brunswick
- Haley Flaro, Ability New Brunswick
- Ntibabaza Nigene and Colleagues, Nunavummi Disabilities Makinnasuaqtiit Society
- Denise McKee, NWT Disabilities Council
- Guillaume Parent, Finautonome
- Keiko Shikako, McGill University
- Natasha Rumsey, Rumsey Consulting
- Cynthia Anaba, University of Regina
- Haley Jones, parent and advocate
- Marli Robertson, parent and advocate

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BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION TO DISABILITY POLICY

“Public policy can be generally defined as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives.”

-Kilpatrick, 2016

“A set of interrelated decision taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve”

-Jenkins, 1978

What is Disability Policy?

There are many different ways to conceptualize and define public policy, and by extension, disability policy. For the purposes of this report, disability policy is broadly defined as what governments and other decision-making entities chose to do or not do that impacts persons with disabilities and their families.

Provincial and Territorial Disability Policy

In Canada, disability policy is delivered by all levels of government in many different sectors, including health, education, finance, and social services. Our previous [report](#) provides an overview of disability policy at the federal level in Canada. This report series focuses on disability policy provided by provincial and territorial governments. For the purposes of this report, we provide information about disability policy for all provinces and territories in alignment with the following five categories:

1) [Income Supports](#) are programs that provide financial assistance to individuals with a low-income so they are able to afford basic necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, and other daily needs. Persons with disabilities in Canada at a lower income level or who experience barriers to employment can access financial assistance from income support programs. Some provinces and territories provide income support programs specifically designed for persons with disabilities, while others provide an additional allowance for persons with disabilities within their general income support program. Others still offer one income support program that all individuals with a low income who meet eligibility criteria can access, with no additional supports for persons with disabilities, specifically.

2) Laws and Policies include laws and policy documents that allow systems to be put in place to help governments carry out changes they want to make to systems and structures. Laws are created from bills that are introduced in the provincial or territorial legislature. To become law, bills must pass through a specific legislative process. Policy documents are often published by ministries and can provide guidelines with respect to a specific topic. Legislation may stipulate that ministers can publish policy documents related to the topic of the piece of legislation (for example, education-related legislation often gives ministers the power to publish policy guidelines related to inclusive education).

3) Advocacy, Awareness, and Action Plans include councils, offices or events funded by provincial and territorial governments that can serve a variety of purposes, such as advocating to government on behalf of individuals with disabilities, advising on the development of government programs or policies, connecting individuals with disabilities with programs in their community, awareness building and education, support for mistreatment and discrimination, and, in some cases, direct service provision. This category also includes provincial and territorial action plans related to persons with disabilities that outline policy priorities and recommendations for government action.

4) Programs Provided through the Tax System include refundable and non-refundable tax credits, as well as tax deductions, that aim to offset the additional costs associated with having a disability by reducing the amount of income taxes an individual owes each year. Non-refundable tax credits reduce the amount of income tax owed but do not produce a tax refund if the amount of the credit exceeds the income tax owed, whereas refundable tax credits reduce the amount of tax owed and will create a tax refund if the amount of the credit exceeds the income tax owed. Tax deductions allow for certain expenses to be deducted from taxable income to lower the amount of taxes owed. In Canada, provincial and territorial governments develop their own tax law and policies; however, the Canada Revenue Agency collects and administers individual income taxes on behalf of provincial and territorial governments (except for the province of Quebec, where taxes are administered by Revenu Quebec).

5) Services and Supports for Basic Needs and Activities of Daily Living are services, supports, and programs that provide assistance to persons with disabilities in their day-to-day lives. This can include community-based support, employment programs, home and housing support, respite, early intervention, transportation support, and rehabilitation, among others. For each province and territory, we provide sub-categories within this section for added clarity.

Disability Policy Outside Government

In many provinces and territories, disability policy is delivered by entities outside of government, such as Crown Corporations, non-profit organizations and registered charities. In some cases, these organizations are funded and/or contracted by the provincial or territorial government to provide these services. We specify these cases whenever possible throughout the report. We also provide a list of these organizations at the end of the section on each province and territory as a resource for individuals and families looking for support.

UN CRPD

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) is an international treaty that upholds and protects the rights of persons with disabilities worldwide. Canada, along with 183 other states parties, has adopted the UN CRPD, which means that they accept the legal obligations contained in the UN CRPD. These obligations include ensuring that there are national laws to prevent discrimination, eliminating barriers to accessibility, and working to promote the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities. Associated with the creation of laws are the provision of disability programs that have the purpose of providing support to persons with disabilities to ensure they are able to fully participate in society.

Contained in the UN CRPD are processes that help to ensure that states parties are meeting the obligations outlined in the UN CRPD. For example, states parties must regularly report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to explain what actions they are taking to implement the UN CRPD. In Canada, the Canadian Human Rights Commission is also tasked with monitoring how well Canada is implementing the obligations outlined in the UN CRPD.

Canada and 99 other states parties have also signed on to the Optional Protocol to the UN CRPD. The Optional Protocol creates a process for people to make complaints directly to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities if they have exhausted all other legal options within Canada.

While the UN CRPD is ratified federally, many of the obligations contained in the UN CRPD can be met by policy and programs delivered at the provincial and territorial level. In fact, due to the federalist nature of Canada, many articles, such as Health (Article 25), Habilitation and Rehabilitation (Article 26), and Education (Article 24) are met to a greater extent by programs provided by provincial and territorial governments, rather than the federal government.

To demonstrate how government actions can fulfill requirements under the UN CRPD, we link UN CRPD articles with the various disability policy tools we include in this report. For the purposes of this report, we have sorted the 50 articles of the UN CRPD with similar aims into 10 categories (outlined below). Articles that are not included in this report are administrative in nature, related to reporting requirements, or are outside the scope of government action in this context. The icons used on the following pages will be used throughout the report to demonstrate how provincial and territorial disability policy is aligned with the UN CRPD articles.



Equality

Description

This category includes articles that promote equality for persons with disabilities both before and under the law, and ensure that persons with disabilities do not face discrimination.

Relevant Articles

Article 4: General obligations

Article 5: Equality and non-discrimination

Article 6: Children with disabilities

Article 7: Women with disabilities

Article 10: Right to life

Article 14: Liberty and security of person

Article 17: Protecting the integrity of the person

Article 22: Respect for privacy



Accessibility

Description

This category includes articles that ensure that persons with disabilities can access public spaces, systems, and facilities, such as the physical environment, transportation and communication technologies.

Relevant Article

Article 9 – Accessibility



Social Participation

Description

This category includes articles that ensure that persons with disabilities are able to participate in society fully and on an equal basis with others.

Relevant Articles

Article 18: Liberty of movement and nationality

Article 20: Personal mobility

Article 21: Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

Article 29: Participation in political and public life

Article 30: Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport



Employment and Financial Security

Description

This category includes articles that ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to work, and have access to inclusive and accessible workplaces. It also includes articles that outline the responsibility of states parties to alleviate poverty and promote financial security of persons with disabilities.

Relevant Articles

[Article 27](#): Work and employment

[Article 28](#): Adequate standard of living and social protection



Health and Social Services

Description

This category includes articles that ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to healthcare and social services that allows them to have the highest attainable standard of health and well-being, achieve inclusion and maintain maximum independence.

Relevant Articles

[Article 25](#): Health

[Article 26](#): Habilitation and rehabilitation



Public Education and Information

Description

This category includes articles that require states parties to provide public information about persons with disabilities to foster respect and combat stereotypes.

Relevant Article

[Article 8](#): Awareness-raising



Legal Capacity and Justice

Description

This category includes articles that ensure persons with disabilities have equality with respect to legal capacity and access to justice.

Relevant Articles

[Article 12](#): Equal recognition before the law

[Article 13](#): Access to justice



Caregiving and Family

Description

This category includes articles that ensure that persons with disabilities have equal rights with respect to family life.

Relevant Articles

[Article 23](#): Respect for home and the family



Education

Description

This category includes articles that maintain the right to education for persons with disabilities through the provision of inclusive and quality education, accommodations, and support.

Relevant Articles

[Article 24](#): Education



Housing and Related Supports

Description

















This category includes articles that ensure that persons with disabilities have equality in their ability to choose where they would like to live and are able to live as independently as possible in the community through the provision of in-home and community supports.

Relevant Articles

[Article 19](#): Living independently and being included in the community

ALBERTA

PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

Income Support   	
Disability-Specific	Blended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) 	
Laws and Policies     	
Disability-Specific	Blended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blind Persons' Rights Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alberta Human Rights Act Education Act Adult Guardianship & Trusteeship Act (AGTA) The Protection for Persons in Care Act
Advocacy, Awareness and Action Plans    	
Disability-Specific	Blended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Advocate for Persons with Disabilities Disability Employment Awareness Month International Day of Persons with Disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Alberta Human Rights Commission Office of the Child and Youth Advocate Alberta Ombudsman
Programs Provided by the Tax System    	
Disability-Specific	Blended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability amount for self Disability amount transferred from a dependent Amount for infirm dependents age 18 and older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical expenses for self, spouse or common-law partner and your dependent children born in 2006 or later Allowable amount of medical expenses for other dependents Caregiver amount

Services and Supports for Activities of Daily Living



Disability-Specific

- Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD)
- Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD)
- FASD Service Networks
- Supports for Students with Visual Impairments (SSVI)
- Alberta Grant for Students with Disabilities
- Disability-Related Employment Supports
- Internship for Persons with Disabilities

Blended

- Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL)
- Alberta Child Health Benefit
- Alberta Adult Health Benefit
- Residential Access Modification Program (RAMP)
- Community Access for People in Continuing Care
- Home Care
- Parking Placard for People with Disabilities

ACRONYMS

AADL	Alberta Aids to Daily Living
AGTA	Adult Guardianship & Trusteeship Act
AISH	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped
DRES	Disability-Related Employment Supports
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
FMS	Family Managed Services
FSCD	Family Support for Children with Disabilities
PDD	Persons with Developmental Disabilities
RAMP	Residential Access Modification Program
SSVI	Supports for Students with Visual Impairments

INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMS

 Employment & Financial Security  Health & Social Services  Equality






Alberta provides an income support program specifically for persons with disabilities. The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program provides financial and health benefits for low-income adults with a permanent medical condition that substantially limits their capacity to earn a living.

Through this program, individuals may receive the following:

- A monthly living allowance (\$1,863 per month) or a modified living allowance for those living in a facility (\$357 per month).
- A monthly child benefit (\$222 for first child, \$111 for each additional child);
- Health benefits, which include coverage for prescription drugs, dental care, optical care, and diabetes supplies.
- Personal benefits for specific needs, such as specific dietary requirements, child care, transportation, and moving, among others.

When determining AISH eligibility, a certain amount of employment income is exempt depending on an applicants' family situation, meaning that the income is not counted when determining eligibility and will not reduce AISH benefits. For example, for a single individual, the first \$1,072 of monthly employment income is fully exempt.

LAWS AND POLICIES





 Equality  Legal Capacity & Justice  Accessibility  Caregiving & Family
 Education

At the time of publication, Alberta does not have accessibility legislation. The only piece of legislation specific to persons with disabilities is the Blind Persons' Rights Act, which recognizes the rights of Albertans who are blind and permits individuals that require the use of guide dogs to access all public places within the province.

The following pieces of legislation include information that mentions or is relevant to persons with disabilities in Alberta:

- The Alberta Human Rights Act recognizes “as a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy that all persons are equal in dignity, rights and responsibilities without regard to...physical disability [and] mental disability,” among many other characteristics.
- The Education Act stipulates that “a student who is determined by a board to be in need of specialized supports and services is entitled to have access to those supports and services in an education program provided in accordance with this Act that will give the student the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister.”
- The Adult Guardianship & Trusteeship Act (AGTA) provides a range of options for adults that require support making health care, personal, and financial decisions.
- The Protection for Persons in Care Act applies to adults receiving government-funded care or support services, and ensures that they are protected from abuse.

ADVOCACY, AWARENESS, AND ACTION PLANS

 Equality  Public Education & Information  Social Participation
 Legal Capacity & Justice

The Government of Alberta receives advice and information about persons with disabilities through two main entities: The Premier’s Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities and the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities.

The Premier’s Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members and is responsible for engaging with and listening to the disability community in Alberta, communicating what they have learned to the government, and working with governments, community organizations and other stakeholders to implement changes as needed to better meet the needs of the community. Their vision is to ensure “Alberta is an inclusive and barrier-free society.”

Similarly, the role of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities’ Office is to represent the rights, interests, and well-being of persons with disabilities through relationship building with members of the disability community. The Advocate’s Office can also provide assistance with questions about disability programs and services. In its 2022-2025 strategic plan, the Advocate’s Office outlined five priority focus areas:

- Expand employment for persons with disabilities.
- Improve social inclusion and supports.
- Champion and mobilize stakeholder outreach work towards Accessibility Legislation.
- Champion efforts to increase access to justice.
- Champion efforts to increase and expand affordable and accessible housing and in-home supports.





In support of awareness building, the Government of Alberta recognizes October as Disability Employment Awareness Month, which promotes inclusion and increased participation of workers with disabilities in Alberta’s economy. The government partners with community stakeholders to deliver activities and events that increase employment opportunities for Albertans with disabilities, raise awareness regarding recruiting, hiring and retaining workers with disabilities, and highlight employers that show a strong commitment to inclusion and diversity.

The Government of Alberta also recognizes December 3 as International Day of Persons with Disabilities through community-based events that promote inclusion for persons with disabilities in Alberta.

Other initiatives in Alberta related to persons with disabilities include the following:

- The [Alberta Human Rights Commission](#) is responsible for protecting the human rights outlined in the Alberta Human Rights Act and can accept complaints from those that feel their human rights have been violated.
- [Office of the Child and Youth Advocate](#) represents the rights, interests, and viewpoints of children and youth in Alberta who receive intervention services or are involved with the justice system.
- [Alberta Ombudsman](#) is an independent and impartial office that promotes fairness and accountability in the public sector. The Ombudsman Office achieves this through investigations, making recommendations, and provision of education.

PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY THE TAX SYSTEM

 Equality
  Caregiving & Family
  Health & Social Services
 Employment & Financial Security

Outlined below are the tax-related programs provided by the Government of Alberta that are available to individuals with disabilities and their families. More information about all Alberta taxes for the 2023 tax year can be found [here](#). All dollar amounts provided in this section are accurate for the 2023 tax year.

Tax Credit	Description and Eligibility
Disability amount for self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces tax payable for persons with disabilities. • Individuals can claim this on their taxes if they have been approved for the federal Disability Tax Credit. • Adults 18 years of age or older can claim \$16,201 on their tax return.
Disability amount transferred from a dependent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals can claim this on their taxes if their dependent has been approved for the federal Disability Tax Credit and does not need to claim all or part of the disability amount on their tax return.
Amount for infirm dependents age 18 and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This amount (up to \$12,158 for each dependent) can be claimed for dependents over the age of 17 years with an impairment in physical or mental functions. • The dependent must have a net income under \$20,190.
Medical expenses for self, spouse or common-law partner and your dependent children born in 2006 or later	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals can claim the same medical expenses on their provincial tax return that they claimed through the federal medical expenses tax credit. • Dependents must be under the age of 18 years.

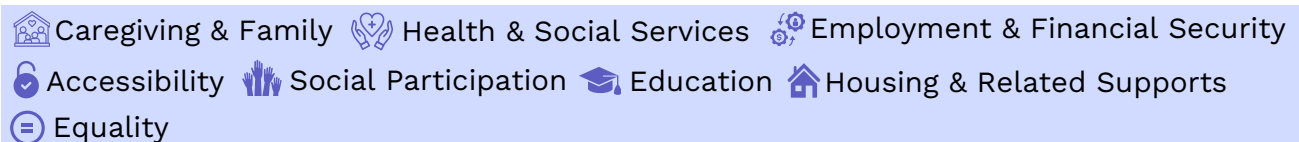
Allowable amount of medical expenses for other dependents

- Individuals can claim the same medical expenses on their provincial tax return that they claimed through the federal medical expenses tax credit for their other dependents 18 years of age or older.

Caregiver amount

- Individuals caring for a dependent over the age of 17 years with a net income under \$31,489 and with an impairment in physical or mental functions can claim this amount (up to \$12,158 for each dependent).
- This amount can also be claimed for an eligible parent or grandparent.

SERVICES AND SUPPORTS



Support for Children

The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) program provides support to children under the age of 18 years and their families, where the child has a diagnosis or is awaiting a diagnosis for a chronic developmental, physical, sensory, mental, or neurological condition or impairment. Conditions for which the primary need is for medical care or health services to treat or manage the condition are excluded unless it is a chronic condition that significantly limits their daily living activities such as eating, grooming, walking, interacting with others, playing and problem solving. Families enrolled in this program may receive help coordinating and accessing services, help with the extraordinary costs related to their child's disability, respite, specialized services, and planning for adulthood, among others.

Support for Adults

The Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program provides support to adults 18 years of age and older with a significant limitation in both intellectual capacity and adaptive skills. Individuals must be diagnosed as having a developmental disability (as defined by the PDD regulations) with onset before age 18 years. Once admitted into the program, individuals meet with their PDD worker to develop an Outcome Plan, which outlines the individual's vision and plan for their life, their needs, services that will help them meet their needs, and where to find services in their communities. This Plan is then used to create an Individual Support Plan, which outlines the individual's yearly goals and their plan for achieving these goals, including the support they need. From there, individuals are connected to services that align with their Support Plan, which can include the following: home living supports, respite, community access supports, employment supports, and other supports.



MEASURING UP: DISABILITY POLICY IN ACTION

Program Spotlight: FSCD

In Alberta, 75 parents and caregivers completed our online survey and nine parents and caregivers participated in an in-depth, follow-up interview.

Of all the programs we discussed during the interview, the most commonly discussed program among our participants in the open-ended portion of the survey and interview was the FSCD program. We share our key learnings about this program below.



FSCD Workers are key determinants of access to support

Our participants shared their FSCD worker was instrumental to the level of support they received through the FSCD program. Participants emphasized the importance of having a worker that understood both the disability support system and their child's needs.

“So, if, if you get the right worker, the processes are very straightforward and supportive, if you get a worker who doesn't know the system very well and doesn't understand, your children's challenges it can be really awful.”

“To me, the most critical thing for parents with children with disabilities is getting a referral through FSCD. Because that worker has then the education and the knowledge to lead parents to apply for more support.”

“When they came around for the visit they didn't mention any of these services to apply for, they didn't help with any of it ... I felt like they were in the business of just not helping.”



Families experienced challenges discussing disability

Some participants found it overwhelming, intimidating, and demoralizing to discuss their child's disability in front of workers to justify the need for support, especially with their children present.

“They want to see the children, which is fine, but I do my best to not talk about the really hard struggles with my children listening. I don't think that they need to hear about that part of themselves, talked about with strangers. And, so that tends to downplay the struggles, and then FSCD doesn't see the need as great as it really is.”

Supports through the PDD program are provided in three ways:

1. By the ministry, in government managed and operated facilities.
2. By contracted community-based service providers.
3. Through PDD's Family Managed Services (FMS), where funding is provided directly to the individuals/families who hire and manage their own staff or contract independently with a PDD-approved community-based service provider.

The Government of Alberta also works with a number of community agencies, that provide various services and supports for adults with disabilities.

Support for Children and Adults

To support individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), the Government of Alberta partners with community agencies and organizations through FASD Service Networks that connect Albertans with services in their communities. The agencies involved in this Network provide assessment and diagnosis, targeted prevention, and support services for individuals with FASD and their caregivers.

Education

Implementation of inclusive education-related services and supports is carried out by individual schools and school boards in Alberta. The Government of Alberta's role in inclusive education is to provide funding, resources, and guidelines to help schools create an inclusive learning environment for all children, including those with disabilities.

Blind or visually impaired students in the K-12 education system can access support through Supports for Students with Visual Impairments (SSVI), which allows eligible students to borrow alternate format resources or equipment to help support their learning. To be eligible for this program, students must be assessed and registered with SSVI by a qualified specialist.

Additionally, post-secondary students with a persistent or prolonged disability can access the Alberta Grant for Students with Disabilities, which can help with the cost of assistive services, equipment or specialized transportation.

Employment

The Disability-Related Employment Supports (DRES) program provides funding to individuals aged 16 years and older with a disability that creates a barrier to employment, training, and/or education. This funding can pay for supports in the following three categories:

- Job search supports, which help individuals seek and obtain employment.
- Workplace supports, which help individuals successfully transition into the workplace and maintain employment.
- Educational supports, which prepare individuals outside the K-12 school system for employment through post-secondary education, skill training, academic upgrading, or labour market programs.

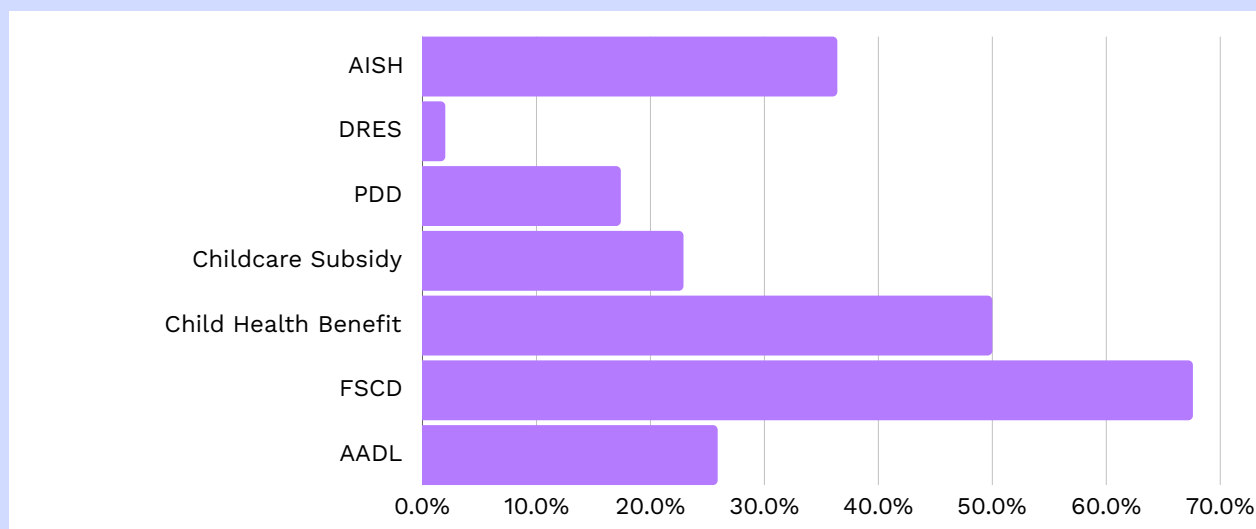
Recent high school and post-secondary graduates with disabilities can also apply for a one-year internship with the Government of Alberta to obtain work experience and access opportunities for professional development and networking.



MEASURING UP: DISABILITY POLICY IN ACTION

Experiences Accessing Programs in Alberta

The chart below shows the percentage of Alberta-based study participants that were accessing or had previously accessed each program, of those that indicated that they were eligible for each program.



Individuals not accessing programs to which they were entitled noted that they either did not know that the program existed or that they had not yet had a chance to apply to the program, potentially highlighting issues within Alberta related to knowledge of available programs and a lack of capacity to initiate a program application.

79%

of participants experienced some level of difficulty applying for disability programs, with 41% finding the process of applying to be very difficult and challenging.

Blended Programs

Programs that may provide support to individuals with disabilities despite the fact that they are not specific to individuals with disabilities include the following:

- Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL). This program provides funding for medical equipment and supplies for individuals with long-term disabilities, chronic illness or terminal illness so they are able to live independently at home and within their communities.

- Alberta Child Health Benefit. The benefit provides health coverage for children in low-income households. Applicants are not eligible if they receive health benefits from other programs, such as AISH and Income Support. Only medications on the Alberta Drug List are covered.
- Alberta Adult Health Benefit. This program covers health benefits for low-income adults with high, ongoing prescription drug needs. This program is intended to support individuals leaving the AISH or Income Support programs. Only medications on the Alberta Drug List are covered.
- Residential Access Modification Program (RAMP). This program provides grants to low-income homeowners or tenants with mobility challenges to enable them to modify their homes. Eligible individuals can receive up to \$7,500 per person each benefit year and up to \$15,000 per person within 10 years.
- Continuing Care. Continuing care homes are publicly funded, facility-based accommodations that provide a range of health and support services that can meet the needs of residents, including those with disabilities. Adults under the age of 65 years living in a continuing care facility can receive support through the Community Access for People in Continuing Care program to help reduce social and cultural isolation.
- Home Care. Alberta Health Services provides Home Care to people with disabilities or other health conditions to ensure they are able to remain in their homes, safely. Support can be provided by an Alberta Health Services funded home care provider or through self-managed care. Of note, Home Care can be difficult to access for those accessing supports through PDD.
- Parking Placard for People with Disabilities: Individuals who cannot walk 50 metres can apply for this program to allow them to use disabled parking stalls. To receive a placard, individuals must provide proof that they meet program requirements. Temporary, long-term, and permanent placards are available depending on the applicants' circumstances.



Support for Individuals and Families

Individuals with disabilities and their families who manage their own services through PDD or FSCD programs can access tools, resources, and information through Family Resource Centres. Albertans can also receive support with accessing services through Alberta Supports.

There are also many non-profits, charities, and other organizations that advocate for and provide support to Albertans with disabilities and their families. A selection of these organizations include the following:

- Deaf and Hear Alberta
- Inclusion Alberta
- Autism Society Alberta
- Canadian Council for the Blind, Calgary and Edmonton Chapters
- Easter Seals Alberta
- Gateway Association