



Disability Policy in Canada: Provincial and Territorial Report

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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

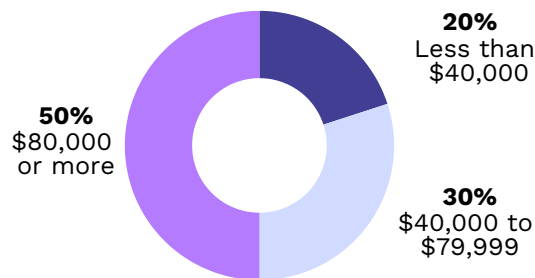
Males: 8%
Females: 91%
Non-binary: 1%

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

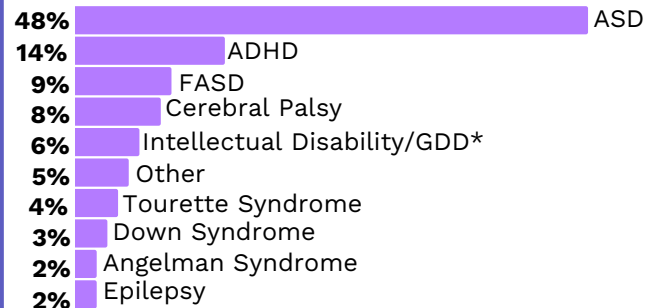
Participants

Youth

Household Income



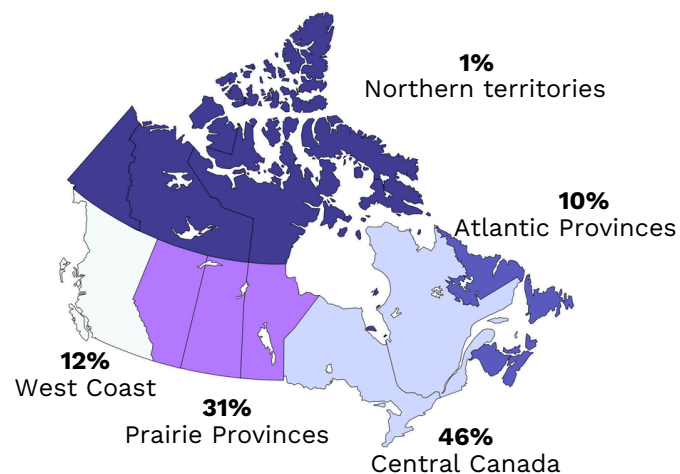
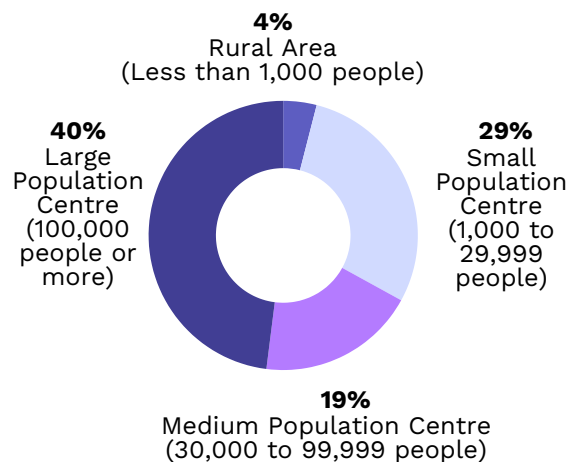
Primary Diagnosis



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

MANITOBA

PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

Income Support 	
Disability-Specific	Blended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) - Medical Barriers to Full Employment • Manitoba Support for Persons with Disabilities 	
Laws and Policies 	
Disability-Specific	Blended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility for Manitobans Act • Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights Code • Public Schools Act • Protection of Persons in Care Act
Advocacy, Awareness and Action Plans 	
Disability-Specific	Blended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manitoba Accessibility Office • Manitoba Access Awareness Week • Disability Employment Awareness Month • Indigenous Disability Awareness Month • International Day of Persons with Disabilities • Accessibility Compliance Secretariat • Office of the Commissioner for Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability • Intellectual Disability Issues Advisory (IDIA) Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Practices Office • Manitoba Human Rights Commission • Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth • Manitoba Ombudsman • Social Services Appeal Board

Programs Provided by the Tax System



Disability-Specific

- Disability amount for self
- Disability amount transferred from a dependent
- Amount for infirm dependents age 18 or older
- Manitoba Primary Caregiver Tax Credit

Blended

- 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
- Children's arts amount
- Fitness amount

Services and Supports for Activities of Daily Living



Disability-Specific

- Children's disABILITY Services (CDS)
- Child Care Inclusion Support Program
- Community Living disABILITY Services
- Consultants for the Blind and Visually Impaired (BVI)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consultant Team (DHHCT)
- Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities
- Manitoba Wheelchair Program
- Manitoba Key Worker Program






Blended

- Home Care Services
- Subsidized Housing
- Personal Care Homes
- Parking Permit Program

ACRONYMS

BVI	Blind and Visually Impaired
CDS	Children's disABILITY Services
DHHCT	Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consultant Team
EIA	Employment and Income Assistance
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
IDIA	Intellectual Disability Issues Advisory
IEP	Individual Education Plan

INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMS

 Employment & Financial Security  Health & Social Services  Equality
 Social Participation  Housing & Related Supports

The Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) - Medical Barriers to Full Employment (formerly EIA Disability category) provides financial support to individuals 18 years of age or older in financial need with a mental or physical disability that is likely to last more than 90 days and that prevents the individual from earning enough income to support their or their family's basic needs. EIA recipients can also receive Rent Assist if they need help with shelter and utility costs. The first \$200 of net monthly earnings from employment and 30 percent of any amount earned over \$200 is able to be kept by the EIA recipient before EIA benefits are reduced.

Financial assistance provided under this program varies with family size and age of children (for example single adults with a disability receive \$1,166 per month, whereas single adults with a disability and a child between the ages of 12 and 17 years receive \$1,666 per month). Individuals and families that do not need help with their basic living costs but that cannot afford to pay for their health needs may be eligible for grants for medical equipment and supplies through this program.

EIA also provides employment services to help support those in the EIA program prepare for, find, and maintain employment. This can include employment and training programs, and extra funding for expenses related to child care, transportation, work expenses, and phone costs, among others. People with disabilities in the EIA program are not required to look for work to receive benefits under the program, although they are able to utilize employment services if willing and able.

In 2023, Manitoba also launched the Manitoba Support for Persons with Disabilities program. This program is separate from EIA and aims to provide income support specifically to low-income individuals with severe and prolonged disabilities. Individuals that are already accessing Community Living disABILITY Services, living in a personal care home, or receiving Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits are automatically eligible for this program. Through this program, recipients are able to receive income support for living expenses, housing, and other supports, determined by living situation and financial resources. The amount received through this program is based on an individual's living situation and financial resources.

LAWS AND POLICIES

 Equality  Legal Capacity & Justice  Accessibility  Social Participation
 Public Education & Information  Education

In December 2013, the Accessibility for Manitobans Act became law. The purpose of this Act is to provide a process to remove barriers for people with disabilities. The Act consists of five accessibility standards (three of which are passed and in force currently):

- Customer Service – Focuses on business practices and training requirements to provide better customer services to persons with disabilities.
- Employment – Includes practices related to employee recruitment, hiring, and retention.
- Information and Communication – Related to removal of barriers associated with accessing and providing information (for example: information in print, in-person, or online).
- Transportation – Address barriers related to all aspects of daily transportation (for example: going to work, school, socializing, or other activities).
- Design of Outdoor Public Spaces – This standard applies to areas outside the jurisdiction of the Manitoba Building Code, such as sidewalks, pathways, parks, and other aspects of the outdoor environment.

Each standard outlines specific requirements and timelines for organizations that have a responsibility to comply with the Act.

Additionally, the Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act (formerly the Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act) came into force in October 1996, with the purpose of promoting and protecting the rights of adults living with an intellectual disability. This Act is based on five guiding principles:

- Adults with intellectual disabilities are presumed to have decision-making capacity, unless otherwise demonstrated.
- Adults with intellectual disabilities should be encouraged to make their own decisions.
- The support network of adults with intellectual disabilities should be encouraged to assist them in making decisions to enhance their independence and self-determination.
- The privacy and dignity of adults with intellectual disabilities should be respected when receiving assistance with decision making.
- Substitute decision making should be invoked only as a last resort.







Did you know?

Manitoba was the second province/territory in Canada, after Ontario, to introduce accessibility legislation.

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

- The Human Rights Code is Manitoba’s human rights law. It protects individuals from unreasonable discrimination based on many different characteristics, including “physical or mental disability or related characteristics or circumstances, including reliance on a service animal, a wheelchair, or any other remedial appliance or device.”
- The Appropriate Educational Programming Regulation established under the Public Schools Act outlines requirements for students to receive specialized assessments at school and to have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) prepared based on the results of the assessment.
- The Protection for Persons in Care Act helps protect adults from abuse and neglect while receiving care in personal care homes, hospitals or any other designated health facility.

ADVOCACY, AWARENESS, AND ACTION PLANS

 Equality  Public Education & Information  Legal Capacity & Justice
 Accessibility

There are two main offices in Manitoba that were created as a result of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. The first is the Manitoba Accessibility Office, which is responsible for developing and conducting public education initiatives to increase awareness of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. As standards of the Act are introduced and regulations become law, this office will provide tools and other resources to help local businesses, non-profits, and public sector organizations understand and comply with accessibility regulations. As part of its mandate, the Accessibility Office recognizes several disability awareness events throughout the year:

- Manitoba Access Awareness Week: Celebrated in June, this week promotes accessibility and inclusion, raises awareness about accessibility issues, and highlights people who are working to remove barriers to accessibility.
- Disability Employment Awareness Month: During the month of October, disability inclusion in the workforce is highlighted and celebrated.
- Indigenous Disability Awareness Month: During the month of November, the Office promotes awareness of the barriers experienced by Indigenous Peoples with disabilities.
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities: Celebrated annually on December 3, this day promotes an understanding of disability issues and calls for supporting the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with disabilities.

The second is the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat, which is responsible for ensuring that private, nonprofit, and public sectors are complying with the

Accessibility for Manitobans Act. The secretariat also works with organizations to raise awareness about accessibility, and receives and reviews complaints from the public about organizations that are not meeting legal requirements under the Act.






There are two bodies in Manitoba related to the Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act. The first is the Office of the Commissioner for Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability, which has the main purpose of determining whether substitute decision makers are necessary, and legally appointing substitute decision makers. The second is the Intellectual Disability Issues Advisory (IDIA) Council, which was launched in February 2023. Its mandate is to advise the Minister of Families on matters relating to programs and services for adults living with an intellectual disability and to oversee the recommendations developed and published in November 2021 by the Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Task Force.

Individuals applying for or accessing Employment and Income Assistance, Children's disABILITY Services, Community Living disABILITY Services and/or the Early Learning and Child Care Program who feel they have been treated unfairly are able to access confidential and impartial assistance from the Fair Practices Office. This Office provides information to program applicants and recipients, investigates complaints, mediates disputes, and can provide recommendations on individual cases to program staff. The Office also makes recommendations to the Government of Manitoba on changes to service design and delivery based on complaint patterns.

Other initiatives and offices in Manitoba related to persons with disabilities include the following:

- The Manitoba Human Rights Commission administers the Human Rights Code, and is authorized to mediate and investigate complaints of discrimination. Complaints with sufficient evidence may go through adjudication, which involved an independent public hearing to determine if the Human Rights Code has been contravened. The Commission is also responsible for promoting human rights and educating the public.
- Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly that advises children, youth, and young adults of their rights and about services that are available to them, as well as conducting research, investigations, and issuing recommendations to improve public services.
- Manitoba Ombudsman is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly that investigates complaints about access to information and privacy, fairness of government actions or decisions, or serious wrongdoings that citizens believe have occurred.
- Social Services Appeal Board provides individuals with a fair, impartial, and informal appeal process of decisions relating to various social programs, including EIA, eligibility for Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities, and eligibility for Community Living disABILITY Services.

PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY THE TAX SYSTEM

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

Outlined below are the tax-related programs provided by the Government of Manitoba that are available to individuals with disabilities and their families. More information about all Manitoba 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 \$6,180 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 \$3,605 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 \$8,720.
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	<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 for their other dependents 18 years of age or older.
Caregiver amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals caring for a dependent over the age of 17 years with a net income under \$15,917 and with an impairment in physical or mental functions can claim this amount (up to \$3,605 for each dependent). • This amount can also be claimed for an eligible parent or grandparent.

Children's arts amount

- Parents of children under the age of 16 years of age are able to claim registration or membership fees (up to \$500) for a prescribed program of artistic, cultural, recreational, or developmental activity.
- Children with Disability Tax Credit eligibility are able to claim this amount until they are 17 years of age and are able to claim an additional amount of \$500.

Fitness amount

- Young adults (age 18-24 years) and parents of children under 18 years of age can claim fees for a prescribed program of physical activity (up to \$500).
- Children and young adults that are eligible for the Disability Tax Credit can claim an additional amount of \$500.

Manitoba Primary Caregiver Tax Credit

- This refundable tax credit can be claimed by the primary caregiver of a person with a disability or illness.
- This tax credit helps cover the caregiver's expenses for time and money spent caring for people who need support. Eligible expenses may include bathing, shopping, doing laundry, going to medical appointments or attending recreational outings.
- Caregivers can claim \$1,400 on their tax return.

SERVICES AND SUPPORTS



Services for Children

The main program that supports children under the age of 18 years with developmental and physical disabilities and their families administered by the Government of Manitoba is Children's disABILITY Services (CDS). Families accepted into the program are paired with a case worker, who assesses the needs and goals of the child and family, and provides information about and helps to coordinate services available through CDS and other agencies (such as child care facilities, schools and volunteer organizations). The amount of services a family receives is based on eligibility, assessed need, and program resources available. Some examples of the types of services and supports available through the CDS program include the following:

- Respite
- Therapy
- Child Development Services for Pre-School Children
- Autism Services (including Autism Outreach which teaches intervention methods to parents and caregivers and Applied Behaviour Analysis)

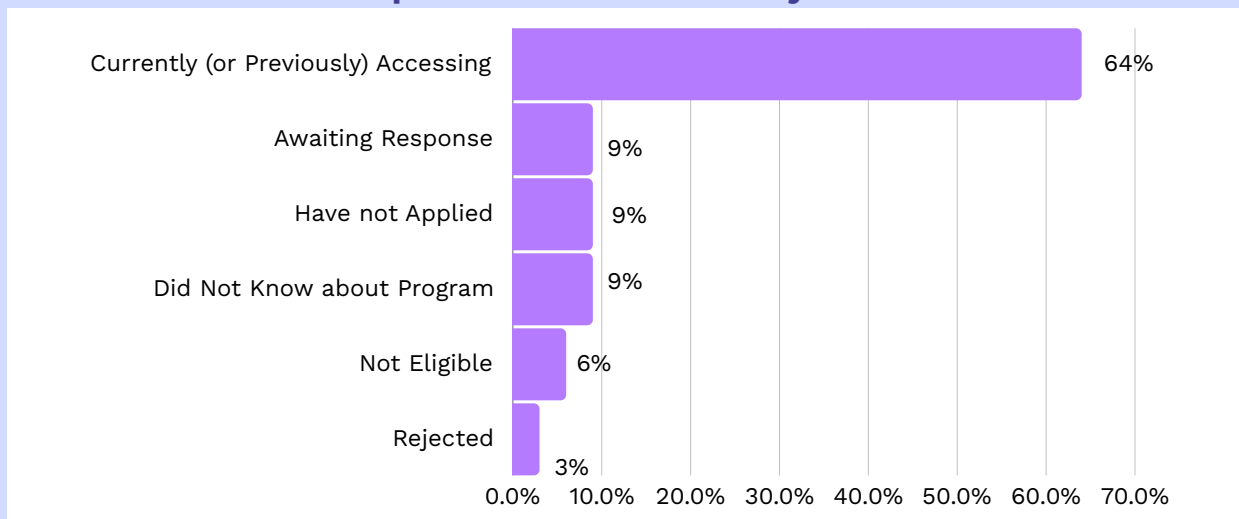


MEASURING UP: DISABILITY POLICY IN ACTION

Program Spotlight: Children's disABILITY Services

In Manitoba, 33 parents and caregivers completed our online survey and 10 parents and caregivers participated in an in-depth, follow-up interview. Participants shared their experiences applying for and accessing Children's disABILITY Services (CDS). As highlighted in the chart below, the majority of survey participants (64%) were currently or had previously accessed CDS.

Participant's Level of Familiarity with CDS



While CDS provided needed support (such as occupational therapy, before/after school programs, and respite) to our participants, many shared that long waitlists and challenges with capacity of program staff precluded access to timely support. Many shared that once an application was submitted, it could take up to two to three years to hear whether the application was approved, delaying access to services. Some participants also shared that, at times, they had difficulties getting in touch with their CDS worker to coordinate services. Additionally, many found that they had difficulties accessing the services and supports they needed, either due to lack of availability of service providers or long waitlists. We highlight quotes from our participants that exemplify these challenges below.

“The waitlists are way too long currently to make support helpful when it is needed. By the time we get to the top of the list, either the support is no longer needed or the situation has gotten worse.”

“Workers are overloaded with clients and often have too many clients...it's hard to connect with [our] CDS worker.”

“We filled out all the stuff, I provided all the assessments and documents that I had, and then sent it off, and then within a couple years, they finally got back to me.”

- Behavioural Services
- Summer Skills Programming
- After-School Care for Adolescents
- Supplies, Equipment, and Home and Vehicle Modifications
- Transportation

Additionally, children with disabilities can benefit from the [Child Care Inclusion Support Program](#), which provides funding for child care centres, nursery schools, and family and group child care homes to reduce or eliminate barriers to allow a child with additional support needs to fully participate in an early learning and child care program.



Did you know?

In Spring 2023, CDS established a partnership with [St. Amant Inc.](#) to deliver case management services to families raising Autistic children, in an effort to reduce the case management waitlist. St. Amant Inc., a non-profit organization located in Winnipeg, also provides many supports for children and adults with developmental disabilities, autism, and acquired brain injury and their families.

Services for Adults

The Government of Manitoba administers one main programs for adults with disabilities: [Community Living disABILITY Services](#). The Community Living disABILITY Services program supports eligible adults with intellectual disabilities. Community Services Workers work with individuals to develop a person-centered plan and connect them with services and supports provided by Community Living disABILITY Services or in the community. Examples of services provided by this program include the following:

- Respite
- In-Home Services
- Day Services
- Residential Services
- Clinical Services
- Crisis Intervention

Employment and Education

In Manitoba, supports for students in the K-12 system with disabilities are funded by Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, and delivered and coordinated by school boards and in-school teams (which can include students, parents, teachers, principals, resource teachers, counsellors, and educational assistants). In-school teams have the option of obtaining support from specialized Manitoba Education and Early Child Learning staff members, specifically [Consultants for the Blind and Visually Impaired \(BVI\)](#) and the [Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consultant Team \(DHHCT\)](#).

The Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities program offers a wide range of employment focused services to assist adults (over the age of 15 years) with disabilities in preparing for, obtaining and maintaining employment. Services available through this program include the following: vocational counselling, vocational assessments, vocational training, vocational planning, support services (such as funding for interpreters and technical equipment), direct employment services (such as support with job search, resume building, and on the job training), and funding for vehicle modifications needed to be able to get to a training or employment site.

Assistive Devices and Equipment

The Government of Manitoba provides funding to the non-profit organization Manitoba Possible to administer the Manitoba Wheelchair Program. This program offers long-term loans of recycled or new manual and motorized wheelchairs. This program also provides wheelchair repair and maintenance services. To be eligible for this program, individuals are required to have a form filled out by a healthcare provider and must require the use of a wheelchair for at least six months.

Services Provided by Health Authorities

The five health authorities in Manitoba provide many services and supports for Manitobans, including those with disabilities. There is one program provided by the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority that warrants specific mention. The Manitoba Key Worker Program provides support and information to families of children and youth (aged 0-21 years) with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) or confirmed prenatal alcohol exposure. Key Workers assist families in accessing supports, community resources, and health and education information that reflects the specific needs of the family.

Blended Programs

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

- Home Care Services. Home care is provided to Manitobans of all ages based on assessed need and in consideration of other resources available to the individual, including families, community resources, and other programs. These services are operated and delivered by regional health authorities. Individuals can choose to have home care services managed by the regional health authority or to self-manage their services.
- Manitoba Housing provides a wide range of subsidized housing options throughout the province of Manitoba. Options that specify that they are able to accommodate individuals with disabilities (among other individuals) include Private Non-Profit Housing, Sponsor Managed Social Housing, and Urban Native Non-Profit Housing.
- Personal Care Homes. Provides personal care services to individuals who can no longer manage independently at home with family support and community services.

- Parking Permit Program. Administered by Manitoba Possible and regulated by Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure, this program ensures that a person who has difficulty walking more than 50 metres can park in a specially designated parking spot. To be eligible, individuals are required to have a health condition that meets eligibility requirements and authorization from a regulated healthcare practitioner. Individuals are eligible for a pass if they do not have a vehicle. Individuals with a permanent disability can receive a permanent permit valid for up to three years before it needs to be renewed.



Support for Individuals and Families

The Family Advocacy Network (FAN) of Manitoba is a network of parents, family members, and caregivers of people, both children and adults, with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This network provides opportunities for families to get together, to share experiences and resources, to be empowered, to advocate, and to have a united voice across the province.

Get Your Benefits! is also a great resource to learn about the various federal, provincial, and regional benefits and programs available to Manitobans.

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

- Manitoba Possible
- Barrier-Free Manitoba
- Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities
- Abilities Manitoba
- Inclusion Winnipeg
- Community Living Manitoba