

# What We Heard

Inclusion Canada's Consultations on The Canada Disability Benefit

## What is the Canada Disability Benefit?

The Government of Canada promised to create a Canada Disability Benefit. This would mean adults with a disability in Canada would get money from the Government each month to help them pay for their daily living costs.

## What will the Canada Disability Benefit do?

Many people with disabilities in Canada live in poverty. People with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities. The Canada Disability Benefit can help change this. It will let people meet their needs and goals. It will give people more choice, freedom, independence, and dignity.

## The Details



From May to September 2022, we talked to the disability community

20

Over 20 disability organizations helped with the consultation

260

We talked to 260 people in focus groups and one-on-one interviews

## Purpose of the Consultation

The Government of Canada hasn't given many details about the new benefit, but we wanted to know what people with disabilities thought about the benefit. We asked things like:

Who should get the benefit?

How much money should it be?

What are the most important things the Government should think about when designing the benefit?

This is why we did the consultation. We wanted to hear the disability community's thoughts on the Canada Disability Benefit.

We submitted a *What We Heard* report to the government. This let the government know everything that the disability community told us when we talked to them.

## This is What We Heard:



**1** Poverty makes life hard, not disability.

**2** The different parts of someone's identity create even more challenges for them as a person with a disability (for example, race, gender, or language).

**3** Eligibility:

- You should **automatically** get the Canada Disability Benefit if you are already getting other government disability supports.
- The definition of disability should be based on a **social model of disability**, not a medical model.
- There should be **no employment test** (this means that getting the Canada Disability Benefit shouldn't be based on if you can work).
- **There should be no asset testing** (this means that you shouldn't have to get rid of your assets, such as savings, to get the Benefit).
- The Benefit must be paid directly to **you** (the individual), and not your family.

**4** Access to the Benefit & The Application Process:

- The application should be **simple, easily understandable and in plain language**.
- It should be the same across the country.
- It should be able to be filled out and processed **quickly**.
- It must be available in **multiple formats** (online, by phone, in person).
- There should be someone you can go to if you're not approved for the Benefit (this is called the **appeal process**). It should be simple and easy for you to ask why you weren't approved for the Benefit.

**5** Benefit Interaction

- There should be absolutely **no claw backs**.
- There should be a generous **earning exemption** (this means that people would be able to work while getting the Benefit and save money).
- The benefit should **not be tied to the Disability Tax Credit** and should be **non-taxable**.


**6** Amount of the Benefit

- It should raise people **above the poverty line**.
- It should acknowledge the **extra cost of disability**.
- It should be **indexed to inflation**.
- It should be between **\$2,000 and \$2,400 per month** at minimum.

**7** We need to change the way we think about and treat people with disabilities. We need better values, attitudes, and beliefs to have a more inclusive society for everyone.

**8** Reducing poverty for people with disabilities in Canada is not only about money. We need a bigger plan that allows people to get all the supports that they need.



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