



# Stronger Together: 2025 Federal Election Priorities



# Who We Are

Inclusion Canada is the national federation of people with an intellectual disability, their families, allies, and organizations working to advance the full inclusion and human rights of people with an intellectual disability and their families. Inclusion Canada leads the way in building an inclusive Canada by strengthening families, defending rights, and transforming communities into places where everyone belongs.

**We believe in a Canada where everyone belongs.**

This election priorities document is a result of extensive consultations with our federation of 13 provincial/territorial organizations and 300 local associations across the country. We are urging all political parties to commit to actionable steps to realize these important priorities to improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and their families.



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# Key Priority #1

## Enhancing Financial Security: Lift Adults with Disabilities Out of Poverty

No Canadian with a disability should live in poverty yet 70% of adults with an intellectual disability who live outside the family home live in poverty.

### Canada Disability Benefit (CDB)

- Goal: Lift adults with disabilities out of poverty by ensuring adequate income support.
- Key Asks:
  - Increase the CDB amount to ensure a total monthly income of \$2,400. To start, increase the announced \$200/month benefit to \$1393/month which is in line with GIS for seniors, with an additional 30% to account for the additional costs of disability.
  - Expand eligibility beyond the Disability Tax Credit – make it automatic for those receiving P/T disability income support.
  - Prevent benefit clawbacks by protecting against reductions in provincial/territorial (P/T) income or other disability-related supports.

### Automatic Tax Filing

- Goal: Ensure all eligible individuals receive the benefits they are entitled to.
- Key Asks:
  - Expand automatic filing to low-income individuals, including those with disabilities.
  - Enhance accessibility for users with disabilities.

### Disability Tax Credit (DTC)

- Goal: Make tax benefits accessible to more Canadians with disabilities.
- Key Asks:
  - Align eligibility criteria for the DTC with the Accessible Canada Act's broader definition of disability.
  - Automatically qualify recipients of P/T disability income support programs for the DTC.

## Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

- Goal: Support financial independence for people with disabilities.
- Key Asks:
- Legal Representation for RDSP Holders
  - Allow beneficiaries to choose their own legal representative/plan holder, regardless of family relationship, if their capacity is in question.
  - Implement a simplified process to appoint an RDSP legal representative if individuals lack power of attorney or guardian for property.
  - Avoid imposing guardianship capacity laws across provinces, drawing on models from New Brunswick and British Columbia.
  - Loosen withdrawal restrictions and allow for early withdrawal without penalty,



# Key Priority #2

## Reforming Canada's Discriminatory Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) Law

When Canadians choose suicide, we intervene... unless, as per current Canadian law, they have a disability. Track 2 MAiD is blatantly discriminatory: it needs to be repealed.

### Repeal Track Two MAiD

- Goal: When a person with a disability wants to die by suicide (assisted or otherwise), we recognize that they are in crisis. Wraparound social, medical, and economic supports are provided to combat suicidality. MAiD is reserved for those whose deaths are reasonably foreseeable.
- Key Asks:
  - Repeal Track 2 MAiD, which targets people with disabilities. Ensure that Canada stops "assisting" (only) people with disabilities, who are more likely to fall through gaping holes in Canada's social safety net, to die by suicide.
  - By repealing Track 2 MAiD, interrupt its forthcoming expansion. If no action is taken, assisted suicide will become an option for people with a mental illness (due to their having a mental illness) in 2027.
  - Uncover and respond to the root causes of suffering. The Canadian government cannot continue to accept that people with disabilities in Canada don't want to be alive. Those dying by Track 2 MAiD are more likely to be institutionalized, low-income, women, isolated, and young.
  - Ensure that Track 1 MAiD is properly safeguarded. Individuals found eligible to die by MAiD at end-of-life must enthusiastically consent and have access to the supports and resources necessary to live the rest of their life in peace and dignity should they choose not to die by MAiD.
  - Defend this course of action before Canada's Supreme Court. Supreme Court Justices have yet to wrestle with the legality of an end-of-life requirement.

# Key Priority #3

## Investing in Inclusive Employment Opportunities

People with disabilities have the right to meaningful employment.

### Enhance Opportunities for Inclusive Post-Secondary Education

- Goal: Improve access to higher education that leads to meaningful employment.
- Key Asks:
  - Invest in inclusive higher education, ensure participation in all learning activities (practicums, labs, etc.), and ensure equal/equitable access to student financial aid.

### Transform Sheltered Workshops into Employment First Models

- Goal: Shift from segregated day programs to inclusive employment.
- Key Asks:
  - Invest in a national initiative to transform sheltered workshops into Employment First models.
  - Provide resources and support to organizations transitioning to inclusive employment services.
  - Implement policies that prioritize competitive, inclusive employment for people with disabilities.

### Enhance Investments in the Ready, Willing, and Able (RWA) Initiative

- Goal: Increase inclusive employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities and autism.
- Key Asks:
  - Sustain and grow funding for the Ready, Willing, and Able (RWA) initiative to \$8 million per year, broadening its reach to more communities across the country.
  - Support partnerships between employers and employment agencies to create sustainable employment opportunities.
  - Promote awareness of the benefits of inclusive hiring practices among employers.

# Key Priority #4

## Transforming Communities: Increase Access to Inclusive Affordable Housing for All

Every person with a disability deserves to have a home of their own and live in an inclusive community.

### Inclusive Housing

- Goal: Promote accessible, affordable, and inclusive housing options.
- Key Asks:
  - Apply a disability lens to federal housing strategies with a clear definition of inclusion.
  - Mandate Universal Design principles in all federally funded housing.
  - Stop funding congregate housing models that segregate people with disabilities.
  - Ensure federal funds support only accessible, affordable, and dispersed housing solutions.

### Introduce an RDSP Home Buyers Plan

- Goal: Enable homeownership for people with disabilities.
- Key Asks:
  - Enable homeownership for people with disabilities by allowing RDSP funds to be used to purchase a home, similarly to the RRSP Home Buyers Plan.



# Key Priority #5

## Strengthening Families: Support Children and Youth with Disabilities

Families should have the support they need to help their children live a fully inclusive life in community and thrive.

### Child Disability Benefit

- Goal: Reduce financial stress on families supporting children with disabilities.
- Key Asks:
  - Double the Canada Child Disability Benefit amounts, raise income thresholds, and extend coverage for youth over 18.

### Inclusive Early Learning and Childcare

- Goal: Ensure all children have access to inclusive early learning and childcare.
- Key Asks:
  - Require comprehensive inclusion definitions in bilateral (F-P/T) childcare agreements, as per Article 24 of the UNCRPD.
  - Allocate targeted funding to enhance the capacity of early learning and childcare providers to include all children.
  - Establish clear benchmarks and accountability measures for inclusion, such as zero expulsions and 100% acceptance at registration.

