

# **NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US**

## **ARCH Legal Brief Report: A Legal Challenge against ADAP & CDB Claw Back and the Erosion of Disability Rights in Alberta**

[TEAMMASON2021Foundation](#)

July 2025

**NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US**  
**ARCH Legal Brief Report: A Legal Challenge against**  
**ADAP & CDB Claw Back and the Erosion of**  
**Disability Rights in Alberta**

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Prepared for: ARCH Disability Law Centre, Toronto, ON

On behalf of: TEAMMASON2021 Foundation

July 2025

## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

July 22, 2025

**ARCH Disability Law Centre**

55 University Avenue

Toronto, ON M5J 2H7

### **RE: Urgent Legal Brief - Alberta ADAP & CDB Claw back Concerns**

Dear ARCH Disability Law Centre,

Our names are Kristina Koivisto and Tanya Hushard, we are the founders of Teammason2021 Foundation. <https://www.teammason2021foundation.org/> A non-profit corporation based in Calgary, Alberta dedicated to raising awareness and funding to provide long-term housing to people with severe disabilities. We are reaching out to express our deep concern regarding the implementation of the new Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP). We have observed that the program is being introduced without any legislative backing, and we are extremely concerned about the program's transparency and potential impact on the human rights, dignity and livelihood of disabled Albertans.

Specifically, our concerns are as follows:

- The absence of legislation: ADAP appears to be driven solely by ministerial policy, giving Minister Jason Nixon broad authority to categorize individuals with disabilities as “able to work” or “unable to work,” without oversight by the Alberta legislature. <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-disability-assistance-program>
- Lack of medical autonomy: The government has stated that individuals on AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped) will be assessed by a panel of government-selected doctors. Stripping away the right to choose one's own healthcare provider (Specialists) and mandating recipients will undergo reassessment to categorize their working abilities.
- Potential human rights violations: ADAP may violate fundamental rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms specifically: Section 7 - life, liberty, and security of the person; Section 15(1) equality right; Section 12 – Cruel and Unusual Treatment or Punishment; Section 2(b) - Freedom of Expression; Section 6 – Mobility rights; Section 10(b) Right to Counsel.
- Violates Provincial Human Rights Act: ADAP may violate Section 4 – Equal Access to Goods, Services, and Facilities; Section 5 – Equal Access to Accommodation, Tenancy, Employment etc.; Section 7 – Retaliation.

- Conflicts with international obligations (e.g., UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).
- Provincial human rights codes, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which Canada is a signatory.
- Claw back of the federal Canada Disability Benefit: ADAP has been associated with a \$200/month claw back from the federal CDB, directly undermining the intended purpose of the federal benefit to reduce poverty among persons with disabilities.

We are formally requesting that ARCH:

1. Review the ADAP framework for potential legal and human rights violations.
2. Provide legal guidance or representation for affected individuals or advocacy groups in Alberta.
3. Consider issuing a public statement or legal analysis to help raise awareness at the national level.
4. Collaborate with local and national partners to challenge the implementation of this program if found to be discriminatory or unconstitutional.

If you require more information or would be open to a meeting with Alberta-based advocates, we would be happy to coordinate. There is a growing concern that ADAP could set a harmful precedent across Canada if it is left unchallenged. We have CC'd key political, legal, media sources, rightsholders and stakeholders. Please find attached to this email a full legal brief report for your review. Thank you for your continued leadership in defending the rights of people with disabilities. We look forward to your response and collaboration.

*“Nothing about us without us”*

Sincerely,

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that the work of this brief report was carried out on the traditional territories of both Treaty 6 and Treaty 7. In Treaty 7, we recognize the traditional lands of the Blackfoot Confederacy, including the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai Nations, the Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations (also known as Assiniboine), Bearspaw, Chiniki, and Wesley First Nations. This area is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. In Treaty 6, we acknowledge the traditional territories of the Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Dene, and Métis peoples, and specifically the homeland of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 4.

We honor the enduring presence, sovereignty, and deep cultural roots of Indigenous peoples across these lands. As this brief advocates for the rights and dignity of disabled Albertans, we recognize that colonial systems continue to intersect with ableism disproportionately impacting indigenous communities. We also recognize the statistic that the Indigenous communities have higher rates of persons with disabilities as one in three are impacted (Statistics Canada, 2019), compared to one in four (Statistics Canada, 2023).

We acknowledge the ongoing underrepresentation of Indigenous disabled individuals at both the provincial and federal levels, and are aware that although efforts have been made, Indigenous persons with disabilities have not yet been written into Bill C-29. As noted by Ms. Soloway at the standing senate committee for Indigenous evidence, "...our funding was next to nil" (Senate of Canada, n.d., para. 69), a statement which highlights the ongoing need for advocacy and support in this area.

In alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), we affirm the inherent rights of the Indigenous Peoples to land, self-determination, and full participation in all decisions that affect them. This acknowledgment affirms our responsibility to advocate not only for disabilities justice but also for reconciliation, and the dismantling of all systems of oppression and is a step towards accountability and action in the pursuit of justice.

## PERSONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We want to thank Kimberly Lillian Sturge of Toronto, Ontario, for bravely reliving her personal experience with the "ODSP medical review" process she underwent 2012-2017. Her willingness to revisit an extremely difficult and traumatic chapter in her life is an act of courage, and her voice brings critical awareness to the systemic harms that many disabled people are put through. Teammason2021 Foundation deeply appreciates her time and courage to help shine a light and be a voice for Alberta's disabled community as we work to prevent similar injustices.

Teammason2021 Foundation also extends sincerest thanks to Allison Bajt for her exceptional editorial work on this brief. While she is not a legal editor, her keen attention to detail, professionalism, and ability to meet a demanding deadline were instrumental in ensuring the project's completion.

## MINISTERIAL PRECEDENT

This brief is being written in response to a historical trend of executive overreach that has developed in the Alberta Legislature and is being led by Cabinet Minister Jason Nixon, who has consistently bypassed public consultation, undermined Indigenous self-determination (Lee, 2021), and disregarded legislative approval and regulatory procedures (JFK Law, 2024).

In 2020, Jason Nixon sparked widespread backlash as Minister of Environment and Protected Areas by opening the ecologically sensitive Eastern Slopes of Alberta to coal exploration. As reported by the Canadian Press (2020), documents released under freedom of information legislation revealed that Nixon told his staff there would be no public input for changes he's planning for Alberta parks, ignored advice to consult the public, and that "no explanation [was] given" (para. 13). This initiative first began by violating international obligations under the United Nations treaty (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, n.d.), as he failed to consult with them adequately on the proposed coal development (Opinko, 2021).

The controversy further escalated when he quietly rescinded the 1976 coal mining policy without public consultation, after spending months wooing Australian coal companies (Government of Alberta, 2020; JFK Law, 2024; Reporter, 2020). A multi-billion-dollar coal lawsuit followed against the Alberta government — originally launched in 2022, consolidated in 2023, and still ongoing — as coal companies challenge the province's reinstatement of the 1976 Coal Policy, alleging that it unlawfully expropriated their investments (Stutt, 2023).

Overall, Jason Nixon's tenure in multiple cabinet roles has been marked by a repeated pattern of bypassing legislative and democratic norms. As noted, he not only moved to allow coal development in protected areas without public consultation and attempted to close provincial parks by ministerial order (Canadian Press, 2020), he also made major funding changes without legislation.

These precedents of unilateral decision-making without legislative oversight have now extended into Alberta's most vulnerable disability services through the unlegislated Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP). As such, this brief represents the Alberta disability community and advocates' right to fair and equitable governance practices and presents a comprehensive basis for legal advocacy, media outreach, and public engagement regarding the development and proposed implementation of ADAP, scheduled for July 2026.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This brief outlines urgent concerns regarding the upcoming implementation of the Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP), scheduled to launch in July 2026. According to government sources, ADAP will be “...operational and disability income assistance applicants will be assessed for both the new program and AISH” (Alberta Disability Assistance Program, 2025, para. 5). The application process is expected to use a combined form, meaning clients “...will be assessed for both the new program and AISH” (Government of Alberta, 2025, para. 5). However, there is growing alarm across all of Alberta that the introduction of ADAP threatens the rights, autonomy, and financial security of disabled individuals, without sufficient legal safeguards, adequate appeal or informed community consent.

Minister Jason Nixon has stated that Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) will remain unchanged and that ADAP is being introduced to support disabled Albertans in seeking employment (Kerr, 2025). Meanwhile, AISH legislation already includes employment exemptions for recipients (Government of Alberta, 2025). The ADAP initiative, described as a “program” and lacking a legislative foundation, raises concerns that it may grant the Government of Alberta excessive control over individuals' autonomy. The structure of ADAP appears to re-categorize disabled individuals, withdraw essential supports, all without guaranteeing due process and transparency.

A further concern addressed in this brief is the Government of Alberta’s decision to treat the new Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) as non-exempt income for AISH recipients. This policy effectively claws back federal support meant to alleviate poverty among disabled Canadians (Canada Disability Benefit, n.d.). A move that completely undermines the CDB’s intended purpose, erodes its financial impact for the province’s most vulnerable (Appendix B, Source 12), and calls into question Alberta’s adherence to the principles of equity and dignity under Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Together, the CDB claw back and the forthcoming rollout of ADAP are financially tethered. ADAP is a non-legislated, employment-focused program involving government-led medical and employment assessments, creating a two-tiered system. This new framework lacks transparency, accountability, and legal safeguards (Kucey, 2025). It signals a troubling shift away from a rights-based model of disability support toward cost-containment and an ableist model of service delivery (Singhal, 2023). This brief urges legal review and the involvement of disability rights organizations, human rights legal experts, and advocacy groups to thoroughly assess this program. The goal is to ensure accountability and uphold the rights of disabled Albertans, as well as to prevent potential harm to this vulnerable community prior to the full implementation of ADAP.

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## INTRODUCTION

This legal brief has been created to raise pressing concerns surrounding the Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP), a government-run initiative currently being implemented without legislative oversight or legal safeguards. ADAP in its current form threatens the fundamental rights of disabled Albertans by operating as a policy-based program outside the protections of established law ensuring safety and security of individuals with disabilities. Without legislative accountability, ADAP risks violating the Charter rights, human rights, and international treaty obligations owed to persons with disabilities in Alberta. At its core, ADAP creates a two-tiered system that categorizes individuals without consent, imposes work-related expectations, and allows ministerial policies to determine access to critical support. This approach undermines dignity, autonomy, and the right to adequate income and healthcare. Unless ADAP is brought under a clear legal framework that centers around the rights of vulnerable persons, it could perpetuate systemic discrimination and expose disabled Albertans to unreviewable harm.

## Purpose

The purpose of this legal brief is to present evidence and analysis demonstrating that ADAP, along with the planned claw back of the federal Canada Disability Benefit (CDB), poses significant risks to the constitutional and human rights of disabled Albertans. This brief is submitted to request legal review and potential intervention by ARCH Disability Law Centre and other relevant legal authorities. It aims to highlight the lack of legislative framework governing ADAP, the coercive assessment and reassessment of Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) recipients without proper consent, and the financial harm (Kamal-Choufi, 2025; Appendix B, Source 4 & 6) caused by clawing back federal disability support. This brief presents urgent consideration of whether ADAP, in its current form, violates Section 15 of the Charter, Section 35 of the constitution the indigenous and treaty rights that are recognized and affirmed (Constitution Act, 1982, Sec. 35), the Alberta Human Rights Act, and Canada's international obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

## Background

The Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP) began quietly (Weeks, 2025) in early 2025 and was publicly announced in February, with implementation scheduled to begin in July 2026. Notably, ADAP has been introduced without public consultation, legislation, or independent regulatory oversight (Skulski & Ellingson, 2025). As a policy-based income support initiative, ADAP's rollout was sudden yet seems clearly orchestrated, its announcement has sent shockwaves throughout Alberta's disability community (AUPE, 2025). Along with the announcement came the news that the program would implement specialized medical (Franklin, 2025, para. 15) work assessments (Bellefontaine, 2025a, para. 8) to determine which disabled individuals are deemed able to work and which are not (Patterson, 2025). Furthermore, those classified as employable will be transferred into the new program (Patterson, 2025) and considered work ready. Marie Renaud, critic for SCSS said "...the government is creating a

second program to move more people off AISH using criteria that hasn't been disclosed to the public" (Bellefontaine, 2025b, para. 11).

## Scope

This brief focuses specifically on the legal, policy, financial accountability, and human rights implications of ADAP and its interaction with AISH, the federal Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) and the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) funding. It examines the absence of enabling legislation for ADAP, the use of government-appointed medical assessments to determine program placement, ministerial budgeting accountability as well as the financial impact of treating the CDB as non-exempt income (Kamal-Choufi, 2025). The full scope of this legal brief includes analysis of constitutional protections under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, relevant provisions of the Alberta Human Rights Act and Canada's obligations under the United Nations treaties. It draws on official government statements, correspondence from Minister Jason Nixon, community advocacy (Appendix B, Source 13) as well as potential areas of legal risk "...the province's plan lacks substance" (Franklin, 2025, para. 8) and portrays rights violations discriminatory that is reflected in phrases such as "...a new social assistance regime" (Skulski & Ellingson, 2025, para. 2).

## Method

This legal brief was developed using qualitative legal and financial research focused on rights-based analysis and critical disability theory. It synthesizes a wide range of sources, including public statements by Minister Jason Nixon, government documents, news media coverage, advocates input and publicly available information. Where possible, it incorporates direct quotations to demonstrate how policy intentions and justifications have a publicly-framed narrative. In addition, this brief draws on community advocacy reports online (Appendix B, Source 15, 16, 17), submissions from affected individuals, and expert commentary to assess potential violations of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Alberta Human Rights Act, and international human rights obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Lived experience narratives and documented community responses (Appendix B, Source 16) are included to reflect the practical implications of ADAP's policy-driven framework. The analysis highlights the lack of enabling legislation, the use of coercive medical gatekeeping mechanisms, and the financial harm caused by clawing back federal benefits (Kamal-Choufi, 2025), all of which raise serious legal and ethical concerns warranting review by appropriate legal authorities.

## Preview

The first section of this brief reviews ADAP, AISH, and disability policy in Alberta. The second section provides an overview of the CDB claw back, followed by a discussion of the government's use of deflection techniques and lack of accountability. The final section describes the hidden costs of the implementation of ADAP.

## ADAP, AISH, AND DISABILITY POLICY

The implementation of ADAP has raised widespread concern that the financial stability (Appendix B, Source 6) for recipients of AISH is in jeopardy. Removing funds from AISH while launching an unlegislated employment program to “...work in conjunction with the existing [AISH]” (Skulski & Ellingson, 2025, para. 2), along with clawing back the CDB (Moulitharan, 2025) raises the concern about the government's intention to reallocate funding across departments in disability services under the guise of reform (Appendix B, Source 11 & 12). Skulski and Ellingson (2025) report that according to Sandra Azocar, the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) vice-president, “the changes will create chaos and instability for workers and questions the province’s motivations (para. 17), adding: “If they are doing it so someone can say they are saving money on the backs of the most vulnerable in this province, that is just shameful” (para. 18). In stark contrast to this sentiment, Jason Nixon, Alberta’s Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services stated that “More than half of those with disabilities who are unemployed were considered to have work potential” (Ferenowicz, 2025). For many individuals within the disability community, this language indicates a transition toward a labor-market-oriented model of disability service delivery, which shifts the focus from a rights-based framework to one centered on economic efficiency.

Assessing a person based on their ability to work, rather than identifying the barriers they face or the supports they need, contradicts Alberta’s legal responsibilities under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Government of Canada, 2024, para. 1 & 2), the Alberta Human Rights Act, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). These frameworks affirm every disabled person's right to an adequate standard of living and “...access to appropriate and affordable services...” (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.a, para. 2a), and to equal benefit and protection under the law without discrimination or retaliation. Categorizing individuals with disabilities to productivity metrics, risks the safety and well-being of Albertans with disabilities that are invisible, episodic conditions, and psychiatric impairments. These disabilities may be found ineligible for support or work ready based on assessments that fail to account for the complex and fluctuating nature of their conditions (Appendix B, source 1). This type of evaluation model enforces stereotypes that disabilities must be visible to be legitimate, and it constitutes differential treatment based on disability, which stands in direct violation of the rights of persons with disabilities set out by the United Nations (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009).

Unsurprisingly, AISH recipients across the province “...are terrified and frightened with the changes to Alberta's new disability program” (Oram, 2025b, para. 1; Kamal-Choufi, 2025), fearing they may be deemed able to work simply because their disabilities are not outwardly visible. One Albertan wrote on a public Reddit forum, “Mine is mental health. I’m doomed”

(Appendix B, Source 16), while another noted, “...my concern is that rare diseases are not common enough” (Appendix B, Source 15).

## Ministerial Budget Plan

Public anxiety escalated further when the Alberta government announced a \$49 million funding cut to AISH, saying it was for “...savings in program delivery costs” (Heenan & Merlin, 2025, para. 19). This is the monthly income for adults with disabilities, triggering alarm not only among recipients but also throughout Alberta’s professional disability service sector (Skulski & Ellingson, 2025; Self Advocacy Federation, n.d.).

Table 1: AISH Program Funding by Year

AISH Program Funding by Year		
Fiscal Year	AISH Funding	Change from Previous Year
2024–25 (Q3 Forecast)	\$1.690 billion	—
2025–26	\$1.641 billion	–\$49 million
2026–27	\$1.619 billion	–\$22 million
2027–28	\$1.613 billion	–\$6 million

“We’re trying to really understand what the program is, at this point. We’re thinking that it’s a revamp of the barriers for employment program,” explained Keri McEachern of the Self Advocacy Federation (Kucey, 2025, para. 4; Doherty, 2024). Furthermore, there is also “\$22 million slated for administration reform to income support and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped AISH” (Heenan & Merlin, 2025, para. 12), highlighting the \$49 million reduced for “...savings in program delivery costs” (para. 19). Understanding the reallocation of funding sparks more confusion, as it seems that while ADAP and income support are connected, AISH is expected to decrease by \$77 million over the next three years (Alberta Ability Network, 2025).

## Wait Times & Population Growth

In addition to fear and anxiety prompted funding changes, the wait times for services within PDD and FSCD are years, and large advocacy groups are pleading with the government for “...allowing 12,000 families to wait months or years for services, particularly in programs designed to support vulnerable populations, undermines public trust. Albertans are asking why



the government is cutting jobs at the same time as it cuts funding for disability advocacy groups” (Azocar, 2025, para. 9).

## Unequal Access for Indigenous Communities

The Alberta government also has a constitutional and human rights obligation to ensure that disability income support programs are accessible to all eligible persons, including Indigenous peoples living on-reserve. Individuals living on-reserve are legally eligible for AISH but systemic barriers, including limited access to healthcare professionals, jurisdictional confusion, and lack of culturally appropriate outreach, results in no access (Woelk, 2023). The implementation of ADAP, without any mention of indigenous living on-reserve, no Indigenous consultation, or cultural safety, risks deepening the already existing inequities.

Excluding Indigenous children and adults impacted by disabilities is harmful in its own right, but particularly in light of the fact that the Alberta First Nations Health Consortium provided clear recommendations that “...the province of Alberta work in partnership with First Nations to build the capacity required to increase access to services on reserve and in rural regions” (ABFNHC, 2018, p. 13). Leaving Indigenous people out of the conversation directly contradicts Canada’s commitments under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, Jordan’s Principle, and Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as its obligations under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). To prevent the continuation of colonial policy structures, ADAP must be designed in partnership with rights holders in Indigenous communities to ensure equitable and meaningful access to supports for Indigenous persons with disabilities.

*Figure 1: Indigenous Disability Policy*

<b>INDIGENOUS DISABILITY POLICY</b> ALBERTA 2025 BUDGET VS. BEST PRACTICE	
Alberta 2025 Budget	Best Practice
 <b>Targeted Disability Support for Indigenous Peoples</b>  No dedicated funding under ADAP or AISH	 <b>Jurisdictional Navigation</b> (e.g. Jordan's Principle) Embed protocols for on-reserve and off-reserve service coordination across ministries
 <b>Jurisdictional Navigation</b> (e.g. Jordan's Principle)  No policy reference or integration	 <b>Collaborate with Indigenous Governances</b> Collaborate with indigenous communities and organizations to co-develop policy
 <b>Cultural Safety in Disability Services</b>  No cultural framework or Indigenous	 <b>Use Indigenous-led service delivery mode</b> and trauma-informed, culturally safe approaches

## CANADA DISABILITY BENEFIT (CDB) CLAW BACK

Coinciding with the AISH cuts, the government also declared that the new federal Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) would be classified as employment income and therefore subject to claw back, effectively making Alberta the only province in Canada to withhold this federally designed poverty-reduction benefit from eligible recipients (Appendix B, Source 2 & 6). When paired with the \$49 million AISH cut, contrasted with a \$73 million increase to the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) budget (Inclusion Alberta, 2025), this redistribution of funding within disability services raises significant concerns. The simultaneous claw back of the \$200 CDB, intended to lift Canadians with disabilities out of poverty, exposes a broader systemic issue. To illustrate, while provincial disability benefits are being clawed back, Alberta MLAs recently voted themselves a \$270 per month accommodation allowance (Kerr, 2024), reinforcing the perception that the government is transferring the burden of austerity onto the most impoverished. In other words, “The province is waging an [all out war] against the disability community” (Zielinski, 2025a, para. 1).

Beyond this, it appears that the perceived work potential of disabled Albertans on AISH is being strategically planned (Appendix B, Source 12) to justify halted access to services within the FSCD and PDD department (Azocar, 2025; Lavallee-Koenig, 2025). As Alberta boasts an \$8.3 billion surplus (The Canadian Press, 2025c). These developments cast doubt on whether funding constraints are real or simply reflect deliberate policy choices (Azocar, 2025). This approach not only destabilizes the financial security of disabled Albertans, but it also causes undo hardship on vulnerable people who rely on AISH and breaches Alberta’s obligations under both domestic and international human rights frameworks (Government of Canada, 2024; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.a). The new federal benefit supplements the AISH cut, ADAP recipients will be in the employment and training program, which is under the Income Support program. This could result in disabled Albertans falling through cracks with no ability to advocate, while provincial advocacy groups have been defunded (Paull, 2025), leaving vulnerable people to fend for themselves.

Ultimately, ADAP appears to operate less as a social safety net and more as an employment training initiative — one that aims to filter out individuals who are deemed able to work and “[transfer] them into the new system” (Patterson, 2025, para. 14). These changes represent a fundamental departure from the principles of equity, autonomy, and support that disability rights frameworks are built upon.

## Ministerial Framing & Medical Gatekeeping

ADAP raises serious concerns surrounding an ableist regime being developed with no legal framework to protect Alberta’s disability community (Skulski & Ellingson, 2025). For example, Nixon stated, “People with disabilities should not be punished for getting a job. Every dollar they earn on a paycheck should be helping make them better off, not threatening their access to the medication they need” (Ferenowicz, 2025, para. 4). This language reduces the right of disability benefits to individuals’ employment status, reinforcing the harmful notion that disabled

individuals' worth is tied to productivity, rather than recognizing their inherent right to dignity, support and self-determination.

Furthermore, Nixon has been quoted in the press, saying: "I want to be clear this will be about which of these two programs is the best fit for them based on their circumstances, but they will be receiving one of those disability programs long term" (Ferenowicz, 2025, Transition Questions Remain). This language is deeply problematic, as it implies that disabled individuals are passive recipients who must conform to externally defined program categories, rather than active participants entitled to choice and be self-determined. Even more troubling is the statement, "If somebody feels they should have been on AISH and have been placed on ADAP instead, that decision can be appealed to a qualified medical panel" (Ferenowicz, 2025, Transition Questions Remain), removing the right to choose your own doctor. This has generated unprecedented uncertainty throughout all of Alberta as disabled individuals are now worried about their livelihoods (Appendix B, Source 15, 8 & 2). Unfortunately, if the government-hired and selected doctors deem an individual as work-ready, many of these members of the workforce will still deal with hidden disabilities (Appendix B, Source 15, 16 & 17).

To further illustrate, disempowering language continuously used in the media, explicitly indicates both challenges to financing and the gatekeeping of services to the most disadvantaged population. It reveals the true intentions of leadership and further illuminates the controlling narrative being portrayed in the media towards disabled individuals and entrenches systemic barriers to equitable support. The development of ADAP under ministerial authority, absent of legislative debate or statutory protections, amplifies these concerns, raising critical questions about transparency, accountability, and the risk of rights violations under a regime that is not anchored in law (Weeks, 2025; Patterson, 2025).

Minister Jason Nixon's media statements since the official announcement of ADAP have raised concerns throughout Alberta, as his responses regarding the rollout of ADAP lack transparency. For example, he states: "I don't want to make this final program in a silo...when asked why the program was being announced without key details being known...We'll be making some final decisions in consultation with others in the coming weeks" (Farrell, 2025, para. 6). His responses also deflect providing informative information: "We have regulations...income that you receive from the federal government, including...Canadian Pension Plan, are part of the calculation of income. Alberta has the highest AISH payments in the country," (Kamal-Choufi, 2025, para. 1) The minister deflected questions to bring transparency regarding ADAP and the CDB claw back and looked to the "...shortcomings in provincial and territorial disability programs and services..." (Kids Brain Health Network, 2025, para. 2) in other provinces to justify failing the disabled population of Alberta.

Families from across Canada come to Alberta for the FSCD and PDD supports Alberta has because of the lack of supports in other provinces (Sterkenburg, 2025). The government is fully aware of the rise in the population, and thereby the increased demand for disability supports (McKay, 2025).

## **Discrimination by Living Arrangement**

Official correspondence from the Alberta government confirms that AISH recipients residing in long-term care facilities are exempt from the claw back of the Canada Disability Benefit (CDB), while those residing independently in the community are not (see correspondences in Appendix G). This differential treatment creates a two-tiered system that adversely affects individuals choosing to live outside institutional care. It seemingly contradicts both Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination; and Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which affirms the right to an adequate standard of living and social protection without exclusion based on living arrangement.

In summary, this policy raises serious concerns about potential non-compliance with domestic and international human rights obligations. Given its disproportionate impact on individuals living in the community, it merits immediate scrutiny to ensure that Albertans with disabilities are not unjustly penalized for choosing independent, community-based living over institutional care.

## **DEFLECTION VS. ACCOUNTABILITY**

Despite clear evidence of budget cuts, the Alberta government has continued to make it seem as though disability services will not be impacted, with \$49 million budget cut to AISH, then \$73 million increase into PDD (Oram, 2025a) and Nixon defending the existing ADAP framework. He further asserted, “The AISH benefit in our province is not changing...Alberta’s disability supports are already among the most generous in the country” (Lee, 2025, para. 21) Meanwhile the decreased budget cut in AISH clearly indicates that there is a plan to remove disabled AISH recipients over to the ADAP program, which has been fully funded under the income support program (Heenan & Merlin, 2025, para. 24).

This is an important consideration, as financial data clearly indicates that the AISH budget is projected to decrease annually over the next three years (Heenan & Merlin, 2025, para. 24). This trend suggests a strategic shift that may impact disabled Albertans' access to support, potentially leading to efforts aimed at increasing workforce participation without conducting rights-based comprehensive evaluations. The financial patterns provide an evidence-based foundation for understanding these forthcoming changes (Appendix B, Source 5). The Alberta government’s decision to claw back the \$200 CDB from an estimated 20,416 AISH recipients as this is equivalent to \$49 million annually, coincides with a \$49 million reduction to the AISH budget. Simultaneously, the province increased employment-related spending by \$185 million to implement ADAP. This program is ultimately designed to transition employable individuals with disabilities off AISH and into job-focused supports, regardless of the ongoing nature of their disabilities.

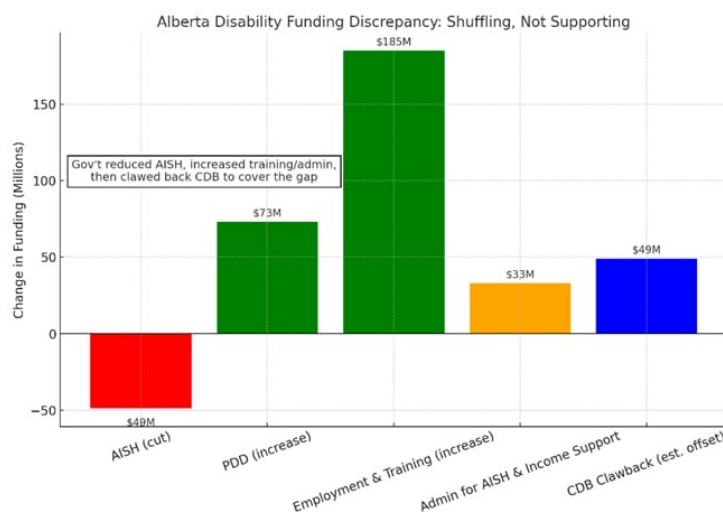
Despite these claims, the development of ADAP remains and is surrounded in unanswered questions (Appendix B, Source 2 & 4), yet it is set to launch “...operations in July 2026”

(Government of Alberta, 2025). Nixon went on to criticize the prior NDP government when pressed for answers to be transparent and tell stake holders and rights holders about ADAP's launch criteria stating, "...continuing to bring forth consecutive budgets with no indexation... continuing to force those who are on AISH that want to participate in employment to be punished, to have their wages clawed back for their hard work" (Lee, 2025, para. 7). Again, referring to the employment of individuals with disabilities in a manner that perpetuates ableist language and undermines the dignity and rights of vulnerable people. Instead of remaining nonpartisan he deflected the systemic issues within the disability government departments, by blaming previous government for the current budgeting shortfalls. Meanwhile Alberta's most vulnerable citizens are the ones suffering these decisions of prioritizing spending over the dignity and rights of people with disabilities.

The claw back of wages contradicts the principle that disabled people have the right to work without losing access to the essential supports they rely on, rights that are protected under both Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. While ADAP is being promoted as a solution to the current financial crisis, it may replicate the same punitive structures, only under a different label. Continuing to frame disability support eligibility around the capacity to work, violates the principle of equality before the law and undermines the dignity of disabled Albertans.

Jason Nixon's assertion that "Alberta's disability supports are already among the most generous in the country" (Lee, 2025, para. 21) attempts to deflect public scrutiny from the harsh reality of a \$49 million cut to the AISH program. This political maneuver, presented under the guise of modernization and efficiency, not only penalizes Alberta's most vulnerable residents, but also burdens the taxpayer. By clawing back, the modest \$200 Canada Disability Benefit and pushing disabled Albertans into precarious work under threat of losing essential income supports, the government advances an ableist agenda that conflates disability with employability while ignoring the long-term economic costs of instability.

*Figure 2. Funding Discrepancies*



In summary, forcing individuals off stable support and into low-wage, unstable jobs leads to higher health care usage, housing insecurity, and reliance on emergency services, and ultimately costs taxpayers more. In prioritizing ideological austerity over human dignity, this decision punishes the poor to fund a policy rooted in exclusion, not empowerment.

## **ADAP & Federal Opportunities Fund**

The Opportunities Fund (OF) is a federal program that supports community organizations in helping individuals with disabilities gain employment (Government of Canada, 2025b). The OF program is not governed by provincial legislation, and therefore, individuals and provinces do not have direct access to this funding. Eligible persons access OF-funded projects through partner agencies within communities such as Gateway, Canmore Association for Community Living and more (Government of Canada, 2025b).

ADAP is a provincial policy program, not legislated entitlement, which results in the following issues:

- Use of Opportunities Fund: ADAP may refer “able to work” recipients to federally funded job programs, which cuts income support without the guarantee of job success
- No Legislation: ADAP operates without enforceable rights or appeal mechanisms, which means there is no accountability nor protection for persons with disabilities
- Medical Assessments: ADAP relies on government-appointed panels that decide who can work, which violates the autonomy of those with disabilities and may disregard their lived experience
- Income Security: ADAP may reduce AISH or CDB based on OF access, which creates coercive work or less support structures

Importantly, ADAP could potentially use these federally funded community employment programs as justification for reducing provincial income support, without guaranteeing access, success, or consent. This may represent an instance of cost containment presented as empowerment, which could potentially leverage existing community work initiatives and risk overloading intake processes. There are diverse, variable risks above and beyond domestic and international human rights violations as a result of ADAP not being enshrined in legislation.

## **PRECEDENT OF ONTARIO: ODSP DENIAL BY DESIGN**

Ontario disability services have faced repeated turmoil since the creation of the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) in 1998 under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997. As Withers (2014) notes, “the shadow of austerity in Ontario is a very long one,” casting lasting impacts on the program’s delivery and disability rights (para. 5).

One of the most damaging changes was the implementation of the Service Delivery Model (SDM), which aimed to modernize ODSP, improve client service, and save taxpayer money. In practice, however, this model led to “...decreased accessibility and service standards for both applicants and agencies assisting applicants” (Fraser et al., 2003, para. 18). A two-tiered system



emerged: financial eligibility was first assessed before applicants received a Disability Determination Package (DDP). Even then, systemic coordination failures meant that Ontario Works (OW) or ODSP offices often failed to send required electronic referrals to the Disability Adjudication Unit (DAU). “[The] poor coordination with the new system, errors [going] unnoticed for long periods [of time], and even when identified, it was difficult to backdate the referral—impacting when retroactive benefits began” (Fraser et al., 2003, para. 32-34).

Between 2012 and 2017, ODSP undertook a mass reassessment campaign targeting medical reviews. Thousands of recipients with permanent and severe disabilities were wrongly reassessed, cut off, or forced through lengthy appeals. Legal clinics and media documented numerous consequences, including homelessness, hospitalization, and — in extreme cases — deaths resulting from loss of support (Street Health Community Nursing Foundation, 2006). Other advocates have noted that this poor process is an ongoing risk to the most vulnerable, and that the application for ODSP is “so complicated and the initial rejection rate so high that more than half of legal clinic cases now involve ODSP appeals” (Monsebraaten, 2015, para. 10).

One such case is single mom Kimberly Sturge, who was a legal assistant that applied for ODSP after losing her job in 2012 due to a head injury and chronic illness (Meniere’s disease). Initially, she was financially and medically approved without delay and received support for a few years. Like many others, however, she was subjected to a sudden medical review. Despite being under the care of specialists and community health professionals, her application was denied by the DAU panel — citing irrelevant and discriminatory factors such as her age, education, and cannabis use. The denial persisted even after these factors were later removed in a second decision. Kimberly never met the DAU physicians in person; all communications were conducted by mail, and she never received a phone call or any confirmation of the doctors’ identities (see Appendix F).

Kimberly’s experience underscores how the system disproportionately penalized individuals with invisible and episodic disabilities. The protracted reassessment process caused significant psychological distress, aggravated her mental and physical health, and placed her role as a mother in jeopardy. She described feeling like “an invalid citizen,” marginalized by her inability to work, and constantly under threat of losing access to medications and necessities. Through the advocacy of her physician, Dr. Fatima Uddin, and direct outreach to ministers at Queen’s Park, Kimberly’s case eventually gained media attention—most notably in the *Toronto Star*—and her benefits were reinstated. She attributes this outcome to her public advocacy and the community’s support, noting that many others did not survive the system’s failings (Janet, 2017; Adlakha, 2022; Appendix F).

The public backlash to these lengthy medical reviews prompted Ontario to introduce key policy reforms in 2016–2017, including streamlined medical reviews and a Rapid Reinstatement pathway that allowed former recipients to reapply without undergoing a full reassessment. These reforms were widely seen as damage control and were explicitly framed as efforts to “find savings for the taxpayer” while restoring access to benefits (Government of Ontario, 2023, Section 1.3; Appendix F).

By examining Ontario’s ODSP onerous medical review crisis, it becomes clear that aggressive reassessment policies can cause real and lasting harm: benefits were wrongly revoked, appeals became backlogged, and the lives of disabled individuals were jeopardized. Alberta must heed these lessons as it rolls out the Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP). Safeguards must be built into the system now to prevent a repeat of Ontario’s trauma, systemic injustice, and the preventable deaths of disabled recipients.

THE HIDDEN COST OF ADAP

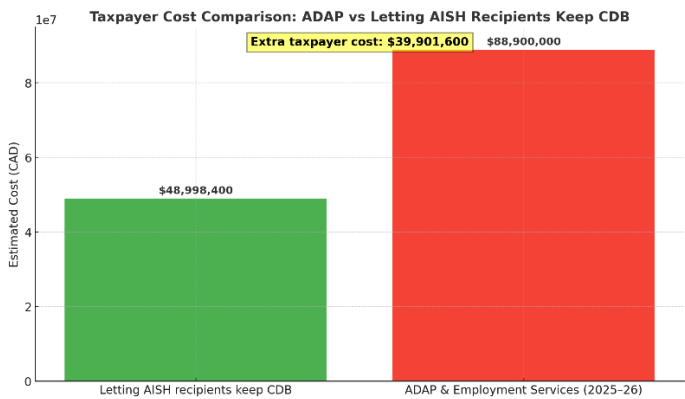
The Alberta Government reduced funding for the AISH program to address shortcomings in adequately supporting the program (Oram, 2025a). Table 2. below presents a clear cost comparison between Alberta’s current policy approach of implementing ADAP and the \$200 CDB claw back, versus allowing AISH recipients to keep the \$200 CDB (Zielinski, 2025).

Table 2. AISH & ADAP Scenario Comparison

Scenario	Estimated Cost (CAD)
Letting AISH recipients keep the \$200/month CDB	\$48,998,400
Spending on ADAP & Employment Services (2025–26)	\$88,900,000
<b>Additional taxpayer cost from current approach</b>	<b>\$39,901,600</b>

Figure 3. below further highlights these discrepancies across ADAP and AISH.

Figure 3. Cost Comparison of ADAP and AISH Recipients with CDB





The Alberta government’s decision to claw back the \$200 CDB from eligible AISH clients saved an estimated \$49 million annually, coinciding with a \$49 million reduction to the 2025 AISH budget. Simultaneously, the province increased employment-related spending by \$185 million to the Income Support program, so the assumption is to account for ADAP clients. This program seems to be designed to transition individuals with AISH into employment, regardless of the ongoing nature of their disabilities, which would make sense as AISH is expected to lose \$77 million over the next three years.

## ADAP & the UN CRPD

Canada ratified the UN CRPD in 2010, thereby legally committing to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities. This commitment aligns with several provisions, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) Articles 12(4), 25(1–7), 28(1–7), and 29(b)(ii), as well as Article 27(a) of the UN CRPD (United Nations, 2006). The Alberta Disability Accessibility Program (ADAP), which introduces a two-tier system with employment and medical based reassessments, raises serious concerns about compliance with these obligations, particularly regarding autonomy, access to support, and protection from discrimination.

<b>Article</b>	<b>What It Protects</b>	<b>How ADAP Threatens It</b>
<i>Article 19</i>	Right to live independently and be included in the community	ADAP may push people into unsafe or unsupported employment, which can destabilize housing and services tied to AISH/PDD
<i>Article 27</i>	Right to work freely chosen in inclusive settings	ADAP pressures people into work not freely chosen and may condition their benefits on it
<i>Article 28</i>	Right to adequate standard of living and social protection	Removing AISH/PDD from people deemed “employable” undermines income security
<i>Article 12</i>	Equal recognition before the law	People may be deemed employable without accessible appeal, violating legal capacity and consent

## The Canadian Charter of Rights: Section 15

Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of rights guarantees equality before and under the law without discrimination, including based on mental or physical disability (Government of Canada, 2025a, Section 15). If the launch of ADAP continues the way, it has been framed as “...operations...” (Government of Alberta, 2025, para. 5) then people with disabilities could be at risk of losing their fundamental freedoms. The Government of Alberta’s coerced medical assessments with a panel of selected doctors (Ferenowicz, 2025) to evaluate work capacity, this seems to be discriminatory gatekeeping to life sustaining services.

“Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination” (Government of Canada, 2025a, Sec. 15) ADAP may breach this by treating certain disabled people as less disabled with no due process, reducing

access to supports based on medicalized or arbitrary assessments, failing to provide equal protection for people with intellectual, episodic, or invisible disabilities.

The Charter guarantees equality before and under the law without discrimination, including based on disability for both mental and physical. If ADAP is not enshrined in legislation and systematically reduces access to vital supports based on biased or unscientific assessments of work capacity, it may be discriminatory. With no meaningful appeals process, disabled individuals lose equal protection under the law.

## **Alberta Human Rights Principles & ADAP Design**

Alberta has a duty to protect against systemic discrimination under the Alberta Human Rights Act. ADAP was designed behind closed doors (Weeks, 2025) with no community input. The CEO of Inclusion Alberta stated “...her organization was not consulted on the changes, leaving her with many questions.” (Skulski & Ellingson, 2025, para. 14) While the Alberta Human Rights Act (CanLII, n.d.) does not explicitly espouse the slogan ‘*Nothing about us without us*,’ it enshrines protections against discrimination on the grounds of physical and mental disability, reflecting the principle that those affected must be integral to decisions about their rights.

This program may disproportionately affect people with episodic, invisible, and intellectual disabilities, as individuals will be assessed by a new panel of medical professionals. Forcing disabled individuals to be assessed by government-hired doctors, who may lack the lived experience or specialized disability training reinforces an ableist system that prioritizes control and compliance over autonomy and dignity. The Alberta Human Rights Commission makes it unequivocally clear that disability-related medical information must be handled thoughtfully and, on a case-by-case basis, not through punitive, one-size-fits-all gatekeeping (Alberta Human Rights Commission, 2025, para.14). The consequences are undeniable: Systemic discrimination, especially for people with complex needs; lack of procedural fairness; and unjustified differential treatment within public benefits, all of which violate Alberta’s duty to accommodate and protect disabled individuals in public programming.

## CONCLUSION

The Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP), as currently designed, represents a policy-based framework with no legislative safeguards, no public accountability, and no independent oversight—despite its sweeping impact on the rights, autonomy, and financial security of disabled Albertans. It threatens to erode long established rights-based disability support by introducing medical gatekeeping, forced assessments, and employment-linked eligibility without respecting legal protections. Protections guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Alberta Human Rights Act, and Canada’s obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Despite this, the government has begun public promotion of ADAP and is already preparing to funnel applicants through a single application process for benefits.

This burden falls even more heavily on Indigenous peoples with disabilities, who already face intersecting systemic barriers due to jurisdictional disputes between federal and provincial governments, historical underfunding, and culturally inaccessible services (Coons & Makela, 2017). Without legislation or clear oversight, ADAP risks further marginalizing Indigenous clients, many of whom are already excluded from consistent supports due to funding ambiguity and geographic isolation. This replicates the very harm that Jordan’s Principle was created to prevent — a jurisdictional gap where essential care is delayed or denied while governments debate who is responsible. ADAP’s silence on reconciliation, Indigenous consultation, and culturally safe disability supports reflects not only a policy failure, but also a breach of Canada’s constitutional and international obligations under UNDRIP and Section 35 of the Constitution Act.

We call on legal advocacy organizations, human rights commissions, disability justice groups, and policy watchdogs to take urgent and coordinated action. This call to action includes the following:

- Demanding a legislative framework for any disability income support program in Alberta with enforceable rights and appeal processes,
- Launching formal legal inquiries into the discriminatory nature of ADAP’s medical panel structure and work-readiness assessments,
- Challenging the claw back of the federal Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) as a violation of equality rights and income security protections, and
- Seeking immediate judicial review or constitutional challenge, where applicable, to prevent the implementation of policy-based programs that bypass public consultation, legislative debate, and basic human dignity.

Without these, ADAP represents a dangerous pilot program, untethered to law, removed from medical best practices, and blind to the needs and voices of disabled Albertans (Appendix B, Source 4). Alberta is exploiting policy loopholes by calling ADAP an employment support, and it avoids meeting clinical standards or receiving public approval. The erosion of rights under the guise of employment support must not proceed unchecked and the time to act is now. We must

ensure that all disability programs in Alberta are enshrined in law, rooted in human rights, and shaped by the voices of those they affect the most.

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## APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acronym	Definition	Function
AISH	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped	Adult Financial & Health Benefit
ADAP	Alberta Disabilities Assistance Program	New pilot program
CDB	Canada Disability Benefits	New federal benefit launched in July 2025
CPPD	Canada Pension Plan Disabilities	Federal Disability Money
CCRF	Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms	Canada Charter
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	UN Treaty
DAU	Disability Adjudication Unit	Reviewing body for applicants to the ODSP
DDP	Disability Determination Package	Provincial application forms for those applying for ODSP
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada	Federal department for developing, managing & delivering programs help Canadians.
FSCD	Family Support for Children with Disabilities	Services for families with children under 18 with disabilities.
IS	Income Support – Alberta Works	Employment & financial assistance
OF	Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities	Federal employment program funded by ESDC.
ODSP	Ontario Disability Support Program	Provincial employment, financial, and disability support program
OW	Ontario Works	Provincial employment & financial assistance

PDD	Persons with Developmental Disabilities	Services for adults (18+)
SCSS	Seniors Community Social Services	Ministry overseeing AISH, ADAP, PDD, IS & FSCD
SDM	Service Delivery Method	Coordination model for ODSP
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	International Treaty
UN CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	International Treaty

## APPENDIX B: CASE STUDIES (REDDIT)

### Source 1

Username: GrandDuchessMelody

Date: April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Post Title: Edmonton AISH Recipients

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton\\_aish\\_recipients/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton_aish_recipients/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “I have an older brother who has intellectual disability who happens to be on AISH in Edmonton what happens if he doesn’t fill out his paperwork before July will he get kicked off? And I don’t think he can afford to pay his psychiatrist to fill out some forms since he barely gets \$300.00 for the rest of the month after rent and trustee fees etc. that I send him money to help him not starve? Does this also apply to other provinces that are on social assistance? Ty.” (Reddit n.d., 2025, Comment #14)

### Source 2

Username: Kittykat501

Date: April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Post Title: Edmonton AISH Recipients

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton\\_aish\\_recipients/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton_aish_recipients/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “It sounds like a lot of misinformation is being handed out as well. One worker tells one person. One thing another worker tells someone something else. They need to get their facts straightened out and in check. They're making people panic. The only province in Canada by the sounds of things that's going to deny a client's \$200 extra a month so they don't have to go to the damn food bank. UCP corruption at its finest!” (Reddit n.d., 2025, Comment #15)

### Source 3

Username: VagusWarrior

Date: April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Post Title: Edmonton AISH Recipients

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton\\_aish\\_recipients/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton_aish_recipients/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “United Cruelty Party so disgusting. Literally punching down on the most vulnerable of us.” (Reddit n.d., 2025, Comment #16)

### Source 4

Username: Liberatedhusks

Date: April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Post Title: Edmonton AISH Recipients

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton\\_aish\\_recipients/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/Edmonton/comments/1kh1la4/edmonton_aish_recipients/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: (I really wish I would have had someone explain this all to me, like an aish worker since I have brain damage and memory issues due to it. But thankfully the OP had made a post previously and that is how I became aware of the situation, [*sic*] or I would have gone along doing nothing, totally unaware. This is just criminal. Thank you to the OP for doing their damned best to help” (Reddit n.d., 2025, Comment #20)

### Source 5

Username: JazzBeans82

Date: March 2025

Post Title: Federal Disability Benefit claw back [*sic*] for AISH recipients - let's fight back.

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jmli9c/federal\\_disability\\_benefit\\_clawback\\_for\\_aish/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jmli9c/federal_disability_benefit_clawback_for_aish/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “Does anyone want to check my math here? According to the internet there are currently around 77,000 AISH recipients in Alberta, 12 months \$200/month, \$184,800,000 is what the UCP is directing away from their support. I always want to know where they’re moving the money in the crazy shell game the government seems to play. Funny thing in the Fiscal Plan 2025 - 2028 is a claimed increase to the cost of Assisted Living Alberta of \$184 million...” (Federal Disability Benefit Claw back [sic] for AISH Recipients - Let’s Fight Back., 2025, Comment #3)

#### Source 6

Username: ok-est

Date: March 2025

Post Title: Federal Disability Benefit claw back [sic] for AISH recipients - let’s fight back.

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jmli9c/federal\\_disability\\_benefit\\_clawback\\_for\\_ais\\_h/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jmli9c/federal_disability_benefit_clawback_for_ais_h/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “All I know is that average rent for a one bedroom is \$1483 and we only give AISH recipients a max of \$1900. How do you eat, get to appointments or have necessities like utilities, internet and a phone? And then money came from elsewhere to help them do those things and we clawed it back? Unbelievably [sic] cruel (Federal Disability Benefit Claw back [sic] for AISH Recipients - Let’s Fight Back., 2025, Comment #4).

#### Source 7

Username: Unlovelyladybartleby

Date: March 2025

Post Title: Federal Disability Benefit claw back [sic] for AISH recipients - let’s fight back.

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jmli9c/federal\\_disability\\_benefit\\_clawback\\_for\\_ais\\_h/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jmli9c/federal_disability_benefit_clawback_for_ais_h/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “I’m an Albertan who will get the benefit because I get the DTC and I don’t think I’ll get a claw back [sic] because I’m on LTD instead of AISH, but I’m outraged and disgusted so if there’s anything I can do, I’m happy to help. I can also reach out to a couple of friends who have disabled adult kids on AISH and DTC who will be getting clawed back. I know they’re fighting mad (Federal Disability Benefit Claw back [sic] for AISH Recipients - Let’s Fight Back., 2025, Comment #9)

#### Source 8

Username: Unusual-Stuff2518

Date: March 2025



Post Title: Alberta to claw back the Canada Disability Benefit from AISH recipients

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jhz3pg/alberta\\_to\\_claw\\_back\\_the\\_canada\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jhz3pg/alberta_to_claw_back_the_canada_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “What about people like me [sic] who have Cancer. were busy fighting Cancer. We paid taxes and can't work while we battle on. We shouldn't have to worry about finances. We [sic] should be focused on trying to simply stay alive” (Alberta to Claw Back the Canada Disability Benefit from [sic] AISH Recipients, 2025, Comment #19).

### Source 9

Username: AllAboutTheXeons

Date: March 2025

Post Title: Alberta to claw back federal disability benefit from AISH recipients

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jkn2ly/alberta\\_to\\_claw\\_back\\_federal\\_disability\\_benefit/](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jkn2ly/alberta_to_claw_back_federal_disability_benefit/)

Excerpt: “Let’s fight back. I would appreciate help in working on a Statement of [sic] Claim next week. I will likely make the work public via a Google Drive acct, or a website, etc. I do not want to accept this without any resistance. Neither should anyone else. Let’s band together and fight for our right to dignity” (Alberta to Claw Back the Canada Disability Benefit from [sic] AISH Recipients, 2025, Comment #46)

### Source 10

Username: Specialk991

Date: March 2025

Post Title: Alberta to claw back federal disability benefit from AISH recipients

URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jkn2ly/alberta\\_to\\_claw\\_back\\_federal\\_disability\\_benefit/](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/1jkn2ly/alberta_to_claw_back_federal_disability_benefit/)

Excerpt: “I made a call to my constituent and to the premier to voice my displeasure and outrage, not only is it embarrassing as a province to think that this was okay, but it's morally wrong. We can do better Alberta! [sic] I am a blue-collar [sic] worker who has no association with AISH [sic] or support programs. Just someone who has decent morals” (Alberta to Claw Back the Canada Disability Benefit from [sic] AISH Recipients, 2025, Comment #

### Source 11

Username: SketchySeaBeast

Date: January 2025

Post Title: ADAP: Alberta to launch new specified disability program, AISH will remain in place  
URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap\\_alberta\\_to\\_launch\\_new\\_specified\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap_alberta_to_launch_new_specified_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “I'm interested in what people who will be impacted think about all this, but to my cynical eye I'm reading "we're going to [*sic*] have people working even if they probably shouldn't". But I'm always cynical around this provincial government and healthcare” (ADAP: Alberta to Launch New Specified Disability Program, AISH Will Remain in Place, 2025, Comment #2)

### Source 12

Username: WeightyInspiration

Date: January 2025

Post Title: ADAP: Alberta to launch new specified disability program, AISH will remain in place  
URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap\\_alberta\\_to\\_launch\\_new\\_specified\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap_alberta_to_launch_new_specified_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “will be greatly impacted by this, and I agree with you. They are breaking up the program into can work / can't [*sic*] work. No way does this bode well. I am also concerned about their "list of qualified medical practitioners" [*sic*] who can write letters for us. That smells like reduced access if you ask me” (ADAP: Alberta to Launch New Specified Disability Program, AISH Will Remain in Place, 2025, Comment #2, Reply #1)

### Source 13

Username: DangerBay2015

Date: January 2025

Post Title: ADAP: Alberta to launch new specified disability program, AISH will remain in place  
URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap\\_alberta\\_to\\_launch\\_new\\_specified\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap_alberta_to_launch_new_specified_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “Yeah, this is absolutely the plan. Get folks who [*sic*] can't work (by whatever definition THAT'S going to be decided by a conservative crony) onto the new system, then when that's been sorted out, kill AISH. Oh, and the doctors will be pre-qualified to be the deciders! None of those pesky family doctors and specialists doing what's in the best interest of their own patients, talk to one of our professionals!” (ADAP: Alberta to Launch New Specified Disability Program, AISH Will Remain in Place, 2025, Comment #2, Reply #2)

### Source 14

Username: Delyriuhm

Date: January 2025

Post Title: ADAP: Alberta to launch new specified disability program, AISH will remain in place  
URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap\\_alberta\\_to\\_launch\\_new\\_specified\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap_alberta_to_launch_new_specified_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “Hi! Person on AISH! I am concerned but without actual details on what the difference between AISH and ADAP is and what the qualifiers between them will be, I can't form a strong opinion. Given the history of this government working against low income and disabled people in Alberta, no way am I going to trust this as a good thing. I do work a little, not enough to reach the "cap" but who knows what they are going to do about that” (ADAP: Alberta to Launch New Specified Disability Program, AISH Will Remain in Place, 2025, Comment #3).

### Source 15

Username: Exotics

Date: January 2025

Post Title: ADAP: Alberta to launch new specified disability program, AISH will remain in place  
URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap\\_alberta\\_to\\_launch\\_new\\_specified\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap_alberta_to_launch_new_specified_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “My husband is on AISH with a rare autoimmune disease. My concern is that rare diseases are not common enough to be on the list of them [*sic*]” (ADAP: Alberta to Launch New Specified Disability Program, AISH Will Remain in Place, 2025, Comment #10, Reply #2).

### Source 16

Username: MapleMapleHockeyStk

Date: January 2025

Post Title: ADAP: Alberta to launch new specified disability program, AISH will remain in place  
URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap\\_alberta\\_to\\_launch\\_new\\_specified\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap_alberta_to_launch_new_specified_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “Mine is mental health. I'm doomed” (ADAP: Alberta to Launch New Specified Disability Program, AISH Will Remain in Place, 2025, Comment #10, Reply #3).

### Source 17

Username: Maestro

Date: January 2025

Post Title: ADAP: Alberta to launch new specified disability program, AISH will remain in place  
URL:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap\\_alberta\\_to\\_launch\\_new\\_specified\\_disability/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/alberta/comments/lihoagr/adap_alberta_to_launch_new_specified_disability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Excerpt: “Same, hidden disabilities are [*sic*] the first to be cut off. Nixon has said that people with disabilities are lazy. The UCP does not care about anyone except their donors. Their agenda is purely ideological” (ADAP: Alberta to Launch New Specified Disability Program, AISH Will Remain in Place, 2025, Comment #10, Reply #4).

## APPENDIX C: ACTIVE E-PETITIONS

### Stop Alberta's Government Profiting Off the Backs of Its Poorest Population

- Platform: Change.org
- Petition Starter: Amanda Theriault
- Published: April 20, 2025
- Summary:
  - Demands the Alberta government reverse CDB claw back from AISH recipients.
  - Highlights that forced application for CDB results in no net gain for recipients.
  - Calls out this as profiting off impoverished citizens.
- Supporters: ~460 signatures
- Excerpt from petition:

“...forcing AISH recipients to apply for the CDB...for a benefit they will essentially never see.” [facebook.com+11change.org+11change.org+11](https://facebook.com+11change.org+11change.org+11)

### We Need That \$200 to Survive — End Alberta's Cruel Claw Back

- Platform: Change.org
- Petition Starter: Kristina Koivisto
- Published: June 14, 2025
- Summary:
  - Seeks immediate end to the full claw back of \$200/month CDB for AISH recipients.
  - Highlights that this move saves \$45 million provincially while worsening poverty for disabled Albertans.
  - Urges the government to publicly justify the decision given other provinces allow recipients to keep the benefit.
- Supporters: ~448 signatures
- Excerpt from petition: “Alberta is the only one clawing back the full amount. This is cruel, unfair, and must be reversed immediately.” <https://chng.it/JtjYx6WDLn>

### Halt Alberta Government's Reclaim of Federal Disability Benefit

- Focuses on stopping the dollar-for-dollar takeback of the \$200/month CDB from disabled recipients [blindcanadians.ca+2reddit.com+2inclusionalberta.org+2](https://blindcanadians.ca+2reddit.com+2inclusionalberta.org+2).
- Recently active, with dozens of signers.

- Inclusion Alberta's toolkit encourages petitioning MLAs and Ministers to legislate an exemption of CDB from income testing  
[reddit.com+3inclusion.alberta.org+3inclusion.alberta.org+3](https://www.inclusion.alberta.org/)
- The TeamMason2021 Foundation - events page to all advocates province wide. A printable paper petition and instructions to end the \$200 claw back.  
<https://www.teammason2021foundation.org/>

## APPENDIX D: JASON NIXON EMAIL RESPONSE

Minister Jason Nixon issued a formal response June 26, 2025, to the email in which he was carbon-copied into, that had been sent to the Honorable Janet Eremenko, Calgary-Currie riding. The email entitled “Reply 44412” with his official response is below:

Reply: 4412

ALSS Minister [ALSS.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:ALSS.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Kristina Koivisto:

Thank you for your email to the Honorable [sic] Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta, and me regarding the new Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP) and the federal Canada Disability Benefit (CDB). As Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services, I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

When I was appointed the Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services, I was tasked with exploring the feasibility of a “short-term disability” program to better facilitate, where medically appropriate, the return of Albertans to work when medically able to do so. Since then, Albertans with disabilities and the organizations that support them have made it clear they want supports that meet their unique needs and abilities, rather than the current one-size-fits-all solution offered by the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program. Albertans with disabilities stressed the importance of providing pathways to employment for individuals who can work but still need to receive financial and health benefits, and AISH is not designed to provide this type of support.

ADAP has been thoughtfully designed based on input from Albertans with disabilities to address a gap in supports for individuals with disabilities who are able to work and want to enjoy the benefits that come with employment, such as earning a paycheque, building relationships, developing skills, and providing a sense of purpose, belonging and independence.

ADAP clients will have access to a range of employment services to help them gain new skills and work to their full capacity. Through generous earnings exemptions, ADAP clients will be able to earn more from working while continuing to receive their monthly financial benefits. Albertans on ADAP will also receive the health benefits they need, regardless of their employment income, until they transition to seniors’ health benefit programs at age 65.

ADAP will be designed to support people with disabilities to work to their full potential. If an ADAP client is unable to find a job after receiving employment services, they will continue to receive financial and health benefits. If their disability progresses to the point that they are fully unable to work, they will be reassessed for the AISH program. There will be no maximum program duration for ADAP—clients will receive supports for as long as they need.

Let me reassure you that AISH will still be there for those with permanent and severe disabilities who are unable to work. As a legislated program, AISH will remain fully funded and available to all eligible Albertans.

When ADAP launches in July 2026, all existing AISH clients will continue to receive their same monthly benefits until they are placed in the program—either AISH or ADAP—that is best suited to their unique situation. This assessment process will be streamlined and prioritized for those with the most severe

disabilities and will be supported by a panel of medical professionals. AISH clients can rest assured that their care and wellbeing will be prioritized as the new program is implemented.

Alberta's government is committed to ensuring the province continues to have the best disability programs in Canada. More information about ADAP will be shared in the coming months, and Albertans will have opportunities to provide input to inform the design of the new program.

With regards to the CDB, the Government of Alberta knows how important financial benefits are to help Albertans meet their basic needs and live independently. I want to reassure you that as a statutory program, the AISH program will remain fully funded and available to all eligible Albertans. The AISH core benefit rate will remain the same at \$1,901 per month in 2025, which is an annual indexed increase of two per cent over 2024—the highest disability support rate of any province in Canada. Budget 2025's projected costs for the AISH program do not impact client income and are anticipated to support over 80,000 Albertans over the next year. The projected costs of the program account for caseload growth, benefit rate increases and the anticipated contributions of the new federal CDB.

We are happy to see the federal government is finally stepping up to help support low-income Canadians with disabilities through the CDB. The CDB will be treated as non-exempt income for AISH recipients, which means Albertans on AISH will continue to receive the same overall monthly support they do today. We are pleased the federal government is finally starting to pay their fair share to help support Albertans with disabilities.

The 2024 federal budget states that the intention of the CDB “is to see the combined amount of federal and provincial or territorial income supports for persons with disabilities grow to the level of Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement.” This works out to \$1,814 per month. Alberta is one of only two provinces to exceed that federal benchmark.

The government is proud that Alberta currently has the highest disability benefit rate in Canada. AISH's core benefit rate is \$1,901 tax-free per month, in addition to personal and medical benefits worth over \$400 per month on average. The core benefit rate is \$533 higher than Ontario's equivalent program rate, \$515 higher than Saskatchewan's equivalent program rate, \$417 higher than BC's equivalent program rate and \$554 higher than Manitoba's equivalent program rate. We encourage all our provincial counterparts to step up and match Alberta's benefit rates for people with disabilities.

Should you have further questions, I encourage you to contact the AISH program by phone at 780-415-6300. AISH staff will be pleased to assist you.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Honorable [*sic*] Jason Nixon

Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services

Minister responsible for Housing

Classification: Protected A



## APPENDIX E: EMAIL RESPONSE ANALYSIS

The Minister's response reveals serious concerns about ADAP's non-legislated status, coercive reassessment practices, loss of medical autonomy, and the use of ableist language that frames disabled Albertans as employable first and human beings with equal dignity and needs second.

### 1. Non-legislated status of ADAP:

Evidence: *"ADAP has been thoughtfully designed..."* and *"ADAP will be designed to support people..."* shows that ADAP is being developed and implemented as an administrative pilot program, not through legislation.

Concern: This bypasses democratic oversight and denies disabled Albertans protections under law, including the ability to appeal or enforce rights. The program operates on ministerial discretion, not statutory entitlement.

### 2. Ableist framing and forced workfare:

Evidence: Repeated references to the "benefits that come with employment," including *"earning a paycheck," "developing skills,"* and *"sense of purpose,"* frame employment as the preferred or superior state.

Concern: This language implies that disabled people lack purpose or worth without paid work, which is inherently ableist. It reinforces a compliance-based model where support is conditional on productivity, violating the dignity, autonomy, and equality rights protected under Section 15 of the Charter and the UN CRPD.

### 3. Loss of medical choice and autonomy:

Evidence: *"Supported by a panel of medical professionals"* replaces the right to see one's own physician with government-appointed doctors.

Concern: This removes the individual's right to medical privacy, choice, and continuity of care—violating both provincial human rights law and best practices in disability accommodation. It enforces a one-size-fits-all gatekeeping model, contrary to what the Minister claims the community asked for.

### 4. Two-tiered system and coerced reassessment:

Evidence: *"All existing AISH clients will continue... until they are placed in the program... best suited to their situation."*

Concern: This establishes a two-tier system, where disabled Albertans are subject to reassessment without consent and risk losing life-sustaining benefits if deemed "employable." This violates security of the person (Section 7) and equality (Section 15) under the Charter.

### 5. Misuse of federal CDB funds (indirect claw back):

Evidence: *“The CDB will be treated as non-exempt income for AISH recipients...”*  
Concern: Alberta is clawing back the federal CDB by counting it as income, meaning recipients see no net gain. This undermines federal intentions, deepens poverty, and violates the principle of financial independence protected under the CRPD Articles 28 and 19.

## APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Interview:** Kimberly Lillian Sturge

**Contact:** Kimberly Sturge via Facebook Messenger

**Location:** Toronto, Ontario

**Date:** July 20, 2025

**Time:** 1500hr

**Q1:** In 2012 you lost your job as a legal assistant due to a head injury, and you were featured in the Toronto Star. What made you decide to speak publicly, and what kind of response did you receive after your story was shared?

- She applied after losing her job and she was a single mom. Got approved due to chronic illness (Meniere's Disease) that causes episodic episodes and mental illness.
- The original application for financial approval and medical approval was done at the same time and was approved immediately.
- After receiving the benefits for a few years then she received a medical review package with the Disability Adjudication Unit (DAU). She went back to her original specialists, social worker and doctors to get the reassessed. Regent Park Community Health Center was shocked with her assessment medical review because you were already diagnosed and approved; however, did the process for her.
- During this process she received a warning that she would lose her benefits; and she needed to get her condition reviewed.
- The medical review she underwent was done by Disability Adjudication Unit (DAU) a government panel of doctors; she felt that they judged her and then she was informed in writing that she has a college education, that she was young, and because additional information was included (IE: back injury) and she was informed that she was abusing marijuana they denied her application. Then she redid the DAU assessment and was denied again but this time they removed the marijuana, age and college statements correcting themselves with another denial due to the additional information of the back injury.
- Review ODSP denied her appeal package; then she was denied a second time and then her doctor, Dr. Fatima Uddin at Regent Park Community Center got in touch with the minister of social services ODSP at Queens Park Legislature. Her doctor personally brought her case forward to the minister.
- During this time, she applied for a lawyer but never had to use a lawyer because of her doctor's advocacy.

**Q2:** How was the DAU panel structured?

- She never met these doctors in person; all documents were mailed with all her personal medical documentation.
- No phone calls

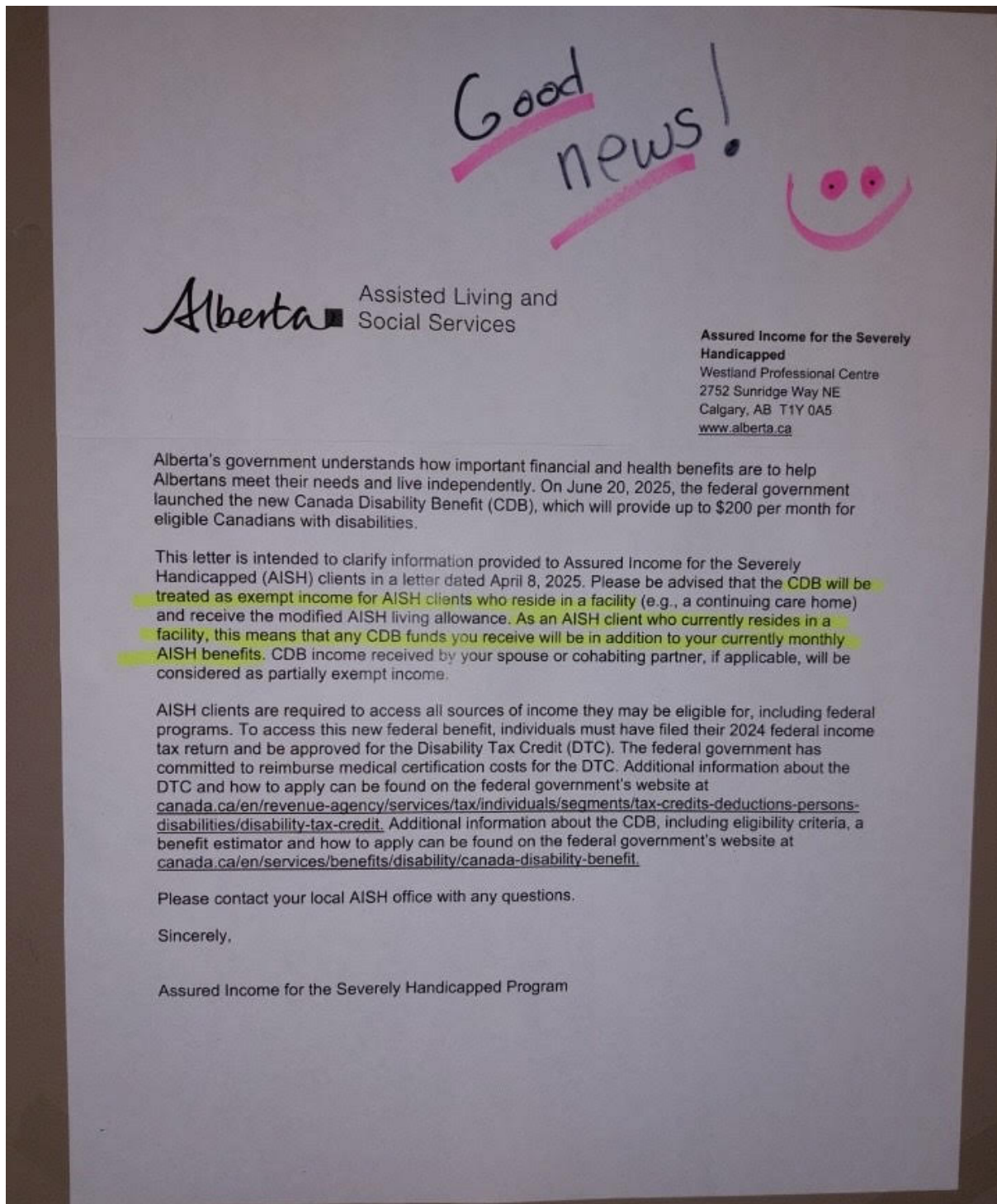
**Q3:** Did you notice ODSP's medical process placed more pressure on people with invisible or episodic disabilities? How did that affect you or others trying to keep their benefits and dignity?

- Kimberly believes that her advocacy and public outreach played a crucial role in preventing more severe repercussions. She attributes her sustained benefits to her public stance throughout this period. The Toronto Star subsequently informed her of the prompt reinstatement, and she publicly announced the news, expressing relief that the ordeal had ended.
- Yes, due to her condition and mental health being invisible and episodic, the ongoing challenges she experienced led to significant levels of anxiety, depression, and concern related to her responsibilities in caring for herself and her child. The accumulated stress of the traumatizing reassessment(s) impacted her medical condition and contributed to emphasized episodic health episodes during this time.

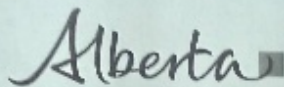
**Q4:** How did ODSP affect your health and trust in the system, and what should Alberta learn from what happened in Ontario?

- It made her feel like she was an invalid citizen, being marginalized by her disability and inability to work. Her financial security for benefits and medication being threatened caused severe stress and anxiety that to this day has still impacted on her mental health and feeling worthy.
- Her message to Alberta policy makers regarding her experience and being forced to have doctors that didn't know her or her condition through the mail made her question doctor patient confidentiality. She really wondered how it could happen as your medical documentation is supposed to be private, and the DAU letters never had any formal proof of who and what these doctors were.
- Overall, she believes that her advocacy with lawyers, ministers, and her community has led those in positions of power to view her primarily as a spokesperson to justify their numerous mistakes to the public throughout that time.

## APPENDIX G: CORRESPONDENCE RE: CDB







Assisted Living and  
Social Services

**Assured Income for the Severely  
Handicapped**

Westland Professional Centre  
2762 Sunridge Way NE  
Calgary, AB T1Y 0A6  
[www.alberta.ca](http://www.alberta.ca)

20156

Kristina Koivisto  
1931 45 Street Sw  
Calgary AB T3E 3S6

July 2, 2025

Dear Kristina Koivisto:

Alberta's government understands how important financial and health benefits are to help Albertans meet their basic needs and live independently. On June 20, 2025, the federal government launched the new Canada Disability Benefit (CDB), which will provide up to \$200 per month for eligible Canadians with disabilities.

To access this new federal benefit, individuals must have filed their 2024 federal income tax return and be approved for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC). The federal government has committed to reimburse medical certification costs for the DTC. Additional information about the DTC and how to apply can be found on the federal government's website at [canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/segments/tax-credits-deductions-persons-disabilities/disability-tax-credit](https://canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/segments/tax-credits-deductions-persons-disabilities/disability-tax-credit). Additional information about the CDB, including eligibility criteria, a benefit estimator and how to apply can be found on the federal government's website at [canada.ca/en/services/benefits/disability/canada-disability-benefit](https://canada.ca/en/services/benefits/disability/canada-disability-benefit).

Income from the new federal CDB will be treated as non-exempt for AISH recipients. This means that, with the addition of the CDB, an AISH client's overall monthly government disability support will remain unchanged. As a legislated program, AISH will remain fully funded and available to all eligible Albertans.

The federal government has stated that the intention of the CDB is to see the combined amount of federal and provincial or territorial income supports for persons with disabilities grow to the level of Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. This works out to \$1,814 per month. Alberta is one of only two provinces to exceed this federal benchmark. The AISH core benefit rate will remain the same at \$1,901 per month in 2025—the highest disability support rate of any province in Canada.

AISH clients are required to access all sources of income they may be eligible for, including federal programs. Please update your local AISH office to update them about the status of your DTC and CDB applications prior to September 5, 2025. Given the statutory requirement to access all sources of income you may be eligible for, clients who have not communicated the status of their CDB application to their AISH office prior to September 5, 2025, may see an equivalent amount to the CDB benefit, \$200, deducted from your monthly AISH benefits, beginning with the October 2025 period of assistance.

Sincerely,

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped Program

## **APPENDIX H: LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL RESPONSE**

This legal brief report has been formally submitted to ARCH Disability Law Centre and acknowledged by their intake department July 23, 2025. While their current process does not permit direct intake by email, they referred us to legal organizations included in our original correspondence. We now call on legal experts, advocacy networks, and human rights organizations across Canada to review this report and assess the systemic violations we have outlined.