



Services for Persons with Disabilities

HRDC's Mission is to enable all Canadians to participate fully in the workplace and the community. We offer a wide variety of programs and support measures and are committed to making all of them accessible to people with disabilities.

Employment Insurance (EI)

The **Employment Insurance** legislation provides for a National Employment Service, Employment Benefits and Income Benefits.

The **National Employment Service** (NES) provides labour market information on employment opportunities across Canada to help workers find suitable employment and to help employers find suitable workers. These services include the Job Bank system and the Electronic Labour Exchange and can be accessed through Human Resource Centres of Canada (HRCC), the Internet or at one of our kiosks. NES also assists with screening and counselling services through HRCC's or community partners. Under the Employment Assistance Services, the local HRCC can provide résumé writing, counselling and job search activities. Labour market partnership arrangements also support Canadians to prepare for and obtain employment.

Employment Benefits are only applicable to insured participants.* They include self-employment and skill development supports, as well as programs such as Job Creation Partnerships and Targeted Wage Subsidies. These are designed to improve employment possibilities or encourage employers to hire insured workers whose skills they may otherwise overlook. All of the employment benefits and support measures include a special **disability allowance** to help cover the incremental cost of an adaptive device

or an arrangement to enable an individual with a disability to participate in the activity.

Income Benefits provide temporary income replacement and include a Sickness Benefit for people who are off work due to illness. Eligibility is based on the number of hours a person has worked prior to application for benefit. For sickness benefit, people are required to have 700 hours of work. Benefit rates are based on 55% of a person's average insured earnings in the 14 to 26 weeks prior to the last paid working day. Additional information is available at your local HRCC.

** **Insured participants** are unemployed individuals, including persons with disabilities currently receiving EI benefits; or persons who were in receipt of benefits within the last three (3) years; or who received EI maternity or parental benefits within the past five (5) years and are re-entering the labour force (having left it to care for newborn or newly adopted children).*

Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD)

This is a federal-provincial cost sharing initiative which replaced the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons/Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRDP/VRS) programs. It is designed to help working age adults with disabilities prepare for, get and keep employment. The EAPD Program, to be delivered through the province, will provide support across the full spectrum of needs related to employability, including pre-employment and employment supports and services, skills development, assistive aids and devices, and job crisis interventions.



Income Security Programs

The **Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit** is payable to persons prevented from working because of a severe and prolonged physical or mental disability. "Severe" means the person is unable to regularly work at any job. "Prolonged" means that the disability is likely to be of an indefinite duration. To be eligible for benefit a person must have made valid CPP contributions in four (4) of the last six (6) years, must be under age 65, and must apply in writing.

The **Disabled Contributor Child Benefit** is a monthly benefit payable to the natural or dependent child of a deceased/disabled contributor until age 18, or age 25 if in full-time attendance at an accepted educational institution. More information on CPP-Disability is available by calling HRDC free-of-charge at 1-800-277-9914 or 1-800-255-4786 (TDD/TTY).

The **Canada Pension Plan Disability Vocational Rehabilitation Program** is available to help selected recipients of the CPP disability benefit return to work. This program assists clients in developing an individualized return-to-work rehabilitation plan. The CPP Disability Vocational Rehabilitation Program could include, but is not limited to, any number of the following services: guidance, skill improvement, upgrading, education/retraining and developing job search skills. The most likely candidates for the program are those who are motivated to return to work and whose physicians agree that they can cope with a work-related rehabilitation program. More information on the Disability Vocational Rehabilitation Program is available by calling HRDC free-of-charge at 1-800-461-3422. People who use a TDD/TTY should place calls with the assistance of Bell Relay Service (BRS) operators.

Labour Programs

Labour Programs Branch administers the *Canada Labour Code* (CLC) and the *Employment Equity Act* (EEA) both of which have a positive influence on the work environment of persons with disabilities.

The CLC applies to all federally regulated employers (about 10% of the labour force) and the federal public service. Under Part II of the CLC, the *Occupational Safety and Health Regulations*

(OSH) require employers to provide information and training regarding promotion and maintenance of a healthy workplace environment, as part of a campaign of **prevention** against workplace injury.

The EEA governs all federal departments, federally regulated employers and agencies with more than 100 employees and federal contractors. Under the EEA, employers are required to identify and eliminate barriers to the employment of the four designated groups (women, Aboriginal peoples, members of visible minorities, and persons with disabilities). They must also implement an employment equity plan containing goals for the hiring and promotion of designated group members, positive policies to address under-representation, and make reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities.

The Canada Student Loans Program

This includes a Special Opportunity Grant of up to \$3,000 per year for additional education-related expenses due to disability while in post-secondary study. These grants are specifically for individuals who are eligible for Canada Student loans and who have a disability affecting their student and/or labour market activity. More information may be obtained through learning institutions.

The Opportunities Fund

This is a three-year program, announced in the 1997 Federal Budget, through which HRDC works in partnership with organizations of persons with disabilities and other sectors to help individuals with disabilities get access to paid or self-employment. The *Opportunities Fund* is designed for those people with disabilities who are not "insured participants" under the *Employment Insurance Act* and it provides everything for them that employment benefits do for insured participants. More information on the *Opportunities Fund* can be obtained from the local HRCC.

This document is available in Alternative Formats through **InfoTouch 1-800-788-8282**.