

# The Next Steps

TRANSITIONING INTO ADULTHOOD



DETAILED VERSION

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# Introduction

## **Purpose**

The main objective of this document is to aid in breaking down barriers to accessing essential services for people with developmental disabilities. Navigate this document using the table of contents as it contains various sections.

## **Target Audience**

For people looking for a walk-through on how to apply to LINX and to raise general awareness for the general public and community.

## **What to Expect**

The introduction briefly presents LINX and explains what to expect from each section of the document. The first section informs the general public about Canadians living with a developmental disability. General knowledge about the subject accompanied by statistics will give readers a sense of the need for public services like LINX. The second section describes the process of working with LINX, and its programs, plus a breakdown of the most crucial steps for students transitioning into adulthood looking to take advantage of the opportunities offered at LINX.



# About LINX

LINX is an organization based in Leduc that assists people with developmental disabilities to identify and reach goals by offering various programs. Through community connections, LINX offers education, employment, residential, and other outreach services.

## The Vision

The main goal is to assist people with developmental disabilities to fulfil their potential in life. With LINX, clients obtain a valued role in society and take the opportunity to be a part of a community. LINX values the life of every individual and offers the full inclusion of all people in the wider community.

## Goals

- To implement a plan to promote knowledge and awareness about the LINX organization in the community among stakeholders for funding to help as many people as possible.
- Broaden the opportunities for clients to meet their needs and aspirations through greater inclusion in the community.
- Develop a funding plan/strategy that will sustain the organization's work.
- Generate "staff strategies" that allow for expanding our services at LINX to keep up with the increasing number of clients.



# LINX Services

LINX offers a wide range of services, from employment preparation, to respite, and (almost) everything in between, to suit your needs best.

**Employment Preparations Classes:** We run up to 12 classes in a day that vary from art and music to budgeting for independence and sexual health.

**Employment Placement:** We provide job coaches to help our clients find and keep jobs.

**Community Access:** This is often for clients who are unable to work but still want to be included in the community. It may have a more volunteerism focus.

**Respite (daily):** Daily respite gives clients, parents, and caregivers a bit of a break.

**Respite (hourly):** Similar to daily respite, this gives clients, parents, and caregivers a bit of a break but on an hourly basis. This is often done in the community.

**SIL/Outreach:** We have many clients who live on their own. SIL provides them hourly in-home support to do meal preparation, budgeting, grocery shopping, home maintenance planning, etc.

**Support Homes:** These are situations where a client lives in a supported roommate situation.

# The Process

# PDD

## Persons with Developmental Disabilities

### What is PDD?

Through the government funding department, Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) is responsible for helping adults with developmental disabilities to acquire services to contribute to living as independently as possible within their community. PDD was designed after the Persons with Developmental Disabilities Service Act, which can be read here: [https://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=p09p5.cfm&leg\\_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779794850](https://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=p09p5.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779794850)

### How to Get in Contact with PDD?

Alberta Supports Contact Centre at 1-877-644-9992, or in Edmonton at 780-644-9992.

### PDD Planning

PDD specifically helps adults who are eligible for their services which include an Outcome Plan and an Individual Support Plan using the person's Disability Services worker. The Outcome Plan is a foundation for the more comprehensive planning and the Individual Support Plan will be guided by the Family Managed Services administrator and Disability Services worker such as the goals the adult wants to meet within a year, how to meet these goals, and who will support them.

# PDD

Cont'd.

## **PDD Planning (cont'd.)**

<https://www.alberta.ca/pdd-supports-and-services.aspx>

The Individual Support Plan offers a multitude of services, where one may access some or more, such as home living supports, in which someone will help with regular daily activities, like making meals, or helping with shopping. Short term respite services may be offered, employment supports, specialised supports to help handle mental, physical, or behavioural needs, involvement with the law, and much more.



# How to Apply?

## STEP ONE

Make sure you are applying for the correct program. View the website <https://www.alberta.ca/pdd-supports-and-services.aspx> through the PDD program.

## STEP TWO

Check to see if you are eligible for the program. You must be 16 years old or older to apply and 18 years old to start the services provided by PDD. PDD is only available for those living in Alberta, and you must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. You must also meet the criteria for defining developmental disabilities by PDD's standard. The developmental disability has to be from birth or occurred while you were growing up and has to be something that makes learning new things more complicated or something that makes daily tasks difficult to do without help.

A complete definition of developmental disabilities by PPD can be found here:

<http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/developmental-disabilities-guidelines.aspx>

PDD will require specific documents such as those recorded or made by your doctor to review the concerns you may need help with. PDD will also need assessments completed by a registered psychologist such as the Psychological Assessment Report, Neuropsychological Assessment, or Psycho-Educational Assessment. These assessments will evaluate your learning, reasoning, thinking, and behaviour. PDD will then decide based on these assessments if you have an intelligence quotient of 70 or lower.

PDD Adaptive Skills Inventory is also to be filled out.

<http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/documents/pdd-adaptive-skills-inventory.pdf>

### **STEP THREE**

An application can then be filled out on the website:

<https://myalbertasupports.alberta.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do>

For help completing the form, <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-supports.aspx>

### **STEP FOUR**

Your Service Disability worker may require additional information from you, such as further documentation of proof of your age and citizenship like a passport or record of landing, they may also request reports which confirm your developmental disability, letters regarding your developmental disability from your schools or doctors, supports or programs you are enrolled in, and more.

# AISH

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped

## What is AISH?

AISH stands for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped and provides financial and health benefits to eligible adult Albertans with a permanent medical condition that prevents them from earning a living.

## AISH Overview

### Eligibility

To be eligible for AISH, you must meet age, residency, medical and financial criteria.

- You have a medical condition that substantially limits your ability to earn a living
- Your medical condition is likely to remain permanent
- There is no medical treatment, therapy, rehabilitation or training available that will help improve your ability to earn a living
- You are 18 years of age and not eligible to receive an 'Old Age Security Pension'
- You are a Canadian citizen or permanent resident and live in Alberta
- You are not in a correctional facility or a mental health facility
- You meet the financial eligibility criteria

## What You May Receive

If you are eligible for AISH you may receive:

- A monthly living allowance - money to pay for your living costs such as food, rent and utilities
- A monthly child benefit - money to assist you with raising your dependent children
- Health benefits - assistance to cover health needs for you, your spouse or partner and your dependent children
- Personal benefits - money above your monthly living allowance for specific needs such as a special diet or assistance in an emergency

## Application Timeline

- AISH reviews applications in the order they are received
- Applicants who are receiving end-of-life palliative care and/or have been diagnosed with a terminal illness are prioritized
- Application processing times vary depending on the number of applicants AISH receives from Albertans and how quickly they get all the financial information and medical information they need for each person's application

# How to Apply?

*Follow these steps to apply for AISH financial and health benefits*

**Step 1)** Refer to the [Guides Your Guide to Completing the AISH Application](#)

**Step 2)** Fill out the AISH Application [Part A](#)

**Step 3)** Have your doctor fill out [Part B](#)

**Step 4)** Apply - Gather your application form and all other documents needed to complete your application

- You can submit your AISH application and supporting documents by:
  - Mailing them to PO Box 17000 Station Main, Edmonton, Alberta T5j 4B3
  - Faxing them 1-877-969-3006 (toll free) or 587-469-3006 (Edmonton area), or
  - Bring them to the nearest [AISH Office](#) or [Alberta Supports Center](#)
  - [Submitting them online](#)

**Step 5)** After you Apply

- You will be contacted once your application is received
- If you have any questions about the status of your application call 1-877-759-6810 (toll free) or 587-759-6810 (Edmonton area).

## Payment Details

### Getting your Payments

Payments are made via direct deposit. There are two ways to set it up:

#### **Option 1)** Prepare your own direct deposit forms

- Fill in and sign the [Direct Deposit Form](#)
  - Write a VOID cheque and attach an unsigned copy to the form, or
  - Print your online bank account information, including your name, branch number, bank number and account number, and attach it to the form

#### **Option 2)** Get help from your bank

- Have your bank help fill in, stamp and sign the Direct Deposit Form
- Sign the form
- Provide the form to your AISH worker
- Get a document from your bank that includes your name and banking information

### Note

- If you are not able to set up direct deposit, contact your AISH worker
- AISH payments occur on the first of the month. When the first of the month falls on a holiday weekend, the payment date is the last business day of the previous month.

## For More Information

The government of Alberta's AISH website has various resources that are available to view including:

### [Your Guide to AISH](#)

- Contains general information about the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) Program and reflects what is in AISH legislation, regulations and the AISH Policy Manual.

### [Your Guide to Completing the AISH Application](#)

- Contains information on step-by-step instructions for filling out the AISH application form.

### [AISH Policy Manual](#)

- Covers general information, Eligibility criteria, Income, Assets, Benefits, Appeals, Underpayments, Overpayments, Debts, Personal Representatives.

### [AISH Financial Benefits Summary](#)

- This sheet summarizes financial benefits that may be provided to eligible clients through the AISH program.

# Guardianship

## What is the role of a guardian?

A guardian is someone who has the authority to make decisions for a person who has lost the capacity to make decisions. This can be in one of three ways; a guardian who deals with personal decisions, a trustee who deals with financial decisions, or a guardian and trustee combination that deals with all decisions.

## Who can have a guardian?

An adult who needs a guardian should fall into the following categories, as listed on the Government of Alberta Website. Adults who need a guardian...

- are 18 years of age or older
- have had a capacity assessment completed that indicates they lack the capacity to make personal decisions
- less intrusive and less restrictive options are not likely to be effective
- may be vulnerable because of a permanent or temporary disability or illness
- don't have a personal directive and need someone to make personal decisions for them

# Guardian Types

## **What kind of decisions can a guardian make?**

A guardian can make decisions that are personal, but not financial. These decisions could include where an individual should live, whether an individual should attend some kind of educational training, as well as decisions regarding employment. A guardian cannot make any decisions about finances, organ donation or sterilization.

Full guardianship is not always necessary. There are other options available to individuals, as explained below.

### Supported Decision-Making

When an individual is able to make decisions, they may want or need support in making certain decisions that do not pertain to finances. If this is the case, supported decision making may be of interest to them. A supporter, in this case, would be someone who communicates on behalf of the individual with various service providers (such as pharmacists, employers, lawyers etc.). It is important to note that the individual seeking support can choose to end it when they would like to.

## Trusteeship

A trustee is someone who is legally allowed to make financial decisions for another individual. The individual they are making decisions for does not have the capacity to make appropriate financial decisions for themselves and now requires support. Individuals who match the following description require a trustee.

Quoted from the Government of Alberta website, adults who need a trustee...

- Are 18 years of age or older
- Have had a capacity assessment completed indicating they lack the capacity to make financial decisions
- Need more than the less intrusive and less restrictive options that would not adequately protect the adult's financial interests
- Do not have an enduring power of attorney and need someone to make financial decisions for them
- Do not have the capacity to make a power of attorney
- Have assets or financial interests in need of protection

Something important to note is that if an individual wishes to or requires a trustee when they turn 18, they should begin the application process as soon as they turn 17.

Once in place, a trustee can manage an individual's money to pay for expenses like bills, rent, care charges, etc. They may also manage the individual's investments. And most importantly, they can for the individual's benefits, like AISH, and file their tax returns.

## Co-Decision Making

An individual can request to have an authority aid them in decision making, regarding personal decisions, yet still have the final say when they use co-decision making. Someone that wishes to have this kind of support would need to meet the following criteria, as listed on the Government of Alberta website.

Adults who need a co-decision maker...

- Are 18 years of age or older
- Have had a capacity assessment completed that indicates they need a co-decision-maker
- Need help understanding information
- Need guidance and support to make personal decisions
- Need more than the less intrusive and less restrictive options as they are not likely to be effective
- Do not have an enacted personal directive or a court-appointed guardian
- Do not have a court-appointed trustee

It is important to note that the individual who requested the support has control over whether they even want this kind of support, who the co-decision maker will be, and when they no longer need the support.

The decisions a co-decision maker can assist with must be personal and usually revolve around healthcare, living arrangements, employment etc.

# Guardianship

Cont'd.

## How long does the guardianship process take?

Becoming an individual's guardian usually takes 6 months. This time is counted from when your paperwork is complete and ready to be submitted to when the court makes a final decision.

## Are there costs associated with the process?

Yes, there are multiple costs associated with the guardianship process. However, this is where the SAGE association comes into play, which can aid you through the process at a much more affordable rate. Their costs are as follows (as of February 2022):

Package	Cost
Guardianship and Trusteeship - Initial Application	\$495
Guardianship or Trusteeship - Initial Application	\$345
Guardianship and Trusteeship - Review Application	\$250
Guardianship or Trusteeship - Review Application	\$125
Co-Decision Maker - Initial Application	\$345
Guardianship & Trusteeship Program Workshops (via Zoom)	\$50

# RDSP

## Registered Disability Savings Plan

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) is a long-term savings plan eligible for those who have a disability.

- You should consider opening an RDSP if you have a long-term disability and are:
  - eligible for the Disability Tax Credit
  - under the age of 60
  - a Canadian resident with a Social Insurance Number (SIN), and
  - looking for a long-term savings plan
- If you have an RDSP, you may also be eligible for grants and bonds to help with your long-term savings.
- You may contribute any amount to your RDSP each year, up to the lifetime contribution limit of \$200,000.
- With written permission from the RDSP holder, anyone may contribute to the RDSP.
- The [RDSP Savings Calculator](#) online will help you anticipate how money contributed to your RDSP could grow over time by calculating the estimated amount of Grant and Bond you could receive, based on contributions and annual family income, as well as the amount of interest accumulated.
- There are video resources on the [Government of Canada website](#), for how to apply, how to make your savings grow, and how to take money out. There is a video that is also in ASL, with a transcript, for the hearing impaired.

# DTC

## Disability Tax Credit

The Disability Tax Credit (DTC) is a Federal tax credit program available to all Canadians and is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

Individuals can receive up to 10 yrs of retroactive funds, an annual refund moving forward for themselves, or Child Disability Tax benefit if their child is impaired. Acceptance to the DTC program gains individuals access to RDSP as well.

### Eligibility Criteria

- Be a Canadian citizen/PR
- Prove that either you cope with a prolonged impairment, marked restriction, have two or more significant restrictions, or are dependent on “life-sustaining” therapy. (Difficulty performing daily activities: 2 levels, unable to or slow at. Both qualify and get the same benefits)  
Physical, mental or psychological impairments count

### How it Works

- You have to pay your federal tax to get the benefit
- One-Time refunds, or annual refund

# How to Apply?

*This process can take anywhere from 3-9 months.*

## **Option One**

Download the [T2201 form](#) from the CRA's website, have your health care practitioner fill it out, and send it to the CRA processing centre.

## **Option Two**

Complete with the help of an accountant or a bookkeeper.

## **Option Three**

Complete with the help of a DTC Firm.

## **How it is Calculated**

- The amount you receive from the government as DTC consists of a Provincial amount and a Federal amount.
- The amount received is determined by the base Federal amount, which will be the same regardless of the province you live in, and the Provincial amount, which differs from Province to Province

# Other Resources

# Contacts

## **AISH - Edmonton Office**

Phone: 780 415 6300

Fax: 1 844 686 9358

Address: Suite 500, 12323 Stony Plain Road, Westcor Building, Edmonton AB, T5N 4B4

Website: [www.alberta.ca/aish.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/aish.aspx)

## **Alberta Supports (for PDD) - Leduc Office**

Phone: 780 415 4900

Fax: 780 427 4778

Email: [abworksis@gov.ab.ca](mailto:abworksis@gov.ab.ca)

Address: 50th Street Plaza, 4809 - 43A Ave, 2nd Floor, Leduc AB, T9E 8J6

## **Leduc LINX Connect Centre**

Phone: 780 980 9423

Fax: 780 980 9429

Email: [linxexec@linxconnect.ca](mailto:linxexec@linxconnect.ca)

Address: #106, 5708-47 St., Leduc AB, T9E 6Z9

Website: [www.linx.ngo](http://www.linx.ngo)

## **SAGE**

Phone: 780 423 5510

Fax: 780 426 5175

Email: [info@mysage.ca](mailto:info@mysage.ca)

Address: 5 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton AB, T5J 2E5

Website: [www.mysage.ca](http://www.mysage.ca)

# Glossary

**Adaptive Skills Inventory:** The list one needs for assistance in performing six or more of twenty-four adaptive skills, in order to achieve the same results as someone who is not disabled. [1] A list of the Adaptive Skills Inventory can be found here: <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/documents/pdd-adaptive-skills-inventory.pdf> [2]

**Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH):** AISH provides financial and health benefits to eligible adult Albertans with a permanent medical condition that prevents them from earning a living. [3]

**Canada Revenue Agency (CRA):** A federal agency that collects taxes and administers tax laws for the Canadian government, as well as for many of Canada's provinces and territories. [4]

**Developmental Disability (as per PDD standards):** Onset must be prior to the age of 18; they must have a significant limitation in intellectual capacity; and a significant limitation in the listed adaptive skills inventory. [5]

**Dependent Children:** A child who is under the age of 18 years old and relies on your care 50% of the time. [6]

**Disability Tax Credit (DTC):** A federal tax credit program available to all Canadians, and is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). [7]

**Guardian:** Someone who has the authority to make decisions for a person who has lost the capacity to make decisions. [8]

**Health Benefits:** Additional benefits or services such as health benefits and income support. [9]

**Income Support:** Income Support can help you and your family with basic living costs and other necessities. [10]

# Glossary

Cont'd.

**Living Allowance:** Money to pay for your living costs such as food, rent and utilities. [11]

**Monthly Child Benefit:** Money to assist you with raising your dependent children. [12]

**Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD):** Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) is responsible for helping adults with developmental disabilities to acquire services to contribute to living as independently as possible within their community. [13]

**Personal Benefits:** Money above your monthly living allowance for specific needs such as a special diet or assistance in an emergency.

**Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP):** A long-term savings plan eligible for those who have a disability. [14]

**Outreach:** An effort to bring services or information to people where they live or spend time. [15]

**Old Age Pension:** A monthly payment you can get if you are 65 and older. In some cases, Service Canada will be able to automatically enrol you for the OAS pension. In other cases, you will have to apply for the old age security pension. [16]

# Glossary

Cont'd.

## References for Glossary Definitions

- [1] <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/developmental-disabilities-guidelines.aspx>
- [2] <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/documents/pdd-adaptive-skills-inventory.pdf>
- [3] <https://www.alberta.ca/aish.aspx>
- [4] <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/ccra.asp>
- [5] <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/developmental-disabilities-guidelines.aspx>
- [6] <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-terms-and-definitions.aspx>
- [7] <https://ekbasipym5m.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Disability-Tax-Credit-Ultimate-Resource-Guide-Updated-February-2021.pdf>
- [8] <https://www.alberta.ca/adult-guardianship.aspx>
- [9] <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-how-to-apply.aspx#otherbenefits>
- [10] <https://www.alberta.ca/income-support.aspx>
- [11] <https://www.alberta.ca/aish.aspx>
- [12] <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-what-you-get.aspx>
- [13] <https://www.alberta.ca/persons-with-developmental-disabilities-pdd.aspx>
- [14] <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/savings.html>
- [15] <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/outreach>
- [16] <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp/old-age-security.html>

# References

## **PDD (Persons with Developmental Disabilities)**

- <https://www.alberta.ca/persons-with-developmental-disabilities-pdd.aspx>
- [https://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=p09p5.cfm&leg\\_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779794850](https://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=p09p5.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779794850)
- <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-supports.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/pdd-supports-and-services.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/pdd-how-to-apply.aspx>
- <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/developmental-disabilities-guidelines.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/pdd-eligibility.aspx>
- <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/pdd-online/documents/pdd-adaptive-skills-inventory.pdf>
- <https://myalbertasupports.alberta.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do>

## **AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped)**

- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-eligibility.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-what-you-get.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-how-to-apply.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-how-to-apply.aspx#otherbenefits>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-payment-details.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-how-to-apply.aspx#jumplinks-0>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-terms-and-definitions.aspx>

# References

Cont'd.

## **Guardianship**

- <https://www.alberta.ca/adult-guardianship.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/supported-decision-making.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/trusteeship.aspx>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/co-decision-making.aspx>
- <https://www.mysage.ca/help/guardianship-co-decision-making>

## **RDSP (Registered Disability Savings Plan)**

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/savings.html>

## **DTC (Disability Tax Credit)**

- <https://ekbasipym5m.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Disability-Tax-Credit-Ultimate-Resource-Guide-Updated-February-2021.pdf>

## **Leduc LINX Connect Centre**

- <https://www.linx.ngo/>
- <https://www.linx.ngo/programs>
- <https://www.linx.ngo/contact-us>