TALKING POINTS

Changes to AISH and creation of the

Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP)

***Explaining the issue to a decision-maker***

*We have provided a loose outline with key points that you can use at your meetings. In addition, we suggest that you personalize your approach and consider mentioning your family’s story and the struggle of living on AISH.*

* Thank you for taking the time to meet with us today. We are here to ask that the Government of Alberta cancel the creation of the new Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP) which would cut AISH by $200/month.
* In August, the Ministry of Assisted Living and Social Services released the ADAP Discussion Guide which announced that all adults with disabilities who receive AISH be moved to the new Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP) effective July 1, 2026, with a benefit that will be $200 per month lower. This 10% cut will worsen an already desperate situation for Albertans on AISH, already below Canada’s poverty line. This follows the [**clawback of the $200 Canada Disability Benefit**](https://inclusionalberta.org/canada-disability-benefit-in-alberta-the-facts-and-how-to-take-action/) and the [**$220 per month rent hike for AISH tenants**](https://inclusionalberta.org/connections/media-release-the-difference-between-almost-living-and-barely-existing-on-the-heels-of-previous-cuts-alberta-government-raises-rent-by-63-for-aish-tenants-in-community-housing/).
* Even while making three successive decisions reducing financial support for adults with disabilities, the government addressed rising living costs by approving pay increases over four years—20% for nurses and 12% for teachers and AUPE members. MLAs increased their own housing allowance by 14% this year from $1,930 to $2,200.
* While ADAP claims to reward work, it actually lowers the fully exempt employment income from $1,072/month under AISH to just $350/month. The reduced exemption means that many people with employment will be financially worse off whether they are on ADAP or the new AISH.
* The announcement of ADAP implies a false dichotomy between individuals with less significant disabilities who can work and will receive ADAP and individuals with more significant disabilities who cannot work and will receive AISH. In fact, people with any type of disability can work – diagnosis is not destiny, and individuals with multiple and severe impairments benefit from work, even when only for very few hours. The benefits of work are not only economic, and a decision to limit the freedom to work of individuals remaining on AISH will deprive them of the opportunity for meaningful participation and contribution, leaving them more isolated.
* The new funding for employment supports that is being introduced at the same time as ADAP may help some, but will not be enough to help tens of thousands of adults with disabilities overcome systemic and attitudinal job market barriers or Alberta’s highest unemployment rate since the pandemic.
* Most people with disabilities would welcome policy changes and employment supports that achieve government’s stated goal of supporting them to “pursue fulfilling job opportunities.” Both increasing the extent to which people with disabilities on AISH keep their employment earnings and medical benefits, and offering enhanced employment supports could be accomplished without cutting benefits and creating a new administrative apparatus to administer a new program, wasting healthcare resources reassessing individuals, and burdening individuals with disabilities with navigating a new adjudication process to re-prove their disability status.