

# Alberta Disability Assistance Program

## Purpose

The Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP) will empower Albertans with severe disabilities to pursue fulfilling job opportunities while continuing to receive the financial, health and employment supports they need.

Albertans with disabilities and the organizations that support them have made it clear that they want more support and opportunities to earn a living beyond what is offered by the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program. They stressed the importance of providing pathways to employment for individuals who are able to work but still require support – something AISH is not designed to provide. ADAP was thoughtfully designed based on input from Albertans with disabilities.

## How it works

Starting July 2026, the new Alberta Disability Assistance Program will become operational and there will be a single combined application for both ADAP and AISH. Eligible applicants will be placed in the program best suited to their unique situation.

ADAP will help Albertans with disabilities pursue meaningful employment while continuing to receive the financial, health and personal supports they need. ADAP's core benefit rate is among the highest in the country, providing \$300 more per month than most disability programs in Canada. ADAP will also allow for the highest level of employment income in the country while receiving financial benefits, meaning Albertans on ADAP can earn more from working while continuing to receive the support they need. These financial benefits are in addition to health and personal benefits, which Albertans on ADAP will receive regardless of their employment income.

In general, an individual with a severe disability that results in them being permanently unable to work will qualify for AISH.

In general, an individual with a severe disability who is assessed as able to work will qualify for ADAP. To be medically eligible for ADAP, the severe disability must be determined to significantly restrict but not prevent a person from being employed.

ADAP clients will be able to apply for an AISH assessment if their medical condition or ability to work changes.

## Transition approach

All existing AISH clients will be assured a place in either ADAP or AISH.

Alberta's government will notify all AISH recipients in mid-May with information specific to their situation, including whether they will remain on AISH, transition to ADAP, or be affected by any regulatory changes.

In July 2026, current AISH clients who meet one or more of the below criteria will automatically remain on AISH, unless they choose to transition to ADAP to benefit from ADAP's higher employment income exemptions:

- individuals with a severe and profound developmental disability, or who are deemed eligible for or are receiving Persons with Developmental Disabilities services
- individuals with palliative or terminal medical conditions
- individuals living in continuing care homes
- individuals 60 years of age or older

Current AISH clients who meet the criteria for automatic approval for AISH do not need to take any action – they will be identified by AISH and notified prior to July 2026.

AISH clients who transition to ADAP in July 2026 will receive a \$200 monthly transition benefit that will keep their financial benefit the same as their existing AISH benefit amount until December 31, 2027. During this time, clients can choose to remain on ADAP or apply for AISH.

Alberta's government will cover the cost of one medical assessment for current AISH clients who transition to ADAP in July and later choose to be assessed for AISH. This support is not time-limited and will be available whenever clients choose to access it.

## Benefit amount and earned income exemptions

When ADAP launches July 2026, ADAP's core financial benefit will be \$1,740 per month.

The ADAP employment income exemption for single clients will be \$700 per month, which means that individuals on ADAP will be able to earn up to \$700 per month with no impact to financial benefits.

- Employment income above \$700 per month will be gradually deducted starting with less than a cent per dollar and increasing significantly approaching \$45,000 employment income per year. See the Disability Assistance Benefits Calculator to determine benefits based on your unique situation at [Alberta.ca/ADAP](https://alberta.ca/ADAP)
- Albertans on ADAP will be able to earn up to \$45,240 annually in employment income while continuing to receive financial benefits. This will be the highest limit for employment income while receiving financial benefits of any comparable disability income assistance program in Canada.
- Albertans on ADAP will continue to receive the health benefits they need, regardless of employment income.

| Client type                                | Amount clients can earn before impact to financial benefits |
|--|---|
| AISH Single or Parent                      | \$350   |
| ADAP Single                                | \$700   |
| ADAP Parent (1 or more dependent children) | \$1,100   |
| AISH or ADAP Cohabiting Partner            | \$1,500   |

## Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)

The longstanding Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program 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.

## AISH and ADAP updates

The AISH General Regulation has been updated and now applies to both AISH and ADAP.

### Increased spousal pension income exemption

Starting in July 2026 there will be an increase to the amount of pension income that a spouse or cohabiting partner can receive before impacting benefits. The first \$1,200 of spousal pension income will be fully exempt and 25% of the remaining amount is also exempt.

### Allowance for two-client couples living together

Starting the August 2026 benefit period, in households where two adults receive disability income assistance (AISH or ADAP), each partner will receive 88% of the maximum individual benefit to reflect a couple's shared household expenses and mutual financial responsibility. This approach aligns with how other jurisdictions structure disability benefits and helps ensure supports are distributed fairly.

### Recalibrated child benefit rate

Child benefit rates under AISH and ADAP have been recalibrated to reflect other child-related supports including the federal Canada Child Benefit. Monthly child benefits are set at:

- \$300 for the first child
- \$117 for the second
- \$88 for the third
- \$59 for the fourth, and
- \$30 for each additional child.

The recalibrated child benefit rates will increase child benefits for approximately 7,000 families who receive disability income assistance, and will be applied starting the August 2026 benefit period.

## More information

Updates will be posted on [alberta.ca/alberta-disability-assistance-program](https://alberta.ca/alberta-disability-assistance-program).