



## Disability Issues

### Questions for Candidates

- How will your party address the lack of transportation for persons with disabilities in urban and rural settings?
- What will your party do to make sure persons with disabilities have appropriate housing?
- What will your party do to address the rise of mental health-related disabilities among youth 15-24 years old?
- How does your party's inclusion policy increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities?

### Why Ask These Questions?

In 2012 The United Church of Canada affirmed our commitment to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church where people with disabilities can participate fully. Our commitment was outlined in the [Open and Accessible: Ministries with Persons with Disabilities](https://commons.united-church.ca) report (<https://commons.united-church.ca>, search "disabilities").

### Background Information

Disability and inclusion for us means making sure we do not discriminate against persons with disabilities, and that congregations can be led by persons with disabilities. We support Deaf ministry congregations so people from Deaf communities can worship, including online. As a witness to our commitment to persons with disabilities, we offer accessibility audits to help communities of faith become more accessible to people with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities continue to face challenges. In 2017 the [Statistics Canada Canadian Survey on Disability](#) showed that these challenges lead to poverty. It showed that, among Canadians with disabilities aged 25–64, only 59 percent are employed compared with 80 percent of Canadians without disabilities. The survey also showed that persons with disabilities earn less than Canadians without disabilities—12 percent less for those with milder disabilities and 51 percent less for those with more severe disabilities—and are more likely to live in poverty.

The federal election offers an opportunity to raise key issues that persist for persons with disabilities.

- The Government of Canada adopted [An Act to Ensure a Barrier-Free Canada](#) (*Accessible Canada Act*). In this act the government commits itself to new accessibility legislation for persons with disabilities and disability communities. In particular, regulations for telecommunication and transportation industries will be created to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility. Removing these barriers will open more access to employment for person with disabilities, which will help to alleviate poverty.
- The [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) mandates that it

is illegal to deny a person housing or to treat them unfairly because of a disability, including a mental health-related disability. If a tenant asks for their disability to be accommodated, it is illegal to deny that request. The [Canadian Human Rights Act](#), however, does not specifically address the "gaps in legislation, policy and programs that result in systemic housing discrimination and disadvantage for people with disabilities." A growing number of youth aged 15–24 with mental health-related disabilities need adequate housing, so this is a critical issue in this election. Without appropriate housing, persons with disabilities cannot escape poverty.

## Learn More

[cacl.ca/housing/](http://cacl.ca/housing/)

[www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2018002-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2018002-eng.htm)

[www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-people-disabilities.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-people-disabilities.html)

[www.equalityrights.org/programsandservices/your-housing-rights/isdisability-and-the-duty-to-accommodate/](http://www.equalityrights.org/programsandservices/your-housing-rights/isdisability-and-the-duty-to-accommodate/)

[www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-81/royal-assent](http://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-81/royal-assent)

[www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/disability-and-inclusion](http://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/disability-and-inclusion)

[www.united-church.ca/blogs/round-table/disability-who-me](http://www.united-church.ca/blogs/round-table/disability-who-me)

*So we, who are many, are one body in Christ,  
and individually we are members one of another.*

Romans 12:5