

City Council**Motion without Notice**

MM11.33	ACTION			Ward: All
---------	--------	--	--	-----------

Calling on the Federal Government to Fully Fund An Adequate and Accessible Canada Disability Benefit - by Councillor Amber Morley, seconded by Mayor Olivia Chow

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Amber Morley, seconded by Mayor Olivia Chow, recommends that:

1. City Council urge the Federal Government to fully fund an adequate and accessible Canada Disability Benefit.

Summary

Among the 6.2 million people in Canada living with disabilities, 23% live in poverty, twice the rate of those without disabilities.[1]

There are a patchwork of income supports available to persons with disabilities at the federal and provincial levels, each of which uses its own definition of disability. Significant barriers exist to accessing these programs, including requiring medical reviews, extensive financial documentation, and a lengthy review process.

As of August 2023, there are 499,000 beneficiaries receiving Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).[2] A single individual on ODSP receives a maximum of \$1,308 per month. By comparison, using the Government of Canada's Official Poverty Line (the Market Basket Measure), a single individual in Toronto would be considered living in poverty if they earn less than \$2,302 per month.[3]

Due to the inadequacy of income supports for persons with disabilities, Daily Bread Food Bank reports that close to half of food bank clients in Toronto have a disability.[4] One in four food bank clients reported their primary reason for coming to the food bank was because of their disability and the barriers they face to an adequate income.[5]

In September 2020, the Federal Government announced the creation of a Canada Disability Benefit designed to reduce poverty among working-age individuals with disabilities in Canada. The Canada Disability Benefit Act received Royal Assent in June 2023. The Federal Government is currently developing regulations that would define the eligibility, benefit structure, and amount. The Canada Disability Benefit has the potential to reduce, or even

eliminate, poverty and food insecurity among people with disabilities, thereby advancing the aims of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

This motion is urgent as the Federal Government is currently developing regulations that would define the eligibility, benefit structure, and amount. It is urgent for Toronto Council to signal their support for an adequate and accessible federal Canada Disability Benefit. The Canada Disability Benefit has the potential to reduce, or even eliminate, poverty and food insecurity among people with disabilities, thereby advancing the aims of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

[1] <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2023/06/landmark-canada-disability-benefit-legislation-receives-royal-assent.html>

[2] <https://www.ontario.ca/page/social-assistance-and-caseload-statistics>

[3] https://maytree.com/wp-content/uploads/Welfare_in_Canada_2022.pdf

[4] <https://www.dailybread.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/DB-WhosHungryReport-2022-Digital-1.pdf>

[5] Ibid

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM11.33