

Alberta Disability Assistance Program – ADAP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) – March 2026

Overview

This document provides information to assist in responding to questions from Albertans regarding the Alberta Disability Assistance Program.

What is ADAP?

ADAP is a new income assistance program for Albertans with disabilities who are able to work. ADAP will empower Albertans with severe disabilities to pursue fulfilling job opportunities while continuing to receive the financial, health, and employment supports they need.

Why is Alberta introducing ADAP?

ADAP was thoughtfully designed based on input from Albertans with disabilities to address a gap in supports for individuals with disabilities who are able to work and want to enjoy the benefits that come with employment, such as earning a paycheque, building relationships, developing skills, and providing a sense of purpose, belonging and independence.

All current AISH clients are guaranteed a spot in either ADAP or AISH.

AISH Act Amendments:

In December 2025, amendments to the *Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped Act* passed in the Legislature under the *Financial Statutes Amendment Act (2025) (2)*, and introduced governance for two distinct programs: Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) for individuals with disabilities that permanently prevent employment, and ADAP for those whose disabilities substantially impede employment.

Provisions in the amended AISH Act largely mirror those in the current AISH Act and outline benefit types, delegation authorities, and regulation-making authorities for both programs.

Notable amendments include:

- authorizing the provision of ongoing health benefits for eligible former ADAP recipients (when their income exceeds eligibility for an ADAP financial benefit);
- establishing employment supports as a benefit type under ADAP, helping clients find and retain meaningful employment;
- enabling the establishment of a medical review panel to make AISH medical eligibility decisions;
- enabling the establishment of a medical appeal panel to provide an appeal process for individuals not approved medically for ADAP or not referred to AISH
- transitional provisions to address the treatment of existing AISH clients, as well as in-process applications, appeals and payments, when the amendments come into force; and;
- additional regulation-making authorities to support amendments to the regulations (expected to be finalized in Spring 2026 and come into force on July 1, alongside the amended AISH Act).

How did the Government of Alberta engage with Albertans about ADAP?

Public engagement took place in August and September 2025 to gather feedback on ADAP. This included consultation with current benefit recipients, subject matter experts, service providers, advocacy organizations and other interested Albertans. More than 6,000 people participated in engagement via roundtables, telephone town halls, written submissions and the online survey. ADAP engagement was focused on six key areas: eligibility criteria, application and adjudication processes, appeals, benefits and exemptions, employment supports and expectations and client transitions.

What decisions have been made as a result of engagement?

Feedback received during the ADAP engagement process has resulted in increases in employment income exemptions for ADAP clients, the determination of which clients qualify for automatic approval for AISH, and the decision to cover the costs of one medical assessment for existing AISH clients who transition to ADAP and choose to be reassessed for AISH.

When will ADAP start?

Starting on July 1, 2026, ADAP will become operational and disability income assistance applicants will be assessed for both ADAP and AISH. Eligible applicants will be placed in the program best suited to their unique situation.

There will be a single combined application for AISH and ADAP. The disability income assistance application will have two parts:

1. Disability Assistance Application (completed by the applicant): collects information to determine general (age and residency) and financial eligibility.
2. Disability Assistance Medical Report (completed by a medical professional): collects information about the individual's disability (medical conditions, diagnoses, prognosis and impact on ability to work).

Medical professionals who can complete the Disability Assistance Medical Report are expected to include physicians, nurse practitioners, psychologists, occupational therapists and others.

Once ADAP has launched, applications for disability income assistance will be assessed for general, financial and medical eligibility. Once general and financial eligibility is confirmed, disability assistance adjudicators will review the medical information to determine if the applicant qualifies for ADAP or should be referred to a panel of medical professionals to determine eligibility for AISH. Eligible applicants will be placed in the program that best meets their unique circumstances and needs.

When will the combined application for AISH and ADAP be available?

The Disability Income Assistance Application will be available on July 1, 2026.

How will AISH or ADAP program eligibility be determined?

AISH and ADAP will consider the information provided by the applicant and their medical professional(s) to assess the severity of the individual's disability and understand how it affects their ability to work to ensure placement in the program that best meets their needs.

A person will be considered to have a severe disability if they have a substantial impairment of mental or physical functioning, or both; the impairment is permanent or likely to continue for two years; the impairment has been diagnosed and substantiated; and all treatment that could

lessen the impairment has been completed and no improvement in the impairment is expected. Individuals with episodic or recurrent disabilities may be considered to have a severe disability if they meet the proposed criteria above.

The distinguishing factor between AISH and ADAP is that AISH clients are permanently unable to work and ADAP clients have potential for employment.

If an ADAP client's health or ability to work changes, they can apply for an AISH assessment. Furthermore, if after participating in employment supports, it is determined that an ADAP client is likely permanently unable to work, they can be assessed for AISH.

Which AISH clients will not transition to ADAP?

Current AISH clients who have a severe and profound developmental disability, have a palliative or terminal medical condition, live in a facility (e.g. continuing care home), are over the age of 60 or have been deemed eligible for or are receiving Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) services will be automatically approved for AISH and will not transition to ADAP.

These clients will not need to submit a new medical report. Clients who qualify for automatic approval for AISH can choose to move to ADAP to access available employment supports and take advantage of ADAP's higher employment income exemptions.

What action is required from clients automatically approved for AISH?

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 before July 1, 2026. However, they can choose to move to ADAP to access employment supports and take advantage of ADAP's higher employment income exemptions.

What support will clients receive as they transition to ADAP?

On July 1, 2026, all AISH clients other than those automatically approved for AISH will be transitioned to ADAP. Clients will receive a monthly transition benefit that will keep their financial benefit amount the same as the AISH rate until December 31, 2027. During this time, clients can choose to remain on ADAP or apply for AISH. Those who choose to apply for AISH would complete a full application, including the Disability Assistance Medical Report. Assisted Living and Social Services will cover the cost of one medical assessment for clients who transition to ADAP and choose to apply for AISH during this period.

What is the monthly living allowance for AISH and ADAP clients?

Starting in July 2026, AISH clients will receive a maximum monthly living allowance of \$1,940 while ADAP clients will receive a maximum monthly living allowance of \$1,740.

AISH clients who transition to ADAP on July 1, 2026, will receive a \$200/month transition benefit that will keep their financial benefit amount the same until December 31, 2027. From July 1, 2026, to December 31, 2027, clients can choose to remain on ADAP or apply for reassessment for AISH.

ADAP's monthly living allowance remains higher than similar programs in most other provinces, reinforcing the Government of Alberta's commitment to supporting Albertans with disabilities. The ADAP rate reflects the program's intent to support individuals with disabilities who can supplement their benefits through employment income.

What are the employment income exemptions for ADAP?

Treatment of income will be aligned between AISH and ADAP, with the exception of employment and self-employment income. Effective July 1, 2026, employment income exemptions for single AISH clients will be set at \$350 per month and any earnings above this amount will be subject to full deduction, reflecting the program's focus on supporting individuals with severe and permanent disabilities who are unable to work.

Single ADAP clients can earn \$700 per month with no reduction in benefits. Earnings above \$700 per month will be subject to progressively increasing deductions, gradually reducing their ADAP financial benefits. ADAP clients won't see a full reduction of financial benefits until they reach \$45,240 net annual income.

Once Regulations are passed, a Ministerial Order will set out the detailed calculations for ADAP employment income exemptions.

Who will be responsible for medical eligibility decisions?

Disability assistance adjudicators will be responsible to make ADAP medical eligibility decisions. Applications that appear to meet the AISH medical criteria will be referred to the Medical Review Panel (MRP) for decision. The MRP is an independent panel composed of non-government medical professionals, ensuring clinical expertise and neutrality. Decisions by the AISH MRP to deny medical eligibility for the AISH program will be final and not subject to appeal.

Which medical practitioners will be able to complete medical assessments?

Medical professionals who can complete the Disability Assistance Medical Report are expected to include physicians, nurse practitioners, psychologists, occupational therapists and others. Medical professionals will be invited to join a pre-qualified roster to complete medical assessments, which will increase access for Albertans and ensure quality of assessments. Applicants will have the option of accessing a medical professional on the pre-qualified list, or their primary care provider, to complete the Disability Assistance Medical Report.

What is the appeal process for ADAP?

If an individual disagrees with an ADAP decision, they can appeal through the ADAP Medical Appeal Panel or the Citizen's Appeal Panel, depending on the type of decision. The Citizen's Appeal Panel will continue to hear non-medical eligibility appeals. Medical eligibility decisions by the disability assistance adjudicator to not refer an application to the AISH Medical Review Panel for an AISH eligibility determination can be appealed to the new ADAP Medical Appeal Panel. Decisions by the disability assistance adjudicator to determine an applicant is not eligible for ADAP can also be appealed.

What is the appeal process for AISH?

The Citizen's Appeal Panel will continue to hear non-medical eligibility appeals. Decisions by the Medical Review Panel are not appealable.

What employment supports are available for ADAP clients?

Through active and supported case management, ADAP clients will have access to a range of supports to assist them to prepare for employment, find a job and work to their full potential.

Employment services will include holistic wraparound supports designed to address a wide range of personal, social and practical barriers that may impact an individual's ability to find and maintain employment.

ADAP clients are expected to participate in activities that help them move toward employment with supports that include digital services, career planning, assistive technology and supported job placements. ADAP clients will work with case managers to create a personalized action plan. ADAP clients in rural or remote areas will have access to digital and in-person supports.

If an ADAP client is unable to find a job after receiving employment services, they will continue to receive financial and health benefits. If their medical condition progresses to the point that they are unable to work, they can apply for the AISH program.

Will ADAP clients receive health benefits?

ADAP clients will continue to receive the health benefits they need, regardless of how much they earn through employment. Even after an ADAP client with employment income reaches the maximum income threshold and no longer qualifies for monthly financial benefits, individuals will continue to remain eligible for essential health supports to ensure ongoing care and stability through to age 65.

Who should I contact if I have more questions?

Connect with the Alberta Supports Contact Centre (ASCC):

- Phone number: 1-877-644-9992, or in Edmonton 780-644-9992, and select option 9
- Email: scss.ascc@gov.ab.ca

Related information and news

- [Alberta Disability Assistance Program \(ADAP\)](#)
- [Transforming disability income support in Alberta \(Aug 12, 2025\)](#)
- [Empowering Albertans with disabilities \(Feb 4, 2025\)](#)