

Over 100 disability-related organizations were asked to submit two questions that they would like to ask federal election candidates. As people with disabilities represent 22% of the population, we are in a position to expect our political parties to recognize our issues and have solutions ready when they form the Government of Canada. When candidates come knocking, ask them some of these questions, or ones of your own.

*These questions are provided in language of origin.*

1. Despite the passage of Canada's historic national accessibility legislation in 2019, federal funding can still be used to create accessibility barriers for Canadians with disabilities. For example, there is a critical need for affordable housing for people with disabilities, including a growing number of older adults who have disabilities, but there is no requirement that housing supported by the federal government be accessible. What is your commitment to ensuring that anything the government funds, such as housing initiatives, be accessible for people with disabilities?
2. Over half a million Canadians with disabilities are able to work, but are unemployed due to barriers in the workplace. This leads to poverty, poor social outcomes, and dependence on costly public programs. What is your commitment to ensuring people with disabilities have access to barrier-free employment and training opportunities that meet their needs and provide an adequate income?
3. Effective communication is essential when accessing all services. Over half a million Canadians who have speech, language and communication disabilities, report significant barriers because they use ways other than speech to communicate. What will your party do to ensure that they have the communication supports they may require when accessing government services?
4. While accessible and affordable transportation remains a big challenge for many individuals and families living with disabilities even in urban areas, what does your party plan to do to address this growing issue and more specifically how you will support addressing this issue in rural communities across the country thus ensuring equality in transport options for ALL Canadians.

5. With the passing of Bill C-81, what does your party plan to do to encourage, assist, support and hold accountable, businesses of all sizes to embrace this federal accessibility act and promote active participation from businesses big and small all across the country to ensure an equal, an accessible and truly inclusive Canada, for Canadians living with disabilities now and for future generations.
6. Will you and your party support and advance the framework of the “Moving Forward Together: A Pan-Canadian Strategy for Disability and Work”: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/newsletters/at-work/95/seeking-broad-input-on-pan-canadian-strategy-to-improve-work-choices-for-people-with-disabilities>
7. I am the mother of a young man who has cerebral palsy and is non-verbal. He is able to communicate through a computer device. He is interested in politics and probably stays informed more than the average person. It is great that attention is being turned to making voting more accessible. I am very interested in knowing what is being proposed by your party to make the voting booth accessible to people who have speech and communication limitations. Look forward to your response.
8. Why do rural communities not have funds to provide appropriate interpreters for educational purposes by using sign that can causes problem for the students all during their school journey as they don't have appropriate access to their languages?
9. Indigenous Deaf people have more challenges to have access to interpreter service because their reserves don't recognize their human rights to access information. What can we do about this?
10. When will all Canadians have a building code that removes barriers and creates inclusion for housing, schools, businesses, public services, transportation etc.
11. Will you commit to funding the Enabling Accessibility Fund to meet demand?
12. Will national transfer dollars to provide employment services include more supports to indigenous job seekers with disabilities?
13. Will there be a national strategy to improve access to services for indigenous persons with disabilities?
14. What is your party planning regarding ensuring that the built environment (i.e. public buildings, side and crosswalks) are fully accessible for all disabilities not only wheelchair accessible? This would mean audio elevators, audio street signals, colour contrast, etc.
15. What is your party planning for full accessible elections into the future which would provide independent voting for all? i.e. polling stations on bus routes, well light areas inside as well as outside, electronic voting mechanisms, yo name a few

ideas.

16. Access to full service gas stations is a critical issue for persons with disabilities and seniors, especially those who are in the labour force. Current practice is having to book an appointment between 10 am and 2 pm when stations have 2 staff members on site, to receive service, this is not reasonable. What is your party doing to ensure that under the Accessible Canada Act that gas stations are providing accessible, available full service options to persons with disabilities in Canada?
17. Lack of access to playgrounds and play structures leaves a lot of children with disabilities on the sidelines watching others play. What is your party doing to ensure proper standards are put in place through the Canadian Standards Association "Annex H" to mandate fully accessible playgrounds and play structures? Meaning more than one piece of ground equipment or swing, actual integrated play structures for all abilities.
18. The Government of Canada is fast approaching its second review in relation to its compliance with the articles contained in the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Although Canada and our provinces and territories can all highlight various initiatives relating to disability that they have implemented / supported that are in line with the spirit of the Convention, however are not consistent or necessarily available across Canada. When and what will your party do to fully implement the Convention in its entirety, equally in all communities of the Nation, ensuring an adequate standard of living and the social and economic inclusion of all people living with a disability?
19. The Federal government looks to Civil Society (CSO) and Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPO) to assist them in their work within the disability sector. However adequate funding to support CSO / DPO's in their work is rarely seen, particularly in the areas of accommodations and funding support at the provincial and community levels. With almost a quarter of Canadians living with a disability, what new funding and what increases to existing funding levels will your party implement to ensure that CSO / DPO's and their clients / membership have the adequate support necessary, both immediately (after election) and throughout the upcoming years?
20. Employment: Alarming, Canadians with disabilities are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than other Canadians. They face exclusion from quality education, from employment and from participation in their communities. According to the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disabilities, about 59% of working-aged adults with a disability were employed compared to 80% of those without disabilities. Canadians with disabilities are seeking equality and more inclusive employment and training opportunities. Easter Seals Canada remains committed to working with persons living with disabilities, community, corporate partners and government to improve outcomes for people living with disabilities. Today, we call on all Federal Parties to

share their plans to improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities.

21. Background: The Act outlines how to identify and remove accessibility barriers and prevent new barriers, under federal rule, including in: • built environments (buildings and public spaces) • employment (job opportunities and employment policies and practices) • information and communication technologies (digital content and technologies used to access it) • procurement of goods and services • delivering programs and services; and • transportation Question: We applaud the Federal Government on the recent passage of the Bill C81 – The Accessible Canada Act to make Canada barrier-free in areas under federal jurisdiction. However, we know that this Act will not be able to address the more substantive issues such as poverty, exclusion and a lack of access to needed disability supports because these issues are within provincial/territorial jurisdiction. This reinforces the need for a comprehensive Federal-Provincial and Territorial disability-supports strategy. What is your party's plan to help address these challenges facing people with disabilities and will it include financial investments?
22. Access to transportation and the costs associated is a critical issue for many people living with disabilities, and what is your party doing to ensure accessible, available and affordable transportation options are available for people living with disabilities in Canada?
23. Undiagnosed and untreated hearing loss has serious consequences for newborns, children, adults, and seniors creating barriers to accessibility. What is your party doing to ensure there is adequate hearing screening programs and affordable hearing aid options available across the lifespan for people living with hearing loss in Canada?
24. The built environment is a critical issue for most people living with hearing loss. What is your party doing to remove barriers due to poor room acoustics and lack of assistive technologies to ensure accessibility in the receipt of goods and services, information and communication, public transportation, employment, and education for people living with hearing loss?
25. We are all too familiar with the broken disability support systems in Canada which can be described as one of fragmented competition - a situation that leaves far too many persons with disabilities with poorly resourced and inadequate support services that are more costly than effective. Will your government consider a publicly funded universal national disability insurance program that will address the chronic problem of underfunding, inefficiency and inequity in the Canadian disability support system?
26. Would your government consider the appointment of a Special Advisor to examine the ways and means to provide medicare for persons with disabilities in the form of a national insurance program that addresses the needs of all persons with

disabilities?

27. How are any accessibility laws and By-Laws being enforced or are they just an honour system?
28. Are building codes going to require ALL buildings to ensure that they adapt their locations to be 100% accessible or are we going to keep using patchwork rules and guidelines?
29. Will your party commit to adopting and funding a national policy and strategy to address Canada's mental health crisis?
30. Will this strategy address the significant gaps in services for persons with a dual diagnosis of intellectual disability and mental illness?
31. Will your party commit to amending the Canada Health Act to include palliative care as a listed core service?
32. Will your party commit to protecting and preserving the end of life criteria in Canada's medical assistance in dying regime?
33. Will your party commit to revisit the RDSP ten-year rule and address issues of legal capacity for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families so that they can appoint replacement plan holders under a national solution?
34. Will your party commit to making the Disability Tax Credit refundable, and to working with provincial and territorial governments to ensure that a refundable credit is not clawed back for people receiving social assistance benefits?
35. Will your party commit to developing and adopting a targeted and coordinated employment strategy for persons with disabilities?
36. Will your party demonstrate best practices in inclusive hiring?
37. Will your party adopt new legislation to protect and give explicit recognition to the right to adequate housing for all?
38. Will your party commit to funding affordable, accessible and inclusive housing for those with intellectual disabilities?
39. Will your party adopt the Housing Inclusivity Framework when funding housing-related projects across the country?  
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