



Disability Income Support Coalition (DISC)

Autism Resource Centre

Autism Treatment Services

Canadian Association for Williams Syndrome

Canadian Deaf Blind and Rubella Association (CDBRA)

Canadian Mental Health Association (Saskatchewan Division) Inc.

Canadian Paraplegic Association (Saskatchewan) Inc.

DAWNing Saskatoon

Epilepsy Saskatoon

FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan Inc.

Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) Disability Office

Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc.

Grassroots Alliance

IDEA Regina

Metis Family and Community Justice Services of Saskatchewan

North Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre (NSILC)

People First of Saskatchewan

People with disabilities

Phoenix Residential Society

Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry (RAPM)

Saskatchewan Association for Community Living (SACL)

Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC)

Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association (SBIA)

Saskatchewan Down Syndrome Society

Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

Saskatchewan Families for Effective Autism Treatment (SASKFEAT)

Saskatchewan First Nations Network on Disabilities, Inc. (FSIN)

Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities

Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan

South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centres (SSILC)

Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Assoc of Saskatchewan North (SBHASN)

What is DISC?

The Saskatchewan **Disability Income Support Coalition (DISC)** was formed by a large cross section of disability advocates, consumers and organizations across Saskatchewan who are committed to advocating for a respectful, dignified and adequate income support system. DISC members have joined together to speak as one voice, working towards a distinct (or separate) income system for people with disabilities that will be built on our common vision and principles.

Our Vision

Our primary vision is to see an income system that offers both *an adequate baseline income for people with disabilities and a user-friendly mechanism to address individual financial needs based on the impact of disability.*

As we look towards our vision of developing a distinct income system, one thing is clear - *no one can create a better system alone.* DISC members believe strongly that the only way to move forward is as one voice and in a collaborative, full partnership with the Government of Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Social Services. We believe that a program designed without the collaboration of community experts will lack credibility and be unsatisfactory in meeting the income support needs of people with disabilities.

As such, we see developing a distinct income program for people with disabilities as a truly **joint venture** between all stakeholders, each contributing equally to the process. DISC comes with one voice and we propose that the Government of Saskatchewan let us bring our rich experience and contribute our expertise to the development of a new income policy for people with disabilities.

Please contact one of the DISC contact people if you have any questions or comments.

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As members of DISC we share a common goal, to work towards positive change in the area of income support for people with disabilities in Saskatchewan. As DISC has developed our vision of a distinct income security program for people with disabilities, we have laid out key principles for an improved system:

- **Adequacy-** People with disabilities should have an adequate income that truly meets their needs without the indignity of having to justify their needs. Lifelong disability and subsequent economic insecurity needs to be a consideration. What does DISC consider adequate? A disability income should be enough financial support to meet individual needs, not just basic needs. Our primary aim is to see an income system that offers both an *adequate baseline income for people with disabilities* and a *user-friendly mechanism to address individual financial needs based on the impact of disability*.
- **Hope and Security-** People with disabilities must have financial accommodations so that they can live their lives with hope, respect and dignity instead of a system of disincentives.
- **Person-Centered and User Friendly-** People with disabilities should be able to expect a dignified service that focuses on their individual financial needs as its reason for being. Financial accommodation should be easily accessible with consistent, respectful income workers who have the mandate and power to respond quickly to individual discretionary needs.
- **Higher Income Exemptions-** People with disabilities need to be adequately accommodated as they move into training or employment. Income exemptions need to be increased to eliminate disincentives to employment and independence. Rapid reinstatement needs to be a working principle that allows people with disabilities to feel secure as they move in and out of employment opportunities.
- **Consistent Implementation-** People with disabilities should be able to expect a portable and flexible income system that meets their individual needs no matter where they choose to live in the province.

These principles describe a respectful system that truly accommodates disability. It moves away from a welfare-based system that is insufficient, disrespectful and degrading and was never meant to meet the needs of people who may rely on it long-term. Living with a disability should not guarantee a life of financial, emotional or spiritual poverty.

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