

Ensuring Accessibility and Inclusion

A Political Survey on the Future of Disability Rights for the Deaf in Canada

for the April 28, 2025, Election Survey Results

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Introduction

The citizens of Canada are set to go to the polls on April 28, 2025, to elect a new government. In recent years, Canada has taken important steps toward creating a more inclusive society for persons with disabilities. Yet, substantial gaps remain in policy implementation, funding, and political commitment for people who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard-of-Hearing or Deaf & disabled (DDBHHD+).

To seek clarity on those issue, the Canadian Association of the Deaf – Association des Sourds du Canada prepared a survey for the five political parties. Their answers, or non-answers, present an in-depth look at where Canada’s major political parties stand on key issues affecting the disability community—from accessible elections and housing to the Canada Disability Benefit and inclusive technology.

As we approach the 2025 implementation deadline for critical federal initiatives like the Canada Disability Benefit, the need for accountability, transparency, and meaningful engagement with the disability community has never been greater and that responsibility will fall upon the next elected government.

CAD-ASC has provided each political party in March, reminders were sent and we have committed to updating this chart within one business day.

CAD-ASC encourages citizens to ask these questions of their local candidates and to choose wisely on April 28, 2025.

Merci, thank you and miigwech.

Richard Belzile

Executive Director, Canadian Association of the Deaf.

The Accessible Canada Act (ACA)

How will your party support the Accessible Canada Act, ensuring it meets the needs of Deaf, blind, Deafblind, Hard of Hearing and partially sighted individuals?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>We will strengthen and fully implement the Accessible Canada Act (ACA) to ensure it meets the needs of Deaf, blind, Deafblind, Hard of Hearing, and partially sighted individuals. Our priority is removing systemic barriers and ensuring full inclusion in every aspect of life.</p> <p>We will expand ACA coverage to include all federally funded programs. This will ensure housing and social services meet accessibility standards. We will require compliance with international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) for all digital services.</p> <p>Our plan guarantees universal availability of sign language interpretation for federal services and events. This includes House of Commons press conferences. All federally funded housing and public transit will become fully barrier-free by adopting universal design standards.</p> <p>We will establish a national assistive device fund. This fund will provide essential equipment such as screen readers, hearing aids, and communication devices.</p> <p>Additionally, we will simplify and expand the Disability Tax Credit to make it easier to access. We will enhance and fully fund the Canada Disability Benefit, lifting people with disabilities out of poverty. We will also invest in community support, rehabilitation, and independent living services.</p>	<p>The NDP is committed to strengthening Canada's Accessibility Act. In taking steps to make Canada more accessible for those living with hearing loss or deafness, this community will be at the heart of our policy development process. We'll be drawing on the latest data, and working hand in hand with organizations like yours that promote accessibility rights.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

These measures will help build a Canada that is truly accessible and inclusive for everyone.				
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Accessible Elections

What measures have you taken to ensure that all election materials, such as candidate platforms, voter education resources, and all-candidate debates, are fully accessible to people with disabilities?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>The Green Party of Canada is committed to ensuring elections are fully accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. We support modernizing Canada's electoral system and strengthening democratic participation. This includes exploring accessible methods such as online voting through a Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Renewal.</p> <p>We will require political parties to be transparent about their efforts to recruit candidates from underrepresented groups, including persons with disabilities. Our platform also calls for restoring fairer public financing of elections to enhance equal participation, which helps remove barriers faced by marginalized groups.</p> <p>Additionally, we will implement clearer, more transparent rules around election advertising to ensure everyone, including voters with disabilities, can access accurate, easy-to-understand information. Election oversight bodies will be empowered to enforce truth-in-advertising standards during campaigns.</p> <p>These commitments reflect our dedication to equity, inclusion, and ensuring all Canadians can fully participate in our democracy.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

What will you do to increase the representation of persons with disabilities in your party's leadership, candidacies, and decision-making processes? Do you have any statistics on how many of your candidates are people with disabilities?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
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<p>The Green Party of Canada is strongly committed to equity and inclusion. We actively seek input from disability advocacy groups to shape policies and practices. We value lived experience, recognizing it makes our party stronger and our policies better informed. We are working to remove barriers within our candidate recruitment processes, leadership roles, and decision-making bodies to ensure people with disabilities can participate fully.</p> <p>At this time, we do not have specific statistics on how many of our candidates identify as having disabilities. We recognize the importance of collecting this data. As part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, we will review our internal processes to gather and share this information in future elections.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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What disability organizations (ex. CNIB, CHHA, CAD) has your party consulted with to shape party platforms and policies that impact accessibility and inclusion?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>The Green Party of Canada has consulted with: March of Dimes, CNIB, Inclusion Canada, Disability Without Poverty, Reena, and PLAN (Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network).</p> <p>We've also engaged with La Société Québécoise de la Déficience Intellectuelle, Spinal Cord Injury Canada, AODA Alliance, Citizens for Public Justice, and the MS Society.</p> <p>These partnerships have helped us ensure our policies reflect real needs and lived experiences. We are committed to ongoing dialogue with the disability community.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

How will your party address barriers that prevent Deaf, blind, Deafblind, hard-of-hearing and partially sighted Canadians from voting independently and privately in federal elections?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
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<p>The Green Party of Canada believes voting should be fully accessible, private, and independent for all. We support strengthening the Accessible Canada Act to cover all aspects of federal elections.</p> <p>We are exploring online voting, which could offer greater accessibility if designed properly. We support universal broadband access so no one is excluded from digital solutions.</p> <p>While we don't yet have detailed policies for Deaf, blind, Deafblind, hard-of-hearing, and partially sighted voters, we are committed to working with disability organizations to develop them. Accessibility in democracy is a right.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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What is your stance on Proportional Representation?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>We strongly support implementing Proportional Representation (PR) to replace the outdated first-past-the-post system. PR ensures every vote counts and better reflects the will of Canadians in Parliament</p> <p>We will create a Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Renewal. This group will study PR and suggest reforms. We will support a Royal Commission to look into electoral reform. Then, we will hold a referendum. This way, Canadians can choose a fair, proportional system. We will change the Canada Elections Act. This will ensure that every Canadian has equal and effective votes. We will also encourage cooperation among parties. This will help make PR a shared goal. We aim to push for Senate reform to ensure it reflects proportional representation.</p> <p>We have always pushed for democratic reform and fairness. A more representative Parliament is key to rebuilding trust in Canadian democracy.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Canada Disability Benefit

What are your plans for ensuring the launch of the federal financial supports for people with disabilities through the Canada Disability Benefit by July 2025? When will Canadians with disabilities receive their cheques?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>We are committed to the Canada Disability Benefit launching on time. Green MP Mike Morrice worked hard to ensure the regulations were approved so that cheques can begin in July 2025. He will continue to pressure the government to fast-track delivery.</p> <p>We believe the delay so far is unacceptable. People with disabilities need support now, not later. We will push for automatic enrollment for people on provincial disability or CPP-D benefits. This will help them access services faster. We will fight to remove barriers like the Disability Tax Credit requirement.</p> <p>We don't know the exact date for when the cheques will arrive. Our goal is to make sure people aren't left waiting. This benefit must be delivered without delay - no further excuses.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Currently, the budgeted amount is estimated at \$6.66/day – How will your party ensure that disability support monies across the country are disbursed fairly and equitably?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>We agree that \$6.66 a day is deeply inadequate. It will not lift anyone out of poverty. The Green Party will fight to fully fund the Canada Disability Benefit. People with disabilities should receive a benefit that reflects the real cost of living</p> <p>We will raise the maximum amount and ensure it puts people above the poverty line.</p>	<p>New Democrats are committed to tackling the cost of living crisis, including by doubling the Canada Disability Benefit, ending unfair clawbacks of the benefit and making it easier to access. We've been consistent in saying that the \$200-a-month benefit the Liberals introduced is</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A

<p>We will make sure eligibility is fair and not limited by outdated criteria. That means removing barriers like the Disability Tax Credit requirement. We will push to expand eligibility and reduce means-testing. Everyone who needs support should be able to access it quickly and without discrimination.</p>	<p>insufficient to meet the increasingly demanding pressures that the disability community is feeling more and more.</p>			
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How will your party ensure that provincial governments do not clawback any benefit received from the Federal government?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>We will legislate protections against clawbacks by provinces or private insurers. Federal support must add to a person's income, not replace it. Green MP Mike Morrice has been clear: this benefit must not be eroded by cuts to other supports.</p> <p>We will partner with provinces and territories to end clawbacks. This way, the Canada Disability Benefit can give true financial help. We also support a Guaranteed Livable Income. This would replace provincial assistance programs and offer stable, universal support. This would make clawbacks obsolete and simplify the system.</p> <p>People with disabilities deserve security and dignity. They should not face bureaucratic barriers or have to deal with broken safety nets.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Accessible Technology

What is your stance on ensuring equal access to digital platforms and assistive technologies for Canadians with disabilities?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
The Green Party is committed to ensuring equal access to digital platforms for all Canadians. This includes those with disabilities. We support the digital accessibility of government websites and services, in compliance with WCAG 2.1 standards. We will also invest in assistive technologies. This will help people with disabilities fully participate in society.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

What is your stance on the provision of virtual interpreting services (such as AIRA or VRI) to Deaf, Deafblind and blind people for federal services or in public buildings?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
The Green Party supports providing virtual interpreting services like AIRA and VRI to Deaf, Deafblind, and Blind people in federal services and public buildings. This will ensure equal access and communication for all individuals, regardless of disability.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

What is your stance on the inclusion access of Video Relay (Interpreting) Services for travelling Deaf Canadians at airports, border crossings, embassies and consulates?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
We advocate for Video Relay Services (VRS) for traveling Deaf Canadians at airports, border crossings, and embassies. Accessibility during travel is essential, and VRS will ensure communication is possible for Deaf individuals in these settings.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Emergency Services

What is your stance on creation of a Canadian standard for smoke alarms that include visual, auditory and tactile alerts?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
The Green Party supports creating a national standard for smoke alarms that include visual, auditory, and tactile alerts. Everyone deserves equal protection in emergencies. Multi-sensory alarms are a key part of universal design. We will update Building Codes to require these alarms in all new and retrofitted homes to keep Deaf, Deafblind, and Blind people safe.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

The RCMP and the army are often called in cases of emergencies to help Canadians. What is your stance at providing these first responders with AIRA and VRI apps to allow them to assist blind, Deafblind, and Deaf people in times of crisis?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
We support equipping first responders with AIRA and VRI apps. In a crisis, clear communication saves lives. RCMP and military personnel must have the tools to assist Deaf, Deafblind, and Blind people. This technology will ensure no one is left behind in emergencies.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Affordable Housing

What steps will your government take to improve employment of Deaf, Deafblind and Blind people's access to adequate and affordable housing including home ownership?

Green Party	NDP	Liberals	Conservatives	Bloc
<p>We believe housing is a human right. We will make sure Deaf, Deafblind, and Blind people have access to safe, affordable homes. We will require universal design in all federally funded housing. New builds must be accessible. We will expand grants to retrofit existing homes. We will triple Canada's social housing stock. This includes co-ops and non-market rentals. All public housing must stay permanently affordable. We will restore CMHC's role in building and financing this housing.</p> <p>We will fully fund the Canada Disability Benefit. We support a Guaranteed Livable Income. We will raise the federal income tax basic personal amount to \$45,000 and we will set a \$21/hour federal minimum wage. These steps will help more people afford to rent or buy a home. We will also enforce the Accessible Canada Act in housing. Everyone deserves a home they can afford and access.</p>	<p>As New Democrats, we believe that all Canadians, including those living with disabilities, have the right to affordable housing that meets their needs. We recognize that the rising cost of living and housing puts increased stress on those living with a disability, particularly those who are deaf or hard of hearing.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A