

## Making opportunities possible for Canadians with disabilities to participate fully in the workplace.

Many Canadians with disabilities are not employed and want the chance to work. Human Resources and Social Development Canada helps people with disabilities to overcome barriers in their efforts to join the workforce, through the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities.

### What is the Opportunities Fund?

The Opportunities Fund is a program designed to help people with disabilities prepare for and obtain employment or self-employment. It can also help develop the skills you need to keep the new job.

The Opportunities Fund also helps organizations and individuals who plan to deliver employment services to persons with disabilities.

### What does the Opportunities Fund do?

The Opportunities Fund supports a variety of activities that help people with disabilities overcome barriers to employment.

Activities may include:

- encouraging employers to provide work opportunities and experiences for people with disabilities
- helping individuals start their own business
- helping individuals to increase their employment skills

- helping individuals to integrate into the workplace through services tailored to meet their special needs
- providing the personal support required to enable individuals to participate in employment-related activities.

*Note: Some activities may not be available in certain regions.*

### How can the Opportunities Fund help you obtain employment?

The Opportunities Fund can provide:

- skills upgrading
- work experience
- assistance for self-employment
- job-search support.

### Who can get help under the Opportunities Fund?

To be eligible for help from the Opportunities Fund, you must be:

- a person with disabilities who is:
  - unemployed (or working less than 20 hours per week)

- not eligible for Employment Insurance benefits
- self-identified as having a permanent physical or mental disability
- legally entitled to work in Canada
- in need of assistance to prepare for employment, find employment, or become employed or self-employed.
- an employer or organization, such as: a business, band/tribal council, municipal government, public health or educational institution; or an individual who wants to deliver employment services to people with disabilities.

### How does the Opportunities Fund program work?

The Opportunities Fund provides financial help, through a contribution for employment services to people with disabilities. Services may be provided directly to individuals or through organizations with projects funded by the Opportunities Fund.

The financial help may cover a range of expenses that are incurred directly as a result of employment or training. Individual participants may receive support toward certain other expenses, such as tuition, commuting and care for their dependants. Funds may also be provided to cover the costs of special arrangements or devices to accommodate a person with a disability.

*Note: Individual participants should continue with their current source of support, if any, and may be asked to share the cost of assistance.*

### How long can the program help you?

The length of assistance to persons with disabilities will vary, based on individual needs. Normally, assistance to projects and/or employers does not exceed 52 weeks.

## Making opportunities possible for Canadians with disabilities to achieve their goals

Since its launch, the Opportunities Fund has assisted more than 40,000 Canadians, by providing almost \$24 million each year to support people with disabilities in achieving their employment goals.

Here's an example of how Human Resources and Social Development Canada supports Canadians with disabilities in their efforts to join the workforce.

It was through the *Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities* that I was able to benefit from paid training at *Klean Keepers* through *Reaching Equality Employment Services*. When the owners started talking about selling the business, I made financial arrangements to purchase the business. I used the same program to hire an office administrator. Without the *Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities*, I would have never had the opportunity to become the owner of an established business.



Robert Slobodzian, Owner  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

## How to apply

If you are interested in submitting an application or a project proposal, please contact your nearest Service Canada Centre, see **Contact us**.

To obtain additional copies of this publication, please see **Contact us** or write to:

**Enquiries Centre**  
Human Resources and  
Social Development Canada  
140 Promenade du Portage  
Phase IV, Level 0  
Gatineau QC  
K1A 0J9  
**Fax: 819-953-7260**

## > Contact us



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# Making opportunities possible!

