

MONEY **TALKS**



**Financial fundamentals for
youth with disabilities**

caf

Canadian Abilities Foundation

Welcome to our Money Management Guide,

**written to support
persons living with
disabilities who are
interested in learning
more about taking care
of their money.**

The Canadian Abilities Foundation (CAF) would like to thank our sponsors:

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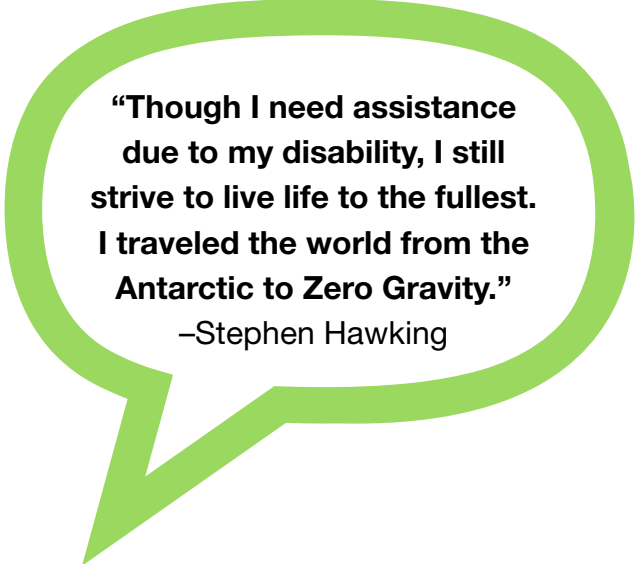
Understanding the basics

As you take the first steps towards managing your money, it's okay to be unsure, anxious, or worried about how everything works.

We're here to strengthen what you already know and add to your financial know how. We'll take you through the basics and answer questions you might have. Our experts will also provide tips and resources to help you develop both the skills and confidence you need to get ahead.

Topics we'll explore include:

- Barriers you might face
- Customer service and accessibility
- How to create a personal budget
- Managing your expenses
- Learning how to save
- Being careful with money
- Decision-making and spending.



“Though I need assistance due to my disability, I still strive to live life to the fullest. I traveled the world from the Antarctic to Zero Gravity.”

–Stephen Hawking

Remember...

- ✓ Many young adults experience barriers to their financial education
- ✓ Not a single person comes into the world knowing how everything works
- ✓ It's okay to have questions and be unsure about something

This booklet might not give you all the answers, but its goal is to help you feel more confident in yourself to manage your own money.

Barriers to building financial resilience

As a person living with a disability or an ongoing medical condition, it is possible you've experienced barriers in your day-to-day life and interactions with others. While most financial institutions and local branches have made significant efforts to be "open to all", many people can still encounter difficulties with:

We've asked people living with disabilities how they've overcome some of these challenges in order to access the financial services they need. Here's what they had to share:

- ✓ Confusing paperwork and forms
- ✓ Lack of trained customer service representatives
- ✓ Accessibility challenges in person and online
- ✓ Over stimulation in crowded, busy branches
- ✓ Limited staff understanding of how to serve with people with disabilities

"I didn't understand credit before and ran up a lot of bills.

A credit counsellor from my agency helped me sort things out, set up a budget and taught me ways to follow it. It's hard but I'm learning. We meet each month now to see how I'm doing with paying my bills."

"Forms are difficult for me to read.

I asked to bring them home for my family to review."

What people are saying

“Credit cards make me anxious in case I forget to make payments.

I prefer to pay with cash most of the time. I write cheques for big things on one bank account.

My credit card is only for emergencies.”

“I lost my bank card and had to get a new one last month.

When I had trouble explaining what I wanted, it was embarrassing and everyone was looking at me.

I realized afterwards that I could have written down my request and saved myself the humiliation and stress.”

“I didn’t know how to make a deposit so I was saving my pay cheques in a drawer.

The new boss took me to the bank and showed me what to do.

Now he reminds me to go to the bank on my lunch hour with my pay and see the same gentleman. He puts my cheque into the bank and gives me back the money I need for the week.”

“Dealing with banking is overwhelming.

I used to struggle but now, I call ahead, explain who I am and what I need. Then get a private appointment with the Manager in a quiet office when no crowds are around. He knows me now.”

Sometimes thinking outside of the box is what’s needed to get you what you need. Don’t be shy to speak to friends, family, or your bank manager about paying bills, saving, how to manage your money, or how to use online banking services. Talking about money can be overwhelming or triggering. However, it can be helpful to “check in” with ourselves before jumping into a task.

First, check in with yourself



Well-being

- Stay active and eat well to maintain energy
- Try a relaxation practice (Yoga, Mindfulness, Deep Breathing, etc.)
- Prioritize sleep



Other Resources

- Call local community centers to join support groups
- Try joining Facebook, TikTok, or Discord groups to find like-minded people you can relate to
- Talk to someone you trust about your concerns



If You are Still Struggling

- Contact your doctor or visit a local walk in clinic
- Local hospitals can also provide free referral services for mental health support
- Familiarize yourself with 24/7 resources such as Kids Help Phone— 1-800-668-6868 or Talk Suicide Canada— 1-833-456-4566

Here are a few questions to consider:

- 1 Does thinking about money make me excited or anxious? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2 Are my finances a priority? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Should they be? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 3 Am I ready to invest my time and energy in learning more about finances? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4 Would it be better to learn about my finances another day? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 5 What is on my mind at the moment that's distracting me?

TIP

If you don't feel ready, put this guide aside and try another day. You can also reach out to a trusted parent or peer to help you start your learning.

Let's get started!

Regardless of your age or abilities, feelings and well-being should be factored into your discussions and decision making around money. There are many resources in your community to support you as you begin your journey. Now that we have addressed your well-being, we should feel better equipped to tackle the big question:

Think about your financial needs, what are 3 things you'd like to learn about money?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Customer service and accessibility

A bank or credit union is an institution that provides services to help people manage their money. By law they must offer barrier-free facilities and services in their branches, offices, bank machines, and websites.

Tips:

- 1 If you are feeling anxious about visiting your bank for the first time, try contacting your local branch beforehand. This way you can ask about the services they provide for your needs and can plan ahead for your visit.
- 2 Ask about a personal appointment to discuss your needs.
- 3 Remember, you have the same right as everyone else to access assistance you need for your banking.

Will a bank or credit union suit my needs?

Many people are unaware that Canada offers two types of financial institutions.

Both offer similar services, such as: depositing cheques, getting a debit card, applying for a credit card, saving money, borrowing money, and financial advice.

Banks operate nationally and are typically for-profit.

Pros: You do not need to be a member and have lots of financial services to choose from

Cons: You will be charged more fees and don't have a say in how the bank is run

Credit unions operate regionally and are non-for-profit organizations.

Pros: You will have lower service fees and a stronger customer service experience

Cons: There'll be fewer physical locations available and you must meet eligibility requirements to buy a share and join.

Both can be good choice. Everyone values different things in a financial institution, so it can be a very personal decision.

Example: Credit unions are normally not as technologically advanced as banks, so this may be an issue for people who do not have easy access to a physical location.

Banks vs. Credit Unions 5 Key Differences	
BANK	CREDIT UNION
For-profit institution, owned by stakeholders	Not-for-profit organization, owned by members
Anyone can be a customer	Must qualify for a membership
Offer a variety of product and services	Offers less products and services, but a more personalized experience
Federally regulated. Deposit insurance provided by Canadian Deposit Insurance Corporation (CDIC)	Provincially regulated. Deposit Insurance provided by provincial regulatory authorities, such as the FSRA in Ontario
Can usually access products or services from anywhere in Canada	Access to products or services is generally limited by location

Your personal banking

An account, like a bank account, is important to keep your money safe and secure. There are many different types of accounts, however the two most common are **chequing accounts** and **savings accounts**.

Chequing account

- Direct deposit your pay cheques or other money you receive
- Make purchases
- Pay bills
- Move or “Transfer” your money
- Cheque-writing privileges
- Receive little or no interest
- May have fees for withdrawals or transfers

Savings account

- Put money away for the future
- Earn interest so your money grows
- Usually has no monthly fees

To open an account, you’ll need:

one piece of government photo ID, your Social Insurance Number, Status Card (if applicable), etc.

Fees: Most branches will charge money or a “fee” for banking services and transactions. They must tell you about these charges, so don’t be afraid to ask.

Common fees include:

Monthly service charges, overdraft/interest fees, ATM withdrawals, or e-transfer fees. Compare different banks offerings to see what works the best for you.

Tip:

Ask about low-cost accounts:

Available for \$4 per month with limited transactions and work well for basic banking.

“The bank is a loud, intimidating place.

I use the instant teller after hours. I can do it in privacy which I like.”

Types of savings accounts

Find out if your parent/guardian has set up any of these accounts for you, and ask how they work. If not, you may set one up for yourself. Contact your local bank branch to begin setting up these services.

Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP)

A long-term savings plan to help people save for their or their child's education



Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

A program to help

Canadians with disabilities save for long-term financial needs. For more info about setting up an RDSP, [click here](#).

Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP)

An RRSP allows you to reduce your tax and save for old age.

Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA)

An long-term savings account that tax is not collected on. The amount you can contribute is based on your birth year.

[Click here for a tool to help you compare accounts.](#)



How you can access your money



Telephone banking



Online and mobile banking



Debit purchases at the store



Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)

Debit cards

Your debit card is an important tool when it comes to accessing your money in your bank account, and paying without cash.

When you open a bank account, you will receive your debit card and choose a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access your card.

Keep your PIN number private and do not share it with anyone.

What is credit?

Credit is the trust that allows you to borrow money, with the promise to pay it back at a later date. In terms of financial institutions, like banks, they will “credit” you the money, but with the expectation that payments will be made every month.

What is interest?

Once you borrow money, it begins to gain interest. This is the cost of borrowing money. Interest rates are usually expressed as a percentage. This is why it is important to pay attention to the rate that is attached to your credit.

What is a credit card?

- A credit card is a card provided by banks, or other businesses.
- These cards have smaller credit limits, but higher interest rates.
- Credit cards can be used to make online purchases, earn rewards points and book hotels.

How does my credit score affect me?

- Your credit score is a measure of how consistently you have paid back the money you’ve borrowed.



Where to find online payment information on your credit card.

- In order to improve your credit score, make consistent payments on your credit card.
- When you have a good credit score, you can qualify for lower interest rates, insurance premiums and other financial benefits for your future.

Important notes:

- Only spend what you can afford on your credit card, think of it as borrowing money from yourself.
- It is ideal to pay your credit card in full each month, to avoid high interest charges.
- Missing a payment can affect your credit score. Set up automatic minimum payments on your card to avoid this.
- If a credit card isn't for you, many banks offer *Visa Debit* cards that allow you to use them for online like a credit card.

Earning money

What is income?

Income is money that you receive on a regular basis. Income includes:

- Salary from a job
- Income from benefit programs (i.e., Gov't of Canada Disability benefits, provincial or disability benefits, etc.)
- Tax credits (i.e., medical, education, disability etc.)
- Earnings from investments

Finding a job

If you are looking for a way to earn money, there are many supports to assist you on your job search. Our advanced booklet will discuss job search and career planning strategies in further detail.

Duty to accommodate:

An employee's duty to make changes to an employee's work environment or duties, so they can do their job properly. The limit to this is that the accommodations must be reasonable and not cause an employer "undue hardship".

Know your rights!

Every worker in Canada has three main rights regarding their work. These rights come from each province's own "Employment/ Labour Standards" codes and are:

1. The **"Right to Know"**: This means you have a right to know about parts of your work that could negatively impact your health.
2. The **"Right to Participate"**: Workers have a right to be involved in the discussion around workplace health and safety. Bigger workplaces have "health & safety committees" you can join.
3. The **"Right to Refuse"** unsafe work: If you reasonably believe it is a danger for yourself or others to complete the work.

The Canadian Human Rights Act

prohibits discrimination in employment based on physical or mental disability.

The Employment Equity Act focuses on ensuring equal treatment in employment for minority groups, including people with disabilities.

Your paycheque

There are a few things to learn about when it comes to how your job pays you for the work you do.

What type of pay do you get?

- Are you paid a certain wage per hour?
- What is the pay rate if you work overtime?
- Do you have a yearly salary?
- Are you paid weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly?

What way do you get paid?

- Do you get a paycheque?
- Is your pay auto deposited into your bank account?

What is a paystub?

A paystub or “statement of wages” is a digital record given with each paycheque to show the total amount of money earned and the amount of money the employer deducted for taxes and other reasons. If you get a physical cheque, your paystub will come with it. However, if your pay is deposited directly then your employee is still required to provide you with some form of paystub. This will usually be available electronically via the company’s intranet.

Employer Name	
[Employer Address] Payroll Account	DATE _____
PAY TO THE ORDER OF _____	\$
_____ DOLLARS	
FOR _____	

What are deductions?

Deductions are amounts of money taken off your total pay by your employer to pay to the government. There are certain required deductions your employer may make off your pay, and some that may be specific to the company.

Income Tax: Federal and provincial income tax is deducted off your pay by your employer.

Canadian Pension Plan: Contributions to the Canadian Pension Plan are required to come off your pay, and your employer must match every dollar you contribute into the CPP. The CPP operates throughout Canada except Quebec.

Employment Insurance: Providing a safety net in case you lose your job, EI is also a required deduction. Employers also contribute 1.4 times the amount of the premium employees contribute, up until the maximum insurable amount per year.

How to create a personal budget

A budget is a personal plan for how much money you have coming in and how much you can spend each month:

- ✓ It will help you manage your money you need to cover regular expenses
- ✓ It will help you understand how much is left for saving or other things
- ✓ It will help you stay out of debt

To create a budget follow these steps:

1. Review your income. How much do you get paid, where does that money come from and how often is it received?
2. Organize all your expenses, what do you owe each month? Aside from necessary bills like rent, or food remember occasional expenses, such as haircuts and to budget for wants.
3. Decide on your saving goals, what do you need or want in the future? Is it your education, retirement, or a house? This will add a sense of direction to your budget.
4. Based on your income, plan out how your expenses will be paid, and when you will add to your savings.
5. Repeat. Reviewing your budget regularly will allow you to keep track of your spending.

Needs:

Rent, groceries, phone bill, gas, medical expenses, etc.

Savings:

Unplanned car repairs, medications, family emergency, loss of job

Wants:

Entertainment such as games, dining out, extra subscriptions, etc.

Click here for a budget worksheet to help you organize your expenses.



Everyone has different goals for their money. No matter what your short or long-term goals are, consider setting money aside for:

- Irregular expenses
- Future planning
- Emergencies
- Household maintenance
- Tech upgrades

Learning to save

Consider disability related costs

As a person with disability, there might be some additional things you need to consider to be sure you can get what you need to feel financially secure.

Alongside basic needs, consider additional costs to your disability.

- Extra housing costs
- Transportation costs
- Additional cost for services
- Loss of earnings

This is why it is very important to save your money!

Different options for savings

Ask your bank to set up **automatic withdrawals** each month into your savings account.

When you contribute to a **RDSP**, you can apply for the **Canada Disability Savings Grant**.

If you have low income, you may be eligible for a **Canada Disability Savings Bond**. You do not have to contribute to your RDSP to get this bond.

If you are an Indigenous person with a disability, you might be eligible for the **Assisted Living Program**.

Signs you are living beyond your means



If you have trouble paying bills and have run up debt:

- 1 Stop using your credit card to pay for things
- 2 Look at your budget for ways to reduce spending
- 3 If you have to use credit, look for options with lower interest rates
- 4 Don't borrow money from strangers
- 5 Ask for help from a family member or credit counsellor, or visit Credit Counselling Canada.

Money saving tips and tricks

Simple ways to save

Cut back on cable TV.

Do you really need all 500 channels? Consider basic cable. Online streaming and antennas are great alternatives.

Reduce your phone plan.

You may be paying for more features or data than you need. Look into lower tier or pre-paid plans.

Visit your local library.

Most have a free selection of books, e-books, movies and TV shows.

Prepare meals at home.

Avoid takeout and ready-made meals. Grocery shop and prep at home.

Make coffee to go!

Cafés can add up quickly. Make a just as delicious latte at home and carry it with you.

Reduce your indulgence.

The taxes on cigarettes, alcohol, and cannabis are high. Cut back for your health (and wallet).

Ride a bike.

If you're able to do this safely, you'll save on transit fees.

Use reward systems.

Many places like gas stations and coffee shops that you spend money at every day offer loyalty systems. These systems earn rewards that can usually be redeemed for perks like discounts, or free products.

Try a free exercise trial/pass.

Monthly membership or individual class fees can add up. With a trial pass you can try classes like yoga, pilates, etc., and see what you enjoy.

Negotiate!

Often businesses offer reductions to get a new client, or to retain one.

Wait 48 hours before you buy.

Hold off on impulse purchases. Give yourself time before making a decision.

Make a weekly "money date."

Update your budget, review your accounts and track your progress against your financial goals regularly.

Avoid fees by ATM's.

It's easy to waste money withdrawing from a convenience store machine, they often have high fees.

Money myths vs. facts

Now that you've covered the basics, let's address some common finance myths you may encounter.

Myth		Fact
You must be rich to invest.	→	You can invest as little as \$10. As long as you are consistent and patient you can receive a financial return.
A person with a disability does not qualify for a credit card.	→	Being qualified for a credit card depends on your annual earnings and credit score. Your disability isn't a consideration on your application.
If I have enough money, I don't need to budget and save.	→	Budgets allow you to organize your money for short and long-term goals. If you do not keep track of your spending, you risk going into debt.
I can't improve my money management skills or situation without the help of a professional	→	While getting advice from a professional is always helpful, there are other options. Ask family members questions. Banks and financial organizations also have resources and tools available for you. See our additional resources for more learning.

What would I do in case of fraud?

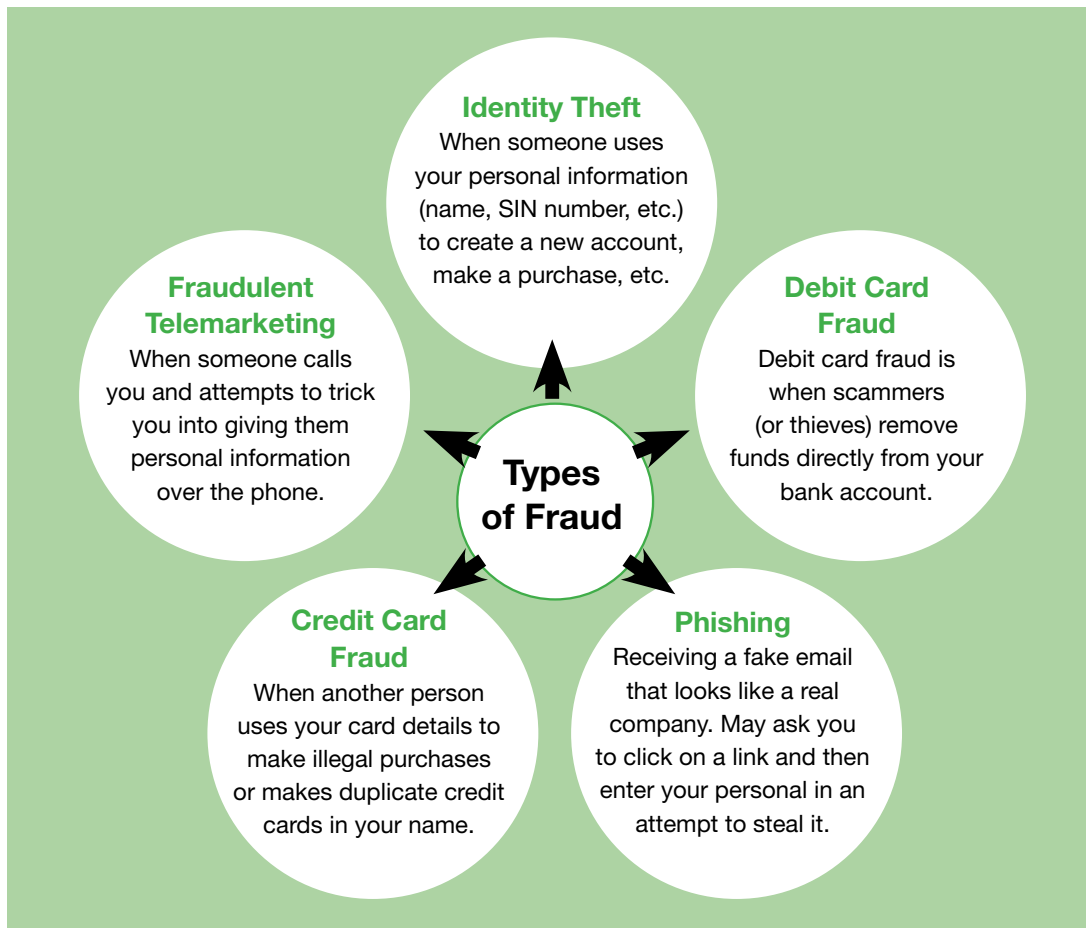
Sometimes we don't realize we've been scammed until it's too late. If you suspect you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank and local law enforcement immediately.

The more we report when it happens, the more resources we will have to protect others. Keep in mind most financial institutions have deposit insurance and will reimburse you for fraudulent charges.

TIP

If you think you have been a victim of financial or identity fraud, contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

Keeping your money safe



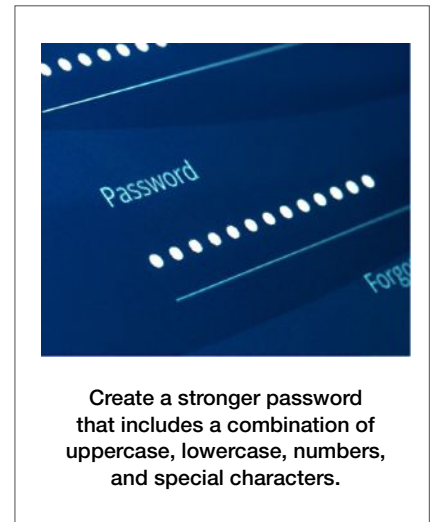
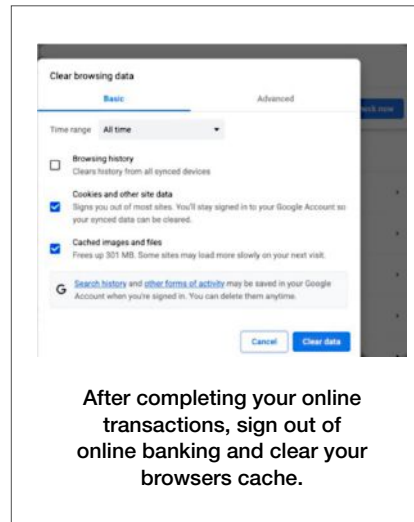
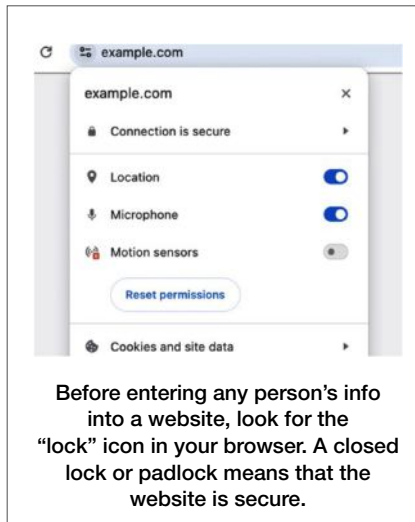
Fraud and identity theft are two of the ways your money and resources can be stolen. Banks do everything they can to protect your money. However, it's your responsibility to be careful, private, and aware of the common ways other people may try to steal your cash or scam you.

How can you protect yourself?

- Keep track of the money in your accounts.
- Remember if an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Keep personal information private: Don't disclose personal information by email, phone or online unless it's secure.
- If you are unsure of a website or offer, stop and ask someone you trust.
- Don't open suspicious looking emails, delete them.

Being careful with your money

CIBC tips for secure online banking



Safe or Scam? Test your fraud knowledge.

Catch fraud before it happens to you. Find out if you can identify the signs of some common scams with CIBC's 5 minutes quiz.

Click on the icon to begin.



Congratulations!

You have made it through the basic financial booklet.

We trust that this booklet has equipped you with fundamental money management tips to empower your journey toward financial independence. As you navigate the complexities of adulthood, our upcoming advanced booklet is set to teach you more about job searching, making large purchases and long-term financial planning, as a person with a disability. Stay tuned for valuable insights on overcoming obstacles and discover a wealth of resources and strategies tailored to support you on your financial path. If you still have questions, don't be discouraged, there is a website to visit with even more resources. Learning about money management is an ongoing process and we are committed to providing you with the tools and knowledge needed to navigate the world of finance.



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MONEY TALKS



**Continued financial fundamentals
for marginalized youth**

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Canadian Abilities Foundation

Welcome: Planning for your Financial Future!

As we continue to get older, our lives will be full of milestones. This can look different for everyone, whether it's graduating, getting your first job, moving out, buying a home, or maybe even getting married and starting a family.

The Canadian Abilities Foundation (CAF) would like to thank our sponsors:

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Continue your learning

Everyone can feel overwhelmed at this stage in life.

It's important to remind yourself that you don't need to be a finance expert. Even so, there are some habits and strategies you can start learning about now to make yourself more financially secure in the future and specifically advocate for yourself as a person with a disability.

Advocating for yourself

When advocating for yourself, you need to be prepared and aware of the conscious and unconscious bias that affects decision makers around you. Build a case for yourself. Keep records of letters from employers, statements of income, past accommodations provided, and how they helped you bring value to the organization.

You must be aware of the inaccurate beliefs that may be associated with your disability. Although an employer, a financial manager, or a tax advisor may not voice these beliefs or concerns, they might show a lack of confidence in your financial abilities through body language or questions. Being prepared will enable you to address these issues and advocate for yourself.

Topics we will explore in this booklet:

- Job search and interview tips
- Disclosing and accommodations at work
- Filing taxes, and tax benefits
- Planning for your future
- Long term and legal considerations
- Other financial tools to use
- Common terms and definitions



Your personal advocacy plan

1 Know yourself. The first step in self advocacy is learning everything about your needs, disability, strengths, and challenges.

- What goals are you trying to achieve?
- Where can you go for help and support?
- Do you communicate better in writing?
- Do you feel more confident with a third party present or 1-on-1?
- Are you good with numbers and can use them to prove your points?

2 Prepare yourself. What your accommodations are, why are your accommodations are needed, and how the company can provide them to you in a reasonable manner. Understanding exactly what you are asking for can help you present your case.

Build a case for yourself. Keep records of steady income, character references from other professionals, bank statements, tax returns, letters from employers, a track record of successfully managing your finances. Collect and keep them in one file.

For example: a credit counsellor might have initial concerns about your ability to make payments on time.

3 Develop a clear message. Prepare a clear and specific message that explains your priorities as a person with a disability when at a financial institution, applying for a loan, credit, or a mortgage. Whether this means specific savings account, investments, or a professional with specific skills and knowledge in disability related needs.

Remain on track of the outcome you want. You can do this by recording points you want to cover or rehearse your message with someone you trust. Provide a positive shadow over any challenges you have experienced in managing your money.

4 Know your rights. Familiarize yourself with the system you are working with, i.e Employee Rights, Customer Service Standards. Learn about the process for requesting accommodations or filing complaints.



5 Present yourself. Remain professional when dealing with financial businesses. Stay calm, do not swear, raise your voice out of anger, or plead with a professional. If possible, use different approaches when communicating an important message (i.e. personal examples, “I” statements - “I need” “I feel”). Even in moments of frustration, keep calm, continue to actively listen, stick to the facts, and be direct and honest.

Consider first impressions. Most people make a first impression of a

person within 7 seconds. Your clothes, cleanliness, and hygiene all play a factor in an initial meeting with a financial professional.

6 Document everything. Communicate in writing or have another form of conversation record. Keep important documents, assessments, notices and letters in one secure private place. This can be helpful later if your rights are not being respected. They can also be helpful to add to your case when the need to advocate for yourself arises in the future.

Important!

- Professional’s questions simply and show employers that you are confident and serious about your finances. Even if you do not necessarily plan to disclose your disability, preparation will increase your confidence.
- Pay attention to employee equity statements at the end of job postings, most employers will include information regarding how to access accessibility supports throughout the application process.

TIP

Role playing with family or friends to act out anything that makes you nervous can help as you use these tools to become more independent.

Job search and interview tips

Focus on companies that care about inclusion

Finding employers that have diverse hiring practices, and have a track record of providing accommodations is one way to help your job search. Each year Canada's Best Diversity Employers posts its list of the top 100 companies in Canada to support diverse hiring.

There are a variety of resources to help people with disabilities job search effectively.

Job Skills Canada

Click on the icon to visit their service page or contact 1-866-592-6278



Gov't of Canada: Opportunity Fund for people with disabilities:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/opportunity-fund-disability.html>

Gov't of Canada: Job Bank for People with Disabilities:

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/persons-with-disabilities>

In the interview!

There are certain questions that a potential employer **cannot** ask, by law. Some include:

- Do you have any disabilities or medical conditions?
- How did you become disabled?
- How often do you miss work?

However, if you disclose your disability to an employer, they can ask about your accommodation needs and your ability to perform the essential job duties.

Tips for success:

- **Stay calm:** You can always take a second before you answer a question if you need more time.
- **Dress professional:** Avoid flashy clothing, distracting accessories and logos.
- **Always follow up:** Sending a follow up email after the interview thanking the employer for their time is always a good idea to stand out!
- **Answer completely:** When answering interview questions, focus on specific examples, actions you took, and the results of those actions to create a full answer.

Disclosure and accommodations

When it comes to disclosing your disability, there are many considerations for employees.

You can disclose at any time you feel comfortable, whether that be during the application process, while in an interview, or as a challenge is encountered.

Disclosing your disability in one situation does not mean you must disclose it in all roles.

Ultimately it comes down to what you feel comfortable telling an employer, weigh your options and do what feels right to you.

Remember **you have a right to accommodations** at work, as long as they don't interfere with your **essential job duties**.

Essential job duties

Tasks that are critical to the function of the job, and you must be able to do with reasonable accommodation that do not cause undue hardship for your employer.

**There is no
“right” approach to
disclosing disability.**

Disclosing

Pros

Prepares the organization for situations that may arise.

Allows you to access accommodations

If there are changes to your employment due to disability related reasons, you could be protected by law.

Cons

May cause exclusion from opportunities.

May lead to discrimination from peers, supervisors or co-workers.

The organization may focus more on potential issues than your actual work performance.

Source: McMaster Student Success

Filing your taxes

As previously mentioned, you pay Income Tax on the money you earn. This money is usually paid directly off your paycheque, occasionally you may not pay enough Income Tax in the year and owe money.

Tax return: A form submitted to the Canadian Revenue Agency each year to state the amount of income and tax you pay. If you paid more tax than you owe, based on your financial status that year, the CRA may give you a tax refund.

How do you file your taxes?

Collect all your relevant tax forms and receipts, which will help the government calculate the amount of tax you need to pay. Take your information to a tax expert, who will help you file your return. Some forms to collect for your return:

- **From your employer:** your T4 form which is a statement of income
- **From your school:** your T2202, your tuition enrollment certificate
- **From your doctor:** your T2201, your disability tax credit form
- **From the government:** Any T4A, or T4, your statement of other income, or benefits.

GST/HST Exemption

As a person with a disability, you don't have to pay service or sales tax on some goods and services. To ensure this, be sure to file your taxes every year, even if you have no income to report.

When is tax season?

You file your taxes each year for the year prior, tax season begins in mid February each year, based on when the CRA opens their filing platform.

The deadline to file personal income taxes is May 1st for individuals and June 15th for the self-employed.

Keep your receipts!

In order to claim tax credits on certain expenses, such as rent, medical costs, or educational costs, make sure you keep all receipts of the transaction. These act as proof of the transaction and are necessary to claim a tax credit.

Your tax return

Tax credits:

A tax credit is an amount taken off of the tax owed. Examples of tax credits:

- Home accessibility tax credit
- GST/HST credit
- Disability Tax Credit
- Medical Expenses

Tax benefits:

Taken off of your taxable income.

Tax benefits include:

- Canada Pension Plan
- Canada Child Benefit
- Canada Dental Benefit

How to claim your Disability Tax Credit

- 1 Visit a doctor to complete the disability tax credit form on your behalf
- 2 Provide thorough information in the effects of impairment section*
- 3 Complete your section of the form
- 4 Submit the completed T2201 form to the CRA

*Note: The DTC'S focus is on the effects to your daily living as a result of your disability.

Things to consider relating to your taxes

- 1 Your disability must be of "qualifying nature" and limit your ability to do certain things
- 2 The property purchased must have accessibility in mind
- 3 The property must qualify.

Medical expenses

Under the Income Tax Act, there are many medical expenses that you may be eligible to claim as a refundable and non-refundable tax credit.

This includes costs associated with:

- Hospital parking
- Medicines
- Accessible computer software
- Service animals
- Home or car modifications
- Assistive devices
- Cost of equipment repairs
- Home-delivered meals
- Cost of training service animals

Making large purchases

As we grow in our life, we may start to want to make bigger purchases that require careful thought and planning. Purchases like a car, or a home can have many different considerations and hidden costs associated.

When making large purchases:

- Know your needs: you're spending a lot of money, do your research to ensure what you're spending it on is accessible to you
- Think in advance: a down payment can be very expensive, make sure you have enough time to save up before you want to buy
- Ask a professional: this is the time to get expert advice from a banking or financial advisor

The Disability and First-Time

Home Buyer's Tax Credit is offered by the federal government of Canada. This allows you, as a person with a disability, to claim a \$5000 tax credit when you buy a qualifying property.



Click on the picture to learn more.

Buying a home: what is a mortgage?

A mortgage is a long-term loan, that is secured by an asset, usually a house or property. Unlike regular long-term loans:

- Mortgages require a down payment
- Your property is considered collateral if you fail to pay the loan
- The amount of the loan is typically very large
- You may have a balance owing by the end of your loan term

The amount on your mortgage is usually the purchase price of your home minus the down payment, and might include additional costs.

Additional costs to consider:

- Maintenance costs
- Land transfer fees
- Insurance costs
- Broker fees
- Taxes

Long-term care and legal planning

Retirement is a significant milestone that marks the culmination of a lifetime of hard work, accomplishments, and aspirations. While this transition is often anticipated with a mix of excitement and apprehension, it takes on unique dimensions for people with disabilities. Take the time to consider:

- What type of long-term care costs do you potentially have?
- Who would you want as your power of attorney?
- What aspects of your current lifestyle may need to adapt so you can remain healthy?

Thinking about the future can be daunting, however for most it comes quicker than expected. Some activities to undertake when planning for the future include:

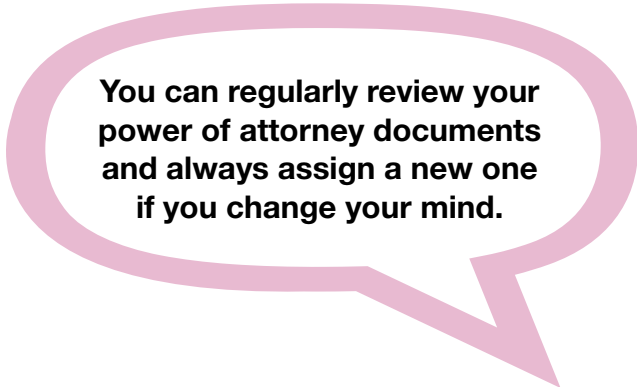
- Creating a will
- Applying for life insurance
- Establishing a trust
- Assigning a power of attorney
- Apply for social benefit programs

Choosing a power of attorney

Anyone could become legally incapable of making decisions due to an accident, disease, or the effects of aging. As a person with a disability there might be certain factors you would like considered by your power of attorney, such as your specific personal care needs.

When choosing a power of attorney, consider:

- Do they know you well?
- Do you trust them?
- Do they live near you?
- Do they show good judgement?
- Do they understand your specific needs and accommodations and be able to advocate for you effectively?
- Can they be trusted to support good financial decision-making for you
- Do they treat you as an adult who's wishes and choices are worthy of respect?



You can regularly review your power of attorney documents and always assign a new one if you change your mind.

Future care and protecting assets

Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit

If you have a disability and are unable to work regularly, you may be entitled to CPP disability benefits provided you have contributed enough to CPP.

Saving for Retirement

It is important to save when possible for your retirement, this is because subsidized income often doesn't cover hidden costs that may arise such as:

- Costs for home or car modifications
- Private health care costs
- Medication costs
- Attendant support costs



Click the icon for more information.

CPP Disability Benefit

Age: Under 65

Must be: Not receiving the CPP retirement pension

Requirements: Have made valid contributions to the CPP in 4 of the last 6 years, or have contributed for at least 25 years.

CPP Post-Retirement Disability Benefit

Age: From 60-65

Must be: Already receiving the CPP retirement pension for more than 15 months or become disabled after starting to receive the retirement pension.

TIP

Consider setting up a irrevocable trust or a family trust, this will protect your assets as you age.

Other financial considerations

There are other financial tools you can use to help you on your journey to financial freedom. These are more advanced financial management techniques and should be thoroughly discussed with a professional.

The power of Compounding Interest:

We have already talked about how your money can earn interest in savings accounts, or you can owe interest on credit cards. In terms of savings, interest can be a great thing! Quite simply put compound interest is when your interest earns it's own interest on top of the base amount. This is why keeping your money in savings can be beneficial, because it can earn more money just by sitting there.

Consolidating debt:

If you have a large amount of debt, it may be beneficial to combine many different types of credit into one line of credit with a low interest rate, that way you only have to make one payment every month. This will help with your credit score as well as with the amount of interest you pay in total.

Ask your banking advisor about:

- Personal savings accounts
- Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs)
- Mutual Funds
- Stock portfolios
- Different ways for your money to earn interest.

Renting

- Supports can be found on your provincial website for different housing options.

Consider:

- Renting or sharing a room
- Social/ community housing
- Supportive housing
- Assisted living

- Your landlord cannot request you pay for the costs of accommodations
- You have a right to equal consideration throughout the application process
- Landlords have a duty to make every reasonable effort to accommodate their tenants, unless it would cause undue hardship.

“Good to know..”

Disability Benefits Compass



Resource:

The Canadian Revenue Agency offers ongoing live and interactive webinars on the credits and benefits available to persons with disabilities.

To visit their website for upcoming webinars, click on the icon.



Click on the icon to learn more about how to withdrawal from your RRSP for your future home.



Alongside income that you earn, there are extra resources available to you to move you towards your goal of buying a home. Contact your local bank branch to learn more about these options.

To access a previous webinar and transcript for disability related tax credits click on the picture.



Disability Assistance Payments

These payments may come from your registered disability savings plan (RDSP) and go towards your estate.

They are singular payments that can be requested when desired and may contain anything from bonds, grants, or income earned.

Lifetime Disability Assistance Payments

These payments must be paid yearly once started and until the plan is terminated. These payments also have an annual withdrawal limit.

Click on a box if you would like to access the service

Disability Planning Helpline



Safe and Secure Worksheets



Webinar: Planning for a Good Life



Congratulations!

Congratulations! You have completed our advanced booklet.

Hopefully this workbook has served as a valuable resource for navigating the complexities of finance for you as a person with a disability. Remember, financial empowerment is a universal right, and with knowledge comes the ability to make informed decisions that positively impact your financial well-being. As you continue your learning and application of financial principles, always celebrate the progress you make, no matter how small.

Your financial journey is unique, and by building a solid foundation through the insights gained from this workbook, you are better equipped to overcome challenges and achieve your financial goals. Here's to your financial success and the empowerment that comes with mastering personal finance.

Best of luck on your financial journey!

Quick definitions:

A

Assets

Items you own that have economic value, or are worth money.

Automatic withdrawals

A bill-paying method. You provide the merchant with your bank information and they take the funds from your account each time the bill is due. For example, you can give your cellphone service provider your account information and they can take the cost of your phone bill out of your account each month.

B

Benefit

A credit provided by an employer, the government, or an insurance company to an employee to cover healthcare costs, car expenses, meals, etc.

C

Credit card

A credit card is like a short-term loan from a bank. The bank agrees to let a person borrow a set amount of money with the agreement that the money will be paid back by a certain date. A credit card usually charges interest.

Credit score

A number created by information from your credit history. The number is considered a “score” and this is based on how consistent you have been with paying loans back on time.

Compound interest

When a credit card or loan gains interest in one period, which is added to the total amount that will gain interest in the next period.

D

Debt

Money you owe another person or a business.

Direct deposit

Money electronically sent to your bank account.

E

Emergency fund

A cash reserve that’s set aside for unplanned expenses or financial emergencies. Some common examples include home repairs or medical bills.

Essential job duties

Tasks that are critical to the function of the job, and you must be able to do with reasonable accommodation that do not cause undue hardship for your employer.

F

Financial aid

Money given in the form of grants, loans, and scholarships to help pay for various costs, such as related expenses such as housing books, supplies, and transportation.

Fixed expenses

Expenses, like rent, that must be paid each month and cost the same amount each month.

G

Grant

A type of financial aid that does not have to be repaid, unless, for example, you withdraw from school and you need to pay back some of the grant money; often need-based.

I

Income

Money earned or received such as wages or salaries, tips, commissions, government transfer payments, tax refunds, gifts, and inheritances.

Interest

A fee charged by a lender, and paid by a borrower, for the use of money.

A bank or credit union may also pay you interest if you deposit money in certain types of accounts.

Invest

To commit money to earn a financial return; the strategic purchase or sale of assets to produce income or capital gains.

L

Loan

Money that needs to be repaid by the borrower, generally with interest.

N

Needs

Basic things people must have to survive (such as food, clothing, and shelter).

O

Overdraft

An overdraft occurs when you don't have enough money in your account to cover a transaction, but the bank pays the transaction anyway. This can have high fees.

T

Taxes

Required payments of money to governments, which use the funds to provide public goods and services for the benefit of the community as a whole.

Tax return

A form submitted to the Canadian Revenue Agency each year to state the amount of income and tax you pay. If you paid more tax than you owe, based on your financial status that year, the CRA may give you a tax refund.

Transaction fee

A fee charged every time you use the card for a certain type of transaction. Be sure to ask about fees or read the cardholder agreement associated with your card.

Variable expenses

Things you have to spend money on, that change in cost from month to month. Examples of variable expenses are groceries, clothing, dining out, or anything you buy from a store.

W

Wants

Something that is desired, but not necessary for your survival.

Keep learning!

You can add terms you learn while exploring finances to reference back to here.

[illegible]



caf

Canadian Abilities Foundation

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(416) 421-7944

caroline@bcsgroup.com