

## VAD is here to help

Need help with:

- ADAP
- AISH
- Canada Disability Benefit
- Disability Tax Credit
- CPP Disability
- Alberta Adult Health Benefit
- Old Age Security
- Taxes (2020 to 2025)
- Leisure Access Program
- Referrals

Our navigators continue providing one-on-one appointments across Alberta.

### ADAP & AISH Notes to doctor

Disability Income Assistant Medical Report (Part B)

#### AISH is looking for:

- Severe: see the definition below (not able to work) which corresponds to “major”
- “Severe handicap” means an impairment of mental or physical functioning or both that, in a director’s opinion after considering any relevant medical or psychological reports, causes substantial limitation in the person’s ability to earn a livelihood and is likely to continue to affect that person permanently because no remedial therapy is available that would materially improve the person’s ability to earn a livelihood.”
- Permanent which corresponds to “indefinite”
- Not able to work

Please include:

- All problems with detailed symptoms
- Treatments that have been tried
- Copies of tests, x-rays, specialist reports, etc.

#### ADAP is looking for:

- Specific symptoms and how they affect the ability to work full time – client may be able to work, not able to work enough to earn a living; both get and keep a job long term
- Activities of Daily Living – must be both moderate and severe in abilities
- Describing limitations in detail, with examples of limitations
- Explain what remedial therapies and treatments have been tried and if they improved the ability to work
- Permanent which corresponds to “indefinite”

Please include:

- All problems with detailed symptoms
- Treatments that have been tried
- Copies of tests, x-rays, specialist reports, etc.

Call VAD Society if you require assistance  
780-488-9088

## Ways You Can Support VAD

Become a:

- Member - Individual - iVAD members FREE  
- Organizational - \$99 per year  
- Corporate - \$150 per year
- Volunteer - VAD accepts volunteers for Bingos, Casinos, and Presentations. We also have many events that volunteers can assist with.
- Monthly donor - Support VAD with a donation of funds to offset operational costs - charitable receipt provided.
- Sponsorship - VAD has multiple opportunities to sponsor events. Contact us today for information.
- Community partner - become a service or product provider in the community and collaborate with VAD on projects, and client interactions.

## Voices Without Barriers: Making Music Accessible for Everyone

This September, the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) is proud to present Voices Without Barriers—Alberta’s first fully accessible indoor music festival. More

than just a concert, this ground breaking event is a celebration of accessibility, inclusion, community, and the incredible talents of artists with disabilities.

Taking place on Saturday, September 26, 2026, from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at The Westin Edmonton Downtown, the festival has been designed from the ground up with accessibility at its core. Every aspect of the event has been carefully planned to ensure that people of all abilities can enjoy a safe, welcoming, and unforgettable live music experience.



Attendees can look forward to an exciting day featuring:

- Live performances by talented artists, including Indigenous artists with disabilities.
- A sensory-friendly space for those needing a quieter environment.
- Live captioning and tactile accessibility features.
- Inclusive arts experiences and interactive activities.
- A silent market showcasing local vendors and creators.
- An accessible venue conveniently located near public transit.

For many people with disabilities, attending concerts or festivals can present significant barriers. Voices Without Barriers is changing that by demonstrating what truly inclusive events can look like. It is about more than entertainment—it is about belonging, equal opportunity, and ensuring everyone can fully participate in Alberta's vibrant arts and cultural community.

This inaugural festival is also creating meaningful opportunities for performers with disabilities by providing paid performance opportunities while showcasing the richness and diversity of Alberta's disability community. VAD hopes this event will inspire other organizations and event organizers to make accessibility a priority in future festi-

vals and public events.

Whether you're a music lover, community supporter, family member, volunteer, or accessibility advocate, Voices Without Barriers offers something for everyone. Join us as we celebrate music without limits and help build a future where accessibility is not an afterthought—but the standard.

We invite our members, partners, sponsors, and the entire community to be part of this historic event. Together, we can create a festival where every voice is heard, every person belongs, and every barrier is removed.

For tickets, sponsorship opportunities, or to learn more, visit VAD's Voices Without Barriers event page or contact our office. We look forward to celebrating with you this September!

[www.vadsociety.ca/events](http://www.vadsociety.ca/events)

## Language Matters

### People-First or Identity-First?

There is no single "right" way to refer to disability. Some people prefer people-first language, such as person with a disability, because it emphasizes the individual before the disability. Others prefer identity-first language, such as disabled person, because they view disability as an important part of their identity and community.

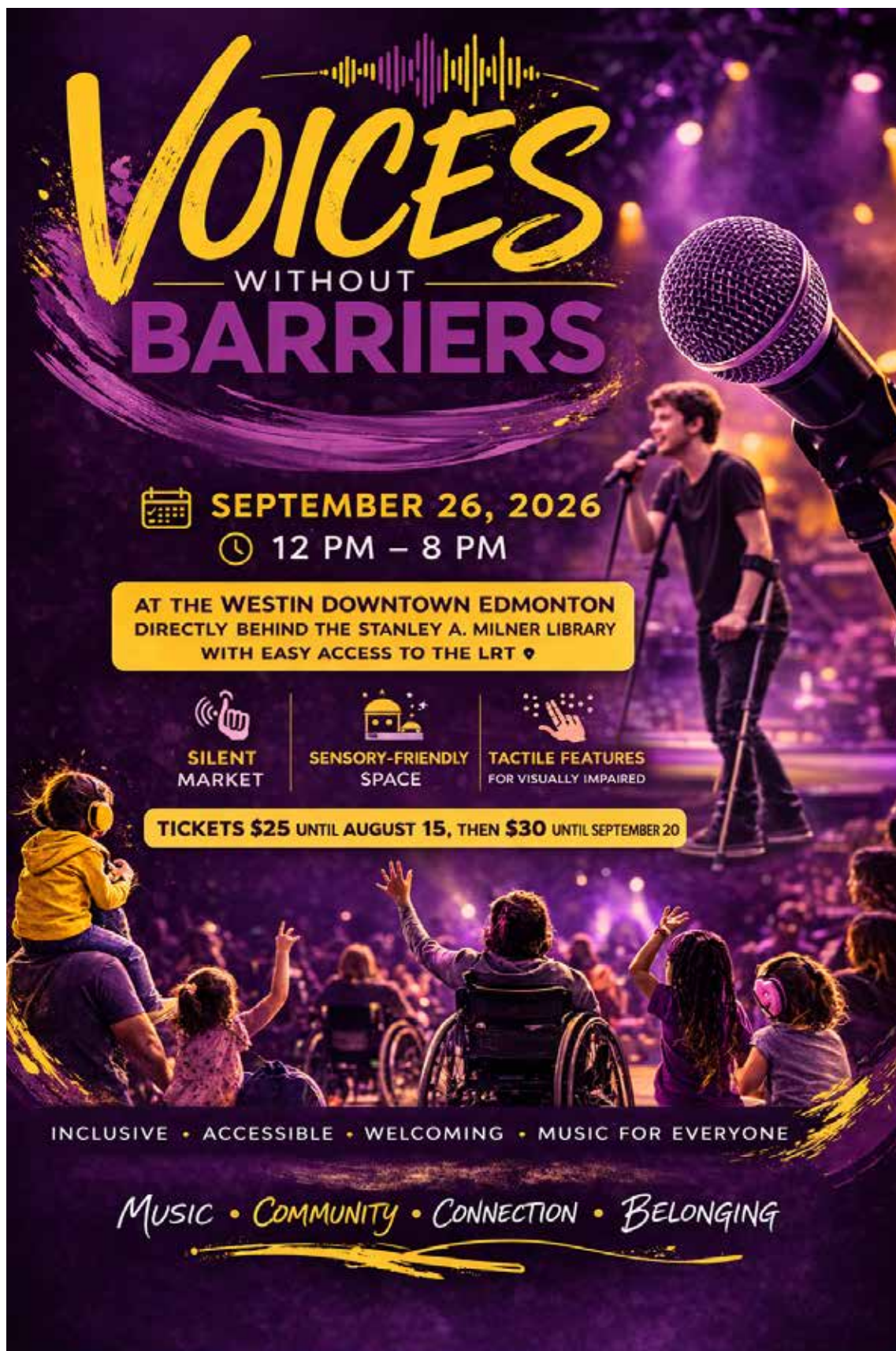
The most respectful approach is simple - Ask people how they would like to be identified—and respect their preference.

Using the language someone chooses demonstrates respect, dignity, and a commitment to inclusion. Every

## WHAT IS PLAIN LANGUAGE?

A communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended readers can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information.





**VoICES**  
— WITHOUT —  
**BARRIERS**

 **SEPTEMBER 26, 2026**  
 **12 PM – 8 PM**

**AT THE WESTIN DOWNTOWN EDMONTON**  
DIRECTLY BEHIND THE STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY  
WITH EASY ACCESS TO THE LRT ♥

 **SILENT MARKET** |  **SENSORY-FRIENDLY SPACE** |  **TACTILE FEATURES FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

**TICKETS \$25 UNTIL AUGUST 15, THEN \$30 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 20**

**INCLUSIVE • ACCESSIBLE • WELCOMING • MUSIC FOR EVERYONE**

*MUSIC • COMMUNITY • CONNECTION • BELONGING*

<https://vadsociety.ca/events/>

**Voice of Albertans with Disabilities Society**  
780-488-9088  
Province Wide Services

# Donate Today

Your donation to Voice of Albertans with Disabilities helps remove barriers, amplify voices, and build a more inclusive Alberta.

[www.vadsociety.ca/donate](http://www.vadsociety.ca/donate)



Helping Hands

person's experience is unique, and honoring their preferred language helps create welcoming and accessible communities.

Respect begins with listening.

## Upcoming VAD Events

### *August Community Outreach Sessions*

- 6th - Gibbons
- 6th - Morinville
- 13th - Portage Collage (virtual)
- 19th - Bissell
- 20th - Lac La Biche
- 26th - Drayton Valley

### *Voices Connect meetings*

2026

- September 3 & 17
- October 15 & 29
- November 5 & 19
- December 3 & 17

2027

- January 7 & 21
- February 11 & 25
- March 4 & 18
- April 15 & 29
- May 6 & 20
- June 3 & 17
- July 15 & 29
- August 5 & 19

### *Disability Awareness presentation:*

- August 24th, DATs Training

### *DEAM - Disability Employment Awareness Month*

Every October, Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM) shines a spotlight on the importance of creating inclusive workplaces where people with disabilities have equal opportunities to succeed. It is a time to celebrate the valuable contributions that employees with disabilities make to our communities while encouraging employers to remove barriers to employment.

Despite the skills, education, and experience that many people with disabilities bring to the workforce,

barriers to employment continue to exist. These barriers may include inaccessible workplaces, misconceptions about disability, limited accommodations, or hiring practices that unintentionally exclude qualified candidates.

The good news is that accessibility benefits everyone. When employers embrace inclusive hiring practices, they gain access to a larger talent pool, improve workplace culture, increase innovation, and build stronger, more diverse teams. Many workplace accommodations are simple, low-cost, or even free to implement, yet they can make a significant difference in an employee's ability to thrive.

At the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD), we believe that employment is about more than earning a paycheck—it is about independence, dignity, purpose, and full participation in community life. We continue to work alongside employers, community organizations, and government partners to promote accessibility, disability awareness, and inclusive employment practices across Alberta.

### *Join Us for Accessibility in Action*

**As part of Disability Employment Awareness Month, VAD and EmployAbilities are proud to host the Accessibility in Action Resource Fair and Reverse Job Fair on Thursday, October 15, 2026.**

This innovative event brings together employers, service providers, and job seekers with disabilities in a welcoming and accessible environment. Unlike a traditional job fair, the Reverse Job Fair allows job seek-

ers to remain at their own tables while employers rotate through the room, creating a more comfortable and empowering networking experience.





[www.vadsociety.ca](http://www.vadsociety.ca); [vad@vadsociety.ca](mailto:vad@vadsociety.ca)  
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @VADisabilities

Attendees will have the opportunity to:

- Connect with inclusive employers.
- Learn about employment supports and community resources.
- Explore education and training opportunities
- Discover workplace accommodation solutions.
- Build meaningful professional connections.

Whether you are an employer looking to strengthen your workforce, a job seeker exploring new opportunities, or a community member passionate about accessibility, we invite you to join us.

Together, we can create workplaces where everyone has the opportunity to contribute, succeed, and belong.

For more information about the event, sponsorship opportunities, or how your organization can participate, please contact VAD or visit [www.vadsociety.ca](http://www.vadsociety.ca).

### ***Accessible Driver Appreciation Week: Celebrating the People Who Keep Our Communities Moving***

Every day, accessible transit drivers do much more than provide transportation—they create opportunities for independence, connection, and inclusion.

Whether helping someone get to work, a medical appointment, school, or a social event, these dedicated professionals play a vital role in helping people with disabilities participate fully in community life.

This November, the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) is proud to recognize Accessible Driver Appreciation Week, a time to celebrate the compassion, professionalism, and commitment of accessible transit drivers, dispatchers, schedulers, and support staff across Alberta.

Accessible transportation is about more than getting from one place to another. It is about ensuring that people with disabilities can live independently, maintain employment, access healthcare, volunteer, visit family and friends, and enjoy everything their communities have to offer. Behind every successful trip is a team of professionals who understand the im-

portance of patience, safety, respect, and outstanding customer service.

Throughout the second week of November, VAD encourages members and the public to take a moment to recognize the individuals who make accessible transportation possible. A simple “thank you,” a positive comment, or a note of appreciation can make a lasting impact on someone whose work often goes unnoticed.

We also recognize that accessible transportation systems continue to evolve. Ongoing investment in accessible vehicles, technology, driver training, and customer service helps ensure that transportation remains safe, reliable, and responsive to the diverse needs of Albertans with disabilities. Working together, we can continue to improve these essential services for everyone.

### ***How You Can Participate***

During Accessible Driver Appreciation Week (November 8 to 14), you can help celebrate by:

- Thanking your accessible transit driver or dispatcher.
- Sharing a positive experience on social media using your local transit agency’s hash tags.
- Sending a note of appreciation to your transit provider.
- Encouraging conversations about the importance of accessible transportation.
- Advocating for continued improvements to accessible transit services in your community.
- Providing thank you cards
- Coffee and snacks if possible

At VAD, we know that accessible transportation creates opportunities, builds independence, and strengthens communities. During this week, we proudly recognize the professionals who help make those opportunities possible every single day.

To every accessible driver, dispatcher, scheduler, mechanic, and support staff member—thank you for keeping our communities connected, accessible, and inclusive. Your dedication makes a difference in count-

less lives.

## Back-to-School Accessibility Tips

As students across Alberta prepare for a new school year, it's the perfect time to think about accessibility. Whether you're a student with a disability, a parent, caregiver, educator, or school administrator, planning ahead can help create a positive, inclusive, and successful school experience.

Accessibility is about ensuring every student has the opportunity to learn, participate, and thrive.

### Tips for Students and Families

*Connect with the school early.*

- Meet with teachers, educational assistants, and support staff before classes begin to discuss accommodations, accessibility needs, and any changes that may affect the school year.

*Review your accommodations.*

- If you have an Individualized Program Plan (IPP), accommodation plan, or other learning supports, make sure they are up to date and reflect your current needs.

*Plan your transportation.*

- If you use accessible transportation or school bus services, confirm routes, pickup times, and any special arrangements before the first day of school.

*Practice your routine.*

- Walking through the daily routine—including transportation, classroom locations, and lunch breaks—can reduce anxiety and help students feel

more confident.

*Build self-advocacy skills.*

- Encourage students to understand their accommodations and feel comfortable asking for the supports they need. Self-advocacy is an important life skill that grows with practice.

### Tips for Educators

- Use accessible digital documents and learning materials.
- Provide captions for videos whenever possible.
- Offer information in multiple formats, including visual, verbal, and written.
- Ensure classrooms are physically accessible and free of unnecessary barriers.
- Create an inclusive classroom culture where every student feels welcomed and respected.

### Tips for Everyone

- Accessibility benefits all learners. Simple actions—using plain language, providing clear instructions, allowing flexible ways to complete assignments, and respecting different learning styles—help create environments where every student can succeed.
- Remember that every disability is different. The most effective accommodations are those developed in partnership with the student and their family.
- As another school year begins, let's work together to build classrooms where every learner feels valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.

If you or someone you know needs assistance navigating disability programs, accessibility resources, or community supports, the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) is here to help. We wish all students, families, educators, and school staff a safe, successful, and accessible school year!

## Accessible Travel in Alberta

Alberta is home to breathtaking mountains, vibrant cities, rolling prairies, and countless parks and at-



## NAAW SILENT AUCTION DONORS 2026

**Preferred Client**  
**Services BBQ Sponsor**

David Sheppard - MLA

Councillor E Rutherford

Fantasy Land Hotel

Edmonton River Boat

Janis Irwin - MLA

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Councillor Rutherford

# THANK YOU

Darcie Prosser

Rutherford House

AiLA

Hon. A LaGrange

Hon. L Sigurdson

Christina Gray - MLA

Royal Alberta Museum

West Edmonton Mall

Nathan Ip - MLA

Launch Pad

Plaza Bowling

Monster Mini Golf

Alberta Art Gallery

**YOUR WILLINGNESS TO HELP HAS MADE  
A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE.**

tractions. With a little planning, people with disabilities can enjoy memorable travel experiences while exploring everything our province has to offer.

Whether you're planning a weekend getaway, a family vacation, or a day trip, accessibility can make all the difference. Taking time to research your destination before you leave can help ensure your trip is enjoyable, safe, and stress-free.

### *Plan Ahead*

Before booking your trip, contact hotels, campgrounds, attractions, or event organizers to ask specific questions about accessibility. Consider asking about:

- Step-free entrances and accessible parking.
- Elevator access and accessible washrooms.
- Accessible hotel rooms and roll-in showers.
- Mobility device accessibility throughout the facility.
- Service animal accommodations.
- Quiet or sensory-friendly spaces.
- Captioning, assistive listening devices, or sign language interpretation
- Accessible transportation options.

Don't be afraid to ask detailed questions. Accessibility features can vary widely, and what works for one person may not meet another person's needs.

### *Pack for Success*

In addition to your usual travel essentials, consider bringing:

- Medications and copies of prescriptions.
- Chargers for mobility devices, hearing aids, or communication devices.
- Backup batteries or power banks.
- Medical documentation if needed.
- Emergency contact information.

- Any adaptive equipment you rely on daily. Having these items readily available can provide peace of mind while you're away from home.

### Explore Alberta's Accessible Experiences

Across Alberta, many destinations continue to improve accessibility by offering paved trails, accessible campsites, adaptive recreation programs, beach wheelchairs, inclusive playgrounds, and barrier-free visitor centres. From urban festivals to provincial parks, more organizations are recognizing that accessibility benefits everyone.

When planning your adventure, look for destinations that provide detailed accessibility information on their

websites or are willing to discuss your needs before you arrive.

### *Share Your Experience*

One of the best ways to help others is by sharing your experiences. Positive reviews highlighting accessible features—and constructive feedback when improvements are needed—encourage businesses and attractions to continue investing in accessibility.

Your voice can help make travel more inclusive for future visitors.



### Accessibility Opens the Door to Adventure

Travel is about creating memories, discovering new places, and connecting with others. Everyone deserves the opportunity to experience Alberta's incredible landscapes, communities, and attractions without unnecessary barriers.

At the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD), we encourage everyone to explore our province, advocate for accessibility, and celebrate organizations that are making inclusive travel a priority.

Together, we can help build an Alberta where adventure is accessible to everyone.

## Accessibility in Action DEAM Resource & Reverse Job Fair

**October 15, 2026,  
Noon to 3:30 PM  
Kingsway Garden Mall**

### Looking for work?



As part of Disability Employment Awareness Month, the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) and EmployAbilities are proud to host the Accessibility in Action Resource & Reverse Job Fair, a community-focused event designed to connect individuals with disabilities, families, service providers, and inclusive employers. This event creates a welcoming, accessible space where attendees can explore services, build connections, and access supports that enhance independence, employment opportunities, and overall well-being.

Bring your resumes and references, visit the product and service providers at the resource fair, then host a job seeker table to meet with employers.

We invite:

- Organizations to host a resource table and share their services/products
- Employers to connect with talent for resume/information sharing
- Community members to attend, and engage with hiring employers

Together, we can create a more accessible, inclusive, and equitable community for all.

**EMPLOY**  
*Abilities*

780-488-9088 for information