



The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

January 1, 2024

Will AISH Increase in 2024 and How Much Will It Be?

November 24, 2023 by Sailza

<https://www.incometaxgujarat.org/aish-increase/>

In the upcoming fiscal year, a wave of financial increases in social welfare payments is projected. Modifying the current Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) payment will be part of the first wave of assistance.

AISH Increase 2024

The AISH Increase 2024 will account for both the present and anticipated inflation rates for the 2024–2025 year. Benefit rate adjustments are contingent upon the needs of Albertans and are based on the consumer price index for 2022.

The amount of the AISH benefit increases, which will take effect in January 2024, are anticipated to be disclosed by Alberta soon. This article will go into great detail about the many causes and effects of the AISH Increase in 2024.

What is AISH Alberta?

Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped was created in 1979 and offers financial support to individuals with disabilities. Benefits under Alberta's AISH scheme will be available to residents with disabilities who satisfy age, income, health, and other requirements.

This program's objective is to assist Albertans with disabilities who are obviously unable to support themselves. A monthly living allowance, child benefits, free health insurance, and additional financial assistance that covers the eligible expenses of beneficiaries are some of the main benefits offered by AISH. Every month, on the first, AISH receives its payment.

AISH Increase News 2024

Implemented By - Alberta Provincial government

Run By - Department of Human Services

Increase in 2023 - 6%

Expected Increase in 2024 - To be announced soon

Current AISH Amount - \$1,787 Per month.

AISH Official Website <https://www.alberta.ca/>

Will AISH Increase in 2024?

The AISH Benefit will rise by 6% and be indexed to keep up with inflation, as per the announcement made in conjunction with the 2023 Alberta Budget. The increases amount to a \$260 million commitment that will last until the fiscal year 2024.

Beginning with the January 2023 payment, the AISH payment increase was implemented. Therefore, we anticipate that the 2024 AISH increase will also take effect as of 2024. It is anticipated that the recipients will receive payments totalling more than \$1,787 each month.



However, Albertans will have to wait for some time to know the exact rate of AISH Increase in 2024. As soon as the government of Alberta makes an official announcement in this regard, we will update the information.

How Much Will AISH Increase Be?

Regarding possible increases in AISH payments for 2024, the provincial government of Alberta has not yet made any announcements. However, as a result of the new indexing of benefits policy, which states that AISH benefits will be adjusted annually using the Alberta Consumer Price Index, beneficiaries will probably notice an increase in AISH payment amounts.

The AISH recipients will currently get payments ranging from \$1,685 to \$1,787 until June 2024, based on their qualifications and needs. Unless the government specifies otherwise, it is anticipated that the AISH payment amounts will continuously adjust annually in accordance with the rising cost of living.

AISH Eligibility 2024

Residents of Alberta must fulfil three primary requirements in order to be qualified for the AISH benefits.

These consist of the following: financial, medical, and age and residency requirements.

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Below is a summary of all the necessary qualifying conditions:

- Your medical condition significantly restricts your capacity to earn a living.
- It is likely that your medical condition will never go away.
- There's nothing you can do to help improve your ability to make a living, not even medical care, counseling, or rehabilitation.
- You are a permanent resident of Canada or a citizen, and you reside in Alberta.
- Your financial eligibility meets the requirements.

You can apply for the benefits online, by mail, or by fax once you are certain that you meet the AISH eligibility requirements.

Will I receive AISH payments even if I turn 65 years?

When you turn 65, your AISH benefits will end because you'll be qualified for other old-age pension and disability programs like CPP, OAS, and others.

How much can you have on AISH in your bank account? Since the intended audience for this program is citizens in need of financial aid. An AISH recipient is not allowed to possess non-exempt assets, such as cash or bank account balances, worth more than \$100,000.

Is AISH expected to increase in 2024, and when will I receive it?

Yes, since AISH payments are tied up with the inflation rates, we expect it to increase for the 2024 financial year. We further anticipate that you will receive increased paychecks from July 2024 if you are already receiving the benefits.

Canada Benefit Payment Dates

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/benefit-payment-dates.html>

Advocate for Persons with Disabilities

The Advocate represents the rights, interests and viewpoints of persons with disabilities.



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Overview

The Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities represents the rights, interests and well-being of Albertans with disabilities. The Office's dedicated staff build relationships with community members to understand the issues and concerns they face every day.

The Office helps children, youth, adults and seniors with disabilities find and get access to the supports and services available to them. By building relationships with people and stakeholders in the disability community, the Advocate's Office can learn about and bring important issues and concerns to the government with recommendations.

The Advocate's Office can help

The Advocate's Office acts as a point of contact between the community and government. Contact the Office by emailing advocate.disability@gov.ab.ca or calling 1-800-272-8841. Let us know if you require any support related to your disability.

The Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities can help:

- Resolve concerns
- Guiding people to find available disability supports and services.
- Helping to find resolutions to challenges.
- Educate
- Promoting the rights, interests and well-being of people with disabilities through awareness and education.
- Bringing awareness of programs and services available to the community.
- Inform
 - Engaging with the community and building partnerships to understand issues.
 - Identifying gaps in programs and services and delivering expert advice to senior leadership.
- Collaborating with other provincial advocates and advisories.

The Office of the Advocate aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was ratified by Canada and supported by Alberta in 2010. The principles include



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full and effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity, equality of opportunity and accessibility.

Note, the Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities is unable to:

- provide counselling for individuals
- make decisions on behalf of another person
- provide formal mediation services or represent individuals at a court or tribunal hearing
- provide ongoing case management support

Connecting with Albertans

For a number of years, many Albertans have requested an advocate who could be the voice for people with disabilities. In 2018, after public consultation throughout the province, the Alberta government created the Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities and appointed an Advocate.

One of the top priorities identified for the Advocate was to build relationships with people living with disabilities. In addition to connecting with Albertans with disabilities, their families and caregivers, representatives from the Advocate's Office are able to attend and present at disability-related events, such as community meetings, annual general meetings or discussion groups. Presentations may cover the work of the Advocate specifically, or critical issues affecting Albertans with disabilities.

The Advocate and staff have been building partnerships with community groups, advocacy organizations and people with disabilities to better understand issues and changes in disability supports in Alberta. Ongoing input from the public is used to provide information and advice to the government with respect to the rights, interests and well-being of persons with disabilities.

Strategic plan

The Advocate for Persons with Disabilities and the Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities developed its 2022 to 2025 strategic plan through:

- a rigorous research approach that included identification of key issues and barriers experienced by Albertans with disabilities as shared with the Office



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- the review of grey and academic literature
- The plan serves as the basis for important actions the Advocate and the Office will undertake to champion and support the inclusion of people with disabilities in Alberta's social and economic fabric.

Annual reports

The Advocate for Persons with Disabilities Act mandates that the Advocate prepare and submit to the Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services a report summarizing the activities for the previous calendar year. The minister will present the report to the Legislative Assembly.

Contact

The Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities can provide assistance with questions about disability programs and services. Connect with the office or make an appointment to meet with an Advocate representative:

- Hours: 8:15 am to 4:30 pm (open Monday to Friday, closed statutory holidays)
- Phone: 780-422-1095
- Toll free: 1-800-272-8841
- Fax: 780-415-0097
- Email: advocate.disability@gov.ab.ca

Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities
Suite 1110, 10055 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2Y2

If you would like the Advocate to visit your organization, email us with more information. <https://www.alberta.ca/advocate-persons-disabilities>

Greg McMeekin,
Alberta's Disability
Advocate





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What to do if your Doctor won't fill out Medical Report Forms

Adapted from article by David Brannen

<https://www.resolutelegal.ca/doctor-wont-fill-out-disability-forms/#:~:text=Have%20an%20honest%20discussion%20with,to%20fill%20out%20the%20form.>

Applying for disability benefits is a hard task to do on your own. Throw in the fact that your doctor won't fill out disability medical report forms, and that's a recipe for disaster.

So, is there anything you can do? Luckily there is.

In this article, I'll go through some of the reasons why your doctor may be unsupportive and give you some advice for moving forward. We also discuss what to do if your doctor won't send medical records to your LTD insurer. These tips can apply to AISH, CPP disability benefits, long-term disability benefits, and the disability tax credit.

Four reasons why your doctor won't fill out forms + solutions

There are actually quite a few reasons doctors won't help patients by filling out disability forms. The most common ones we've seen are:

- Unclear expectations about what they need to do
- Personal opinion or bias against government programs like CPP disability
- A medical opinion that your disability doesn't meet the necessary criteria
- They don't have time to complete the form
- Communication problems

Now let's go over each reason in detail, and I'll explain what you can do about it.

1. Unclear expectations

Often, doctors don't understand exactly what is expected of them when filling out the medical report form. They may have never seen one or filled one out and assume the forms will be lengthy and complicated. Some doctors are also concerned about their reputations if the government disagrees with their opinion.



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What you can do

If your doctor doesn't fully understand what is expected of them, you should reassure the doctor that their involvement ends once the medical report form is completed and given to Service Canada or the insurer. You should also tell your doctor that their opinion on your disability won't impact their license or practice in any way.

Sometimes doctors don't understand the forms and are too embarrassed to say so. Focus on having them outline your limitations, participation in treatment, current and future treatment and how they feel your condition will progress.

2. Personal Opinion

Some doctors may have a personal bias towards those who apply for and receive the CPP disability benefit. This means that some doctors may not help you because they don't want to support the federal program actively. The physician may be reluctant to label you as "disabled," knowing that this may result in an approval of benefits.

What you can do

This one gets a bit tougher. It can be very hard to convince your doctor to support you if their problem is not with you but with the program as a whole. Have an honest discussion with your doctor about how you're feeling and that you are willing to do anything they believe may help. Don't come on too strong, as you don't want to push them away.

If your doctor doesn't budge, we recommend asking another one of your healthcare providers to fill out the form. For instance, if you also see a psychologist or nurse practitioner, along with your family doctor, you can ask them to complete it. Another option is to go to an online clinic that fills out disability medical report forms. While this may set off red flags to the insurance company, it is certainly better than nothing.

In an extreme case, you may need to look for a new doctor. However, finding a new doctor should be the very last option if nothing else works. This is because the government sees



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switching doctors as a red flag. Additionally, there is a severe doctor shortage in Canada. Currently, over six million Canadians don't have a family doctor. So, switching doctors should be exercised with extreme caution. Remember, a bad doctor is better than no doctor.

3. Medical Opinion

A common problem is that the doctor doesn't think you meet the disability criteria in their professional medical opinion. They might have a mistaken belief about "how disabled" a person must be to qualify for disability benefits — thinking that the level of severity needed to get approved is much higher than it actually is. Doctors are sometimes quick to say that you're able to do some type of work without taking other potential barriers into account — things like age, experience, and general employability. Unfortunately, sometimes if you try to enlighten or convince them of how your disability is impacting your ability to work, they will begin to feel defensive and become even more unlikely to agree with you.

Another reason they might be hesitant to fill out the form is if you have refused to follow their treatment plans.

What you can do

It may be difficult to convince them in this scenario. If they don't fill out the medical report form because they don't think you meet the disability criteria, it may be helpful to bring a printed copy of Service Canada's definition of disability or the definition from your insurer and share it with your doctor. If they feel you're able to work, try every recommendation they have for you and see them regularly throughout the process so you can speak with them about your difficulties and limitations.

Take the time to look into Vocational & Return To Work programs, and ask for a letter of support or denial pending the outcome of your intake appointment to provide to your benefit provider.

Don't get stuck on trying to get your doctor to say, "My patient suffers from a severe and prolonged disability;" this will not get you automatically approved. Instead,

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they need to outline your limitations, your participation and compliance with treatment, current and future treatment plans or remedial therapies, and how they think your condition will progress.

4. They don't have time

Many doctors will refuse to fill out forms because they simply don't have time. Doctors have insane schedules, and the last thing they want to do is fill out a form at the end of a long day. They also may think these forms are going to be lengthy to complete and absorb an immense amount of time.

What you can do

So, if your doctor doesn't want to help because they think the process is too time-consuming, bring a medical report form with you to show them. Let them know that the form can usually be completed during a regular appointment. And since the doctor is familiar with you and your condition, it shouldn't take too long. Once they know that, you should book an appointment that is solely dedicated to filling out the form. That way, your doctor won't have to make time in their busy schedules to complete it.



Another strategy is to bring in two copies of the form: one you completed and a blank one for them. While we never advise people to fill out the form themselves, it can be helpful to show the doctor what you wrote. You can have them look over your version to help them complete their form.

If they still refuse to fill out the form after that, you might be able to get a nurse practitioner, psychologist or psychiatrist to fill out these forms if they are more supportive.

5. Communication issues

Sometimes, people aren't upfront with their doctor about the seriousness of their disability. They won't tell their doctor about their struggles until they are at their wit's end. In these situations, a doctor may be reluctant to fill out forms because





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they weren't aware of the severity of the condition or, in some cases, that it even existed in the first place.

That is why it's extremely important to be clear and honest with your doctor from the get-go. You should be telling them about your symptoms and limitations at every appointment. Even if something may seem insignificant, it could go a long way when the time comes to ask them to fill out these forms.

What you can do

These situations can be tricky because you can't go back in time to all the appointments where you failed to tell your doctor about your condition. The only thing you can do is tell them everything you left out over the past weeks, months or even years.

One of the most effective ways to do this is to explain what a day in life is like for you. In other words, tell them your pain story. People often leave out information because they think it is quote-on-quote normal, but oftentimes, you've become so used to modifying your life as a result of your disability that you don't even realize how severe your condition is. For instance, you should tell your doctor if you can't stand for more than 10 minutes without having to lie down on the floor. Or that you are crippled by debilitating migraines almost every morning. Your doctor doesn't know what your daily life is like, so you need to tell them. Otherwise, they may not understand the severity of your condition.

Thoughts

Applying for disability benefits can be challenging to begin with, so when your doctor won't fill out medical report forms, it can feel like everyone is working against you. Hopefully, after reading the article, you now have a few strategies to get your doctor on your side.

Other Options

Ask one of your other treating providers

For one reason or other, your doctor may still refuse to complete your disability paperwork. Before panicking, think of all your other treating providers – is there another practitioner you could ask? For example, if your primary care provider is not willing to complete your paperwork, you may consider reaching out to your specialist instead (and vice versa). Additionally, in most cases, the forms can be completed by someone besides a medical doctor, such as your physical therapist, chiropractor, psychologist, counselor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.

Ask for a referral

If none of your treating providers are able or willing to complete your paperwork, consider asking your doctor



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to refer you to another doctor within their clinic who would could complete the disability paperwork. Specifically, you may seek a referral to an occupational specialist, also known as a Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation specialist, or a physiatrist. A physiatrist focuses on the ways in which a patient's medical conditions impact their functional ability, including their ability to perform work-related activities.

Get a second opinion

Finally, if all else fails, you may need to seek a second opinion or establish care elsewhere. The importance of having a doctor's support as you pursue a claim for disability benefits cannot be overstated. Accordingly, if you are not receiving that support from your current doctor, you will need to seek that support elsewhere. This strategy should be used sparingly, however, as you want to avoid the appearance of "doctor shopping" if you change doctors too many times.

Get help from an attorney

If you are still struggling to get a doctor to support your disability and complete the necessary paperwork, get help from an attorney who will have experience explaining the disability benefit process to doctors.

As a reminder, when your doctor refuses to complete your paperwork, your chances of your claim getting approved diminish. For that reason, it's important to promptly seek help securing the medical evidence needed to get your claim approved.

Contact VAD for free assistance with AISH, CPPD, DTC, and more application forms 780-488-9088.

Barrier-free Alberta

Barrier-free Alberta initiative emerged from the Alberta Ability Network Human Rights table. We have one main purpose – to encourage the Government of Alberta to enact strong and effective accessibility legislation that will ensure every Albertan living with a disability has the opportunity to participate in all aspects of a complete and meaningful life.

barrierfreealberta@gmail.com

BARRIER-FREE AB

Join us in the call for an accessible Alberta

What

is Accessibility Legislation?

Accessibility legislation, in contrast to human rights legislation, requires applicable organizations to comply with accessibility standards; these standards are designed by committees that include people with disabilities. When organizations improve accessibility, people with disabilities have greater opportunities to become involved in their communities, find meaningful employment, consume goods and services, use public transportation, and to physically access public spaces and businesses. Accessibility legislation can greatly improve quality of life for people with disabilities.

Why

does Alberta need it?

Ontario, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and British Columbia have already passed provincial accessibility legislations, and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has one tabled. Alberta must pass its own accessibility legislation for Albertans with disabilities to be afforded the same benefits and opportunities Canadians with disabilities enjoy in other provinces.

ON MB NS BC AB
✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✗

21.7%

of Albertans aged 15 or older reported a disability (2017)

1 IN 4 PEOPLE IN CANADA HAVE A DISABILITY



ACCESSIBILITY MEANS ACCESS TO:

Employment
Housing
Transportation
Education
Information
and so much more



\$630 BILLION

The Estimated Amount that the aging and disabled population together will represent in income in Canada by 2031

Who

benefits from Accessibility Legislation?

- People with Disabilities
- Seniors
- Families
- Businesses
- Taxpayers
- Governments

In short, EVERYBODY!

SUPPORT

If you agree that a better Alberta is a Barrier-Free Alberta, please visit our website at www.barrierfreeab.ca and pledge your support. More information about the Alberta Ability Network and Barrier-Free Alberta can also be found on our website.

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As we step into a brand new month, seize the opportunity to embrace and keep your dreams in focus. Continue to paint the masterpiece of your life with determination and success. Remember that you are not just a part of the story, you are the storyteller. Your journey is filled with untold adventures waiting to unfold. Dream big, reach for the stars, and believe in the potential within you.

In the face of challenges, be a beacon of resilience, rising stronger and wiser with every setback. Life may throw you curveballs, but you have the courage to hit them out of the park! Surround yourself with positivity, lift others around you as you rise, and let your kindness be a guiding light.

We become much happier when we are chasing our dreams, choosing forward movements towards your goals builds self confidence and energy, so let's take an attainable step towards something you want for yourself. The feeling of positive movement in your life releases endorphins in your brain, which cause you to be more creative and over all more positive. Choose to take steps toward a positive pivot in your life journey lets find goals that actually work. We can always learn something new. Have you set some goals for this next amazing year?

Remember what Brian Tracy says; "A goal that is not in writing is just a wish with no energy behind it, it has no power in your life; its just a vague objective that comes in and out of our life like a sunrise and sunset, without ever accomplishing anything. There are many misconceptions when it comes to goals, many people believe that they don't need them or say, "I don't need goals, I am doing fine!" or "I already have goals, so I don't need to make new ones." Are you living without any goals or plans, maybe your goals are only tumbling around in your mind, offering you no clarity or direction. When you think of a home that is carefully designed and beautiful, it still will require continual upgrading, needs to be continually worked on and constantly improved. If we don't take the time to think about what we truly want in life, no matter our challenges, or choosing to write those things down,



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we only have dreams and wishes."

Lets make a difference in the plan, path and potential of our 2024 year ahead by choosing to use some time management and discipline to write our goals down. This amazing psycho-neuromotor activity, of choosing to sitting down and being honest with ourselves about what we really want, this forces us to think and concentrate while choosing what is more important to us and our future. Lets build our self confidence and increase our daily energy all with the gift of writing our goals for the next amazing year in our life down.

Don't worry if you think that you don't have the skills to achieve your goals, because all essential skills are learnable with attainable steps and gradual results. We can take the first attainable step today in any direction we wish. We can all set a course for our own life while discovering the motivation to succeed. Here at VAD we can work together to support each other, never feel that you are alone, reach out and gain a motivational partner.

Allow yourself to be open to critique and accountability, a healthy sense of self-awareness helps with self-control, self-confidence and feelings of validation. To become proactive in our life journey's, it is important to breakdown large goals into attainable steps, while also taking time to celebrate each small milestone we achieve along the way. Striving to take a small steps builds our motivation up in increasing amounts. Constructively reviewing our own performance allows us to assess our intentions and personal effectiveness, and it provides an opportunity to ensure our strategies are geared towards self-reward and not self-punishment. Choose to develop your self-leadership this year, you have the ability to pivot the vision of your life, so start today.

This first month is yours to own! Make it one of your chapters in your journey that radiates strength and grace. You are capable of greatness and the world is ready to itness your brilliance and so are we at VAD. \Have an amazing year,
Katrina Breau, President