

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities are motivated and determined to meet employment challenges and are accustomed to finding alternative ways of doing things. This enthusiasm and innovative thinking can carry over into the workplace and have an impact on how all staff approach their work.

According to the *EEA*, persons with a disability are defined as individuals who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment and who consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, or believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment.

Did you know?

A survey of employers reported that 90% of workers with disabilities received an above-average rating on their performance and 46% of the employers said that their employees with a disability worked harder than other employees.

(Study by E.I. DuPont)

Statistical Overview*

In 1991, 4.2 million Canadians, 16% of the population, reported some level of disability.

A number of factors discourage persons with disabilities from seeking work. The reasons for not joining the labour force most often cited by persons with disabilities are:

- losing their current income (21%)
- problems with training (16%)
- no jobs available (15%)
- fear they would lose additional supports (13%)
- family responsibilities (10%)
- discrimination (7%)
- lack of accessible transportation (7%)

As the Canadian population ages, the prevalence of disabilities among the population rises. Disability rates increase regularly with age, from 7% of children under the age of 14, to 50% of those over age 65.

*Source: Health and Activity Limitations Survey (HALS), Statistics Canada, 1991.