

# WE ARE ALL ABLE

---

Canadian society is enriched by the diversity and contributions of its members, regardless of their levels of physical and mental ability.

The City of Calgary wishes to set an example by creating a more livable and accessible place to live. Through its [Advisory Committee on Accessibility](#). The City supports community efforts to create awareness of the contributions of people with disabilities to society, and by issuing Advocacy, Accessible Transportation and Community Access Recognition Awards. As well, The City has a [Corporate Accessibility Policy](#) that has been instrumental in improving accessibility at City Hall for people with physical, visual, hearing and cognitive disabilities.

At any moment, anyone may acquire a disability, either through illness or accident. As the population ages, the proportion of persons with disabilities is expected to rise. In Calgary, 15% of the population has a disability, rising from 14% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2007). A new [Canadian Survey on Disability](#) will release more current data in 2013.

Employers have a role to play in creating inclusive workplaces for persons with disabilities. Today, more employers look beyond the disability to the talent and skill set persons with disabilities bring to their job. [Duty to accommodate](#) legislation and [universal design principles](#) have supported workplace modifications so that employees with disabilities have the same opportunities as those without disabilities. Often modifications are simple and inexpensive (See 2010 [Federal Disability Report](#)).

All people, including those with disabilities, can lead long and healthy lives, attend school, work, vote, marry, have children, and play. Remember, we all have abilities; they may just be in different areas. Don't make assumptions about a person's limitations based on his or her disability; this can lead to discrimination.

## Tips for Inclusive Behaviours

- Always ask a person if they need assistance before helping. The individual is the best judge of what they can or cannot do.
- Discuss accommodations that can be made to work; such as flexible work schedules and arrangements, organizing the workspace for easier movement, or acquiring or modifying equipment, software or devices
- Look around your workspace and ensure that it is accessible. Use the City of Calgary's [Access Design Standards](#) for guidelines. Promote an environment that welcomes reasonable accommodation.
- Be aware that some mental and physical disabilities are hidden and not obvious. Create a welcoming environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their disability with you.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Use communication that treats individuals in a respectful manner.
- Always use [respectful language and images](#). Refer to the person first, not the disability, hence the term "persons with disabilities". Remember, language changes and words used 20 years ago may not be respectful today. People with disabilities are just like any other employee. The disability is only one aspect of a unique, intelligent and capable individual.
- Employees are encouraged to talk to their supervisor, Human Resource Advisor, or their organization's [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#) for more information.
- There are many solutions available to support persons with disabilities based on their specific needs – whether they be related to mobility, hearing, visual, cognitive or developmental aspects. Please refer to the links below for more information.

## More information?

### City of Calgary links:

[Accessibility of recreation facilities](#), City of Calgary

### External resources:

A [video](#) on working with a disability

A [video](#) on an inspiring individual who shows his ability has no limits

A [video](#) on the economic benefits of hiring persons with disabilities (video clip)

[Disability Related Employment Supports](#), Government of Alberta

[Myths and Facts about Persons with Disabilities](#)

[Workink](#): an employment resource centre website

[Living with Vision Loss](#)

[Canadian Mental Health Association](#)

Other Programs and Services in [Alberta](#)