



Canadian
Down Syndrome
Society

Société
canadienne de la
trisomie 21

Supported Employment

The Canadian Down Syndrome Society is committed to ensuring that the Down syndrome community in Canada is valued, supported and that individuals with Down syndrome are given equitable opportunities to contribute to society as fully participating citizens. We work to empower Canadians with Down syndrome through raising awareness and by providing information about Down syndrome for all life stages from prenatal to retirement years. We foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity, worth and equal rights of all people.

Background:

Although many people with Down syndrome have demonstrated abilities and aspirations to engage in meaningful work in the community, a large percentage of the Canadian population with Down syndrome remain unemployed, or are under-employed where they might be paid insufficiently and/or may not be working to their full potential. Some people with Down syndrome experience barriers and an increased level of disparity to appropriate education, career development, training and adequate supports to have gainful employment and to be fairly compensated when compared to the general population.

Position statement:

As work enhances an individual's quality of life, the Canadian Down Syndrome Society (CDSS) asserts that people with Down syndrome have the right to be employed in the community, where they can work alongside people of all abilities, earn fair and equitable compensation and pay taxes like other Canadians. People with Down syndrome should be supported to make informed decisions about their careers and have places of employment available to them where they can gain experiences and contribute to their communities and to society.

The CDSS supports the following guiding principles to serve our Supported Employment Position:

- Individuals with Down syndrome will earn at least minimum wage or better.
- Employment benefits will meet all requirements of applicable Canadian labour standards.
- Job choice and supports will be identified through individualized planning.
- Required accommodations and supports will be available and portable as long as individual may require them.
- Transition activities will be facilitated early in education settings to help individuals explore and experience post-secondary and employment options that help them make informed decisions about their futures before graduation from secondary school.

- General and specific job skill training and actual paid work experiences will be available in the community including co-op and paid internship opportunities to enhance the individual's marketability and to help them advance in careers or chosen areas of interest.
- Workplaces are encouraged to promote diversity, equity, social responsibility, and accessibility. These workplace qualities are beneficial to all the employees.
- Help dispel employers perceived concerns about the cost of employing, providing on the job supports and offering disability accommodations to people with Down syndrome.

Please quote fully and reference the Canadian Down Syndrome Society

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