

The AISH Program

The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program will provide financial and health benefits to you if you are an adult with a permanent disability that severely impairs your ability to earn a livelihood. You will only receive AISH if your disability is permanent (e.g. if you have exhausted all opportunities for rehabilitation, training and work). The level of benefits you will receive depends on your and your spouse/cohabiting partner's income and assets.

"Spouse" means a legally married person.

"Cohabiting partners" are two adults in a relationship of interdependence where they share one another's lives, are emotionally committed to one another, and function as an economic and domestic unit. This includes relationships where:

- Two adults live together and have a child by birth or adoption;
- Two adults live together and have entered into an adult interdependent partner agreement;
- Two adults live together in a committed relationship, including relationships formerly described as common-law;
- Two adults are cohabiting partners but do not reside together (e.g. one partner is working out of town).

AISH Benefits

As an AISH recipient, you receive a monthly financial benefit. The benefit is paid at the end of the month for the next month. There is a maximum benefit amount you can receive. This level is set according to Alberta government regulation. The benefit amount is less when you receive certain kinds of income such as Canada Pension or money from working.

The financial benefit ensures that your total income from ALL sources will not fall below a certain level. That level is reviewed regularly by the Alberta government.

As an AISH recipient, you also receive health benefits. In addition to premium-free Alberta Health Care, you will get a medical card providing you coverage within Alberta for things like:

- emergency ambulance services;
- dental work;
- glasses;
- prescription drugs*;
- eye exams;
- emergency diabetic supplies.

* Some AISH recipients may pay a \$2 co-payment fee for the first three prescriptions per month.

If this is the case, a \$5 monthly co-payment amount is provided to offset the cost.

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AISH Benefits And Eligibility

A different monthly benefit called *modified* AISH may be paid to you if you are disabled and living in a hospital, nursing home or other facility listed in the AISH regulations.

You can find out if a facility is on the list by contacting an AISH intake worker at an Alberta Human Resources and Employment office listed at the end of this booklet. The *modified* AISH benefit includes room and board, a handicap benefit, and any other approved item of need. *Modified* AISH also takes into account your and your spouse/cohabiting partner's income and assets when determining the amount of your monthly benefit.

You must apply for other income benefits you qualify for, such as Canada Pension Plan disability benefits.

You must have a severe disability.

To qualify for AISH, *everything* on the following list must match your situation:

The disability must be permanent. You may not qualify for AISH if treatment for your condition will help you to be able to work.

You must not have refused to take or look for reasonable employment for reasonable wages.

You must not have quit work that you were capable of doing.

You must not have refused or neglected to take training, rehabilitation or medical treatment which would help you to be able to work.

Your income and the income of your spouse/cohabiting partner must not exceed the limits allowed under the program.

Your assets and the assets of your spouse/cohabiting partner must not exceed the limits allowed under the program.

You must be 18 years old or older, but not eligible to receive an Old Age Security pension.

You must be a permanent resident of Alberta.

You cannot be residing in an institution such as the Michener Centre in Red Deer or an Alberta mental hospital, since the institutions provide for all your needs.

The disability must be so severe that it substantially limits your ability to earn a living.

Your disability must be the main factor, not your age, lack of education or lack of available jobs.

You must claim or collect the benefit of any asset you qualify for (such as an inheritance).

Please note

The information in this booklet serves only as a general guideline to the program. An AISH Administrator determines whether you qualify for AISH.