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# The Disability Tax Credit

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When you're working or making income, you might pay a portion of what you're making in taxes. The Disability Tax Credit (DTC) is an income tax credit that can help reduce the income tax that you or someone who supports you owes.

The credit is non-refundable. This means the government will not pay you money for the credit if you do not owe income taxes. However, even if you do not owe income taxes, you may still be able to benefit from the DTC. The DTC gives you access to other supports, such as the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

You must apply to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to qualify for the DTC. It's important to know that the DTC eligibility may not be permanent, even if your conditions are lifelong. You may need to apply more than once over your lifetime.

This help sheet explains:

1. Potential benefits of the DTC
2. How to apply and qualify for the DTC
3. Ways to strengthen your application.

## Potential Benefits

### Disability Amount

The Disability Amount is the amount you can claim as a credit on your tax return. For the 2023 tax year, this amount is \$9,428. Because the federal non-refundable tax rate is 15%, the amount your taxes may be reduced with the 2023 Disability Amount is about \$1,414. The Disability Amount increases slightly every year. You might get additional money depending on the province/territory in which you live because of how taxes are calculated provincially.



**Disability Alliance BC**

Information in this Help Sheet is based on the legislation that was current at the time of writing.

The legislation and policy may be subject to change. Please check the date on this Help Sheet.



If you do not owe income taxes, it is sometimes possible to transfer the Disability Amount to your spouse or a family member who helps you with food, shelter or clothing on a regular basis.

### **Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)**

The RDSP is a long-term savings plan for people who qualify for the DTC. If you open an RDSP before the end of the year that you turn 49, you can qualify for up to \$90,000 in grants and bonds. See our [Help Sheet 15](#) on the RDSP for more information.

### **Canada's Workers Benefit (CWB) Disability Supplement**

The CWB helps people with low income who get most of their money from employment. If you qualify for the DTC and are working, you may also receive more support with the CWB Disability Supplement. The maximum CWB Disability Supplement in BC for the 2022 tax year is \$737.

### **Child Disability Benefit (CDB)**

Families with children under the age of 18 who qualify for the DTC may receive more benefits through the CDB. From July 2023 to June 2024, you could get up to \$3,173 per year (\$264.42 each month) for each child eligible for the DTC.

### **Canada Caregiver Credit (CCC)**

The CCC is available to those who provide family members with physical or mental impairments with food, shelter, and clothing. The tax credit is non-refundable. This means the government will not pay you money for the credit if you do not owe income taxes. If your family member is eligible for the DTC, you do not need a signed letter from your doctor to receive the credit.

### **Medical Expenses and Disability Supports Deduction**

Certain medical expenses, including some prescription therapies and a personalized therapy plan, can only be claimed on your tax return if you have the DTC. You may also be able to claim a Disability Supports Deduction for some medical expenses.

### **Home Buyers' Amount**

People eligible for the DTC do not have to be a first-time home buyer to qualify for the Home Buyer's Amount, which is a non-refundable credit that allows you to claim up to an additional \$10,000 for a qualifying home as of the 2022 tax year. Because the



non-refundable tax rate is 15%, most people will actually see a tax reduction of around \$1,500.

View more benefits and credits you may be able to access if you're found eligible for the DTC here: <https://tinyurl.com/kyctnwn4>.

## Ways to Qualify for the DTC

The DTC is a Canada-wide benefit and there is no age requirement. A person of any age, including children and seniors, can qualify if they meet the requirements. However, there are age requirements for some programs connected to the DTC, such as the Registered Disability Savings Plan.

To qualify for the DTC, your disability must be prolonged and severe. This means your disability is likely to continue for at least 12 months **and**:

1. You are markedly restricted in an activity of daily life. This means you are unable or take a lot longer to perform at least one of the daily activities below (substantially all of the time).

Even if you are not markedly restricted in one of these categories you can still qualify if you:

2. Have cumulative significant restrictions in two or more of the daily restriction categories listed below, such that you have a marked restriction overall, or,
3. Require life-sustaining therapy at least three times per week, for an average of 14 hours per week (this will soon change to two x per week, likely in time for the next tax filing season).

The different **daily restriction categories** that you may qualify under are:

- Speaking
- Hearing
- Vision (to claim vision as a marked restriction, you must be legally blind)
- Walking
- Eliminating (using the toilet)
- Feeding (eating or preparing food)
- Dressing
- Mental functions necessary for everyday life.



## Applying for the DTC

You apply for the DTC by filling out a form from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) called the Disability Tax Credit Certificate ([form T2201](#)). Copies of this application are available online or can be requested from the CRA. The form is 16 pages long and has two parts.

### Part A (pages 1 to 2)

Part A must be completed and signed by you or your legal representative. You can also fill out Part A of the form online through your My Account or by calling the CRA. You will receive a reference number.

### Part B (pages 3 to 16)

Part B is a medical report that must be completed and signed by your doctor, nurse practitioner or another qualified health professional. Other health professionals can only fill out the form for you if your disability is within their area of practice. **Please note:** Medical practitioners now have the option to fill out their section of the form online. You can give your medical practitioner your reference number to allow them to submit your application on your behalf.

Health professionals who can complete this form include:

- Doctor
- Nurse Practitioner
- Optometrist (vision)
- Speech Language Pathologist (speaking)
- Audiologist (hearing)
- Occupational Therapist (walking, feeding, dressing)
- Physiotherapist (walking)
- Psychologist (mental functions necessary for everyday life)

You do not need to qualify under every daily restriction category (listed on the previous page). Only have your medical practitioner fill out information for the categories that apply to you; the rest of the categories can be left blank. If you are found eligible, the CRA will determine if you're markedly or cumulatively restricted.

After your medical practitioner fills out Section B, they will sign it and return the application form to you. You can then submit your application online through [MyAccount](#) or [by mail](#). Medical Practitioners can also submit online on your behalf if you provide them with your reference number.



## Before You See Your Doctor

It's a good idea to prepare for your appointment with your medical practitioner. If you need help preparing for your conversation with your doctor, you can consult our online DTC tool: <https://disabilityalliancebc.org/dtc-app/>.

You should be able to answer the following questions:

- Which DTC daily restriction categories do you think apply to you? (Eg: walking, dressing, mental functions necessary for everyday life)
- Which symptoms do you have and how do they affect these activities? (E.g. pain, numbness or dizziness may affect walking; poor dexterity; stiffness or loss of motor control may affect dressing).
- How often do your symptoms occur? To qualify, the CRA requires that you are restricted in one or more activities **all** or **substantially all of the time**. Remember that “restricted” could either mean you cannot perform the activity or that it takes you significantly longer to do it.

There is a checklist at the end of this Help Sheet that may help you. You can bring it with you to your doctor to make your conversation about the DTC easier.

## Fees

The CRA does not charge a fee to apply for the DTC. However, your doctor may charge a fee to fill out the form. If you cannot afford a fee, some doctors may be willing to reduce or waive it, if you explain your circumstances.

Some companies will charge a fee to help you apply for the DTC. Typically, they will claw-back a percentage of any money you recover. This could mean you pay hundreds or thousands of dollars for this service. If you need help to apply for the DTC, we encourage you to look for a non-profit organization, like DABC, that will not charge you to help with your application.

## Where to Send Your Application

Send your completed application to your nearest tax centre. If you live in BC, your completed DTC application can be mailed to the CRA's Winnipeg Tax Centre:

**Post Office Box 14001, Station Main  
Winnipeg MB R3C 3M2**

You can also submit your application online through your [MyAccount](#).

If you and your medical practitioner filled out the application online, your medical practitioner may be able to submit your application on your behalf.



We strongly encourage you to make a copy of your completed application and keep it in a safe place in case you need to refer back to it later. This may be particularly helpful if you ever need to re-apply for the DTC.

## After You Submit Your Application

The CRA will send you a Notice of Determination after you submit your application, which will tell you if you have been found eligible for the DTC. To check the status of your application, call the CRA or check online through your MyAccount. If you have not received your Notice within a month of submitting your application, contact your medical practitioner to see if they have received a follow-up questionnaire.

### Follow-up Questionnaire

After you send in your DTC application, the CRA may send you or your medical practitioner follow-up questions, if they need more information. If you or your medical practitioner are not confident responding to these questions, you may want to get an opinion from an advocate or someone knowledgeable about the DTC. As mentioned above, if you have not received a decision from the CRA within a month of submitting your application, it is a good idea to check with your medical practitioner to ensure that they have completed and submitted the questionnaire.

### If You Are Approved

You can be approved to claim the DTC for the current year, a past year and/or a future year. After you have been approved, you can claim the Disability Amount on your tax return for the years that you have been approved. Remember that you may need to re-apply for the DTC in the future. Keep a copy of your old applications, so you can refer to them if you need to send in a new application. The number of years you've been approved for will be noted in your Notice of Determination letter.

### If You Are Denied

You have three main options if your application is denied.

#### 1. Request for Second Review

Ask for a Request for Second Review. This means you are asking the CRA to review your application, as well as any new supporting information you give them. There is no specific deadline to request a second review. However, we recommend you act as quickly as possible, since the CRA may refuse your request if you take too long. You can make this request by sending a short letter to the CRA (in BC, the [Winnipeg Tax Centre](#)) explaining why you think their decision was wrong. You must provide some additional supporting medical documentation from your medical practitioner that you have not already sent. This can include updated medical reports or a letter from your medical practitioner. We recommend you contact an advocate to get advice on a Request for Second Review.



## 2. Notice of Objection

If you think you should have been eligible with the application you sent in and have no medical reports to add that can support your case, you can submit a formal objection within 90 days of the Notice of Determination letter. There are two options to appeal:

1. Send an objection through your [MyAccount](#), through a representative, or to the Chief of Appeals
2. If you are denied again and disagree with the decision, you can file an appeal to Tax Court.

We recommend you consult an experienced advocate, accountant or lawyer for assistance with this process.

## 3. Reapply

The CRA can consider a new application, if the circumstances of your disability change or you have new evidence they did not consider in a previous application.



## DTC Application Checklist

If you need help figuring out which daily restriction categories may apply to you, you can consult our online DTC tool: <https://disabilityalliancebc.org/dtc-app/>.

When applying for the DTC under a physical category of disability, consider the following for **EACH of the daily restriction categories that apply to you** (Speaking, Hearing, Vision, Walking, Eliminating (using the toilet), Feeding, Dressing). We will include examples for qualifying under the Mental Functions category on page 9.

### Daily Restrictions (Physical)

<b>Year you were restricted</b> (not based on diagnosis)					
<b>Year you were diagnosed</b> (if available)					
<b>Severity</b> (pick one)	Mild	Mild to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to severe	Severe
<b>Frequency</b> (pick one)	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Usually	Always
<b>Use of devices</b> (e.g. leg brace, shoe horn, hearing aids)					
<b>Use of therapy</b> (e.g. massage, physiotherapist)					
<b>Do you use medication to help with your restriction?</b>	Yes		No		
<b>If yes to the above, how effective is your medication?</b>	Effective	Moderately Effective	Mildly Effective	Ineffective	Unsure





<p><b>Compared to an average person of the same age without restrictions, it takes _____ x as long to complete this activity of daily living.</b> (e.g. 2 times, 3 times, 4 times)</p>	
<p><b>How is your daily living affected by your restriction?</b> (e.g. if your restriction is dressing, do you sit to dress? Do you avoid getting dressed? How often do you get dressed? Are there certain types of clothing that are difficult or painful to put on? -- pants, shoes, shirts etc).</p>	

**Daily Restrictions (Mental Functions):**

<p><b>Mental function categories:</b> Adaptive functioning (adapting to change, going out in the community, daily tasks – feeding, dressing, sleeping, hygiene), Attention, Concentration, Goal-setting, Judgement, Memory, Perception of reality, Problem-solving, Regulation of behaviour and emotions and Verbal and non-verbal comprehension.</p> <p>List all that apply.</p>			
<p><b>Severity</b> (pick one for each category )</p>	No limitations	Some limitations	Very limited capacity
<p><b>Year you were restricted</b> (not based on diagnosis)</p>			
<p><b>Year you were diagnosed</b> (if available)</p>			



<p><b>Use of medication, devices, therapy and/or aids:</b>          (e.g. devices and aids: GPS, safety devices, memory aids such as alarms, calendars, notes, lists, medication organization pack)</p>					
<p><b>How effective is your medication?</b></p>	Effective	Moderately Effective	Mildly Effective	Ineffective	Unsure
<p><b>How is your daily living affected by your restriction(s)? Compare yourself to a person of the same age without your restrictions (list restrictions for each category).</b></p> <p>(e.g. do you have difficulty keeping up with basic personal hygiene? Do you need assistance to make simple decisions? Do you have trouble concentrating on conversation?)</p>					
<p><b>If you are a Legal Adult above the age of 18:</b></p>					
<p><b>Are you able to live independently, without the assistance of others?</b></p>	Yes		No		
<p><b>If no to the above, list all the supports you need (eg: assisted living or long-term facility, community-based health services, hospitalization, support from family members).</b></p>					
<p><b>If you are the guardian of a child under the age of 18:</b></p>					
<p><b>Do they need: Adult supervision at home beyond an age-appropriate level or additional support from educational staff at school?</b></p>	Yes		No		



## Alternative to Qualify: Life-sustaining Therapy

Do you need therapy to support a vital function, even if this therapy has eased the symptoms?	Yes	No
Do you need this therapy at least two times per week?	Yes	No
Does this therapy average at least 14 hours per week?	Yes	No

Therapy time cannot include time spent on dietary or exercise regime if it has not been prescribed by your health practitioner, travel time to medical appointments or shopping for medication.

If you indicated “Yes” to all of the above questions, tell your medical practitioner you want to apply under the “Life-sustaining Therapy” category. If you require therapy at home (eg: insulin therapy) we suggest that you log how many hours or minutes it takes you to complete activities relating to life sustaining therapy every day, and provide your medical practitioner with that information. People with Type 1 Diabetes will automatically qualify for the DTC for the years 2021 onwards.



## Get Help Through Access RDSP

Access RDSP is a partnership of Disability Alliance BC, BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society and Plan Institute. Here's how we can help.

### Disability Alliance BC

You can contact a DABC advocate for free one-on-one support with the DTC application process.

Local 604-872-1278 | Toll Free 1-800-663-1278 | [rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.org](mailto:rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.org)

### Plan Institute

You can contact Plan Institute for free one-on-one support with opening an RDSP and deciding whether an RDSP is right for you.

Disability Planning Hotline 1-844-311-7526 | Watch an RDSP tutorial at [www.rdsp.com](http://www.rdsp.com)

### BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society

If you are looking for Indigenous-specific navigation and support, contact BCANDS for free one-on-one support with the DTC and the RDSP.

Local (250) 381-7303 | Toll Free 1-888-815 -5511 (TTY Accessible)  
[bcands@bcands.bc.ca](mailto:bcands@bcands.bc.ca)

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