



Attracting New Talent: Persons with Disabilities

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Employers participating in the 2024 THRC pilots of new tools can also refer to their [resource list](#) and are welcome to contact their designated advisor for consultation and guidance.

ATTRACTING NEW TALENT: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Attracting and recruiting people with disabilities to apply to work at your company requires nothing more than some basic knowledge, good communication efforts, and thoughtful design of your processes. It is the first step in ensuring that everyone who is qualified and interested can find out about your opportunities and doesn't face unnecessary barriers to applying.

Getting Started

To start being more inclusive and attracting people with disabilities to your company, start with these tips:

1. **Build your own awareness, knowledge and comfort with various types of disabilities.**

Learn about the range of disabilities. This can help you when responding to inquiries and in creating accessible recruiting and hiring strategies. Broad categories and widely known disabilities can be a starting point:

- **Visible disabilities** are conditions that are easy to observe or when a person uses an assistive device. This may include using a cane or wheelchair, communicating with sign language, or having limited manual dexterity.
- **Invisible disabilities** are conditions that can make everyday activities challenging, but you wouldn't necessarily know someone has them by just looking at them. These can include things like chronic pain, fatigue, learning differences, chemical sensitivities, substance use disorders, or mental health conditions. For more information, see the THRC Tool on [Invisible Disabilities](#).
- Reach out to disability specific organizations for information and training about particular disabilities. Read materials on their websites. These agencies can describe the types of supports or accommodation that can help an individual with a disability to succeed in your workplace. A few well-known examples include:
 - Canadian National Institute for the Blind
 - Canadian Association of the Deaf
 - The War Amps
 - The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

2. **Make connections: Expand your recruitment sources and networks.**

Employers can attract persons with disabilities the same way they would recruit anyone else. However, there are some great additional resources and organizations that can help you to hire from this talent pool. Here are some steps you can take:

- Post jobs to targeted websites and local community agencies to give your company a great start and help to build good connections. The Connector Tool has a growing list of organizations across provinces and territories that you can use to start with: [THRC Connector Tool](#). *Tip:* Help grow this tool by adding organizations that you are familiar with.

- Build relationships with local agencies that specialize in persons with disabilities – even when you are not actively recruiting. This can demonstrate your commitment, give your company visibility, and help you to improve your recruitment practices.
- Ask your current or former employees, suppliers, customers and other business contacts to refer potential candidates with disabilities. They can identify people who might be well suited to your work. It also builds awareness and engagement within your eco-system, so that everyone can be part of your efforts to be inclusive.

3. Ensure your materials demonstrate your commitment.

- Review your websites. Is the message that you are sending to potential candidates attractive to persons with disabilities? The language and images should be inclusive and show that persons with disabilities belong in your business.
- Consider accessibility throughout your website, not just the careers section. Integrate alternative text descriptions for website images, offer downloadable job postings in accessible formats (e.g., screen reader compatible PDFs), and use clear language in your company's business information.

4. Include welcoming language and accommodation statements in job postings.

- Use welcoming language. Avoid phrases like “must be able to” or “fast paced environment” that might be seen to close off any possibilities for accommodation and discourage people with disabilities from even applying. Here are some examples:

Examples of inclusive language when describing job duties

Instead of: "The ideal candidate will be a highly motivated individual with excellent communication, problem-solving, and time management skills. Must be able to work independently and as part of a team in a fast-paced environment."

Try: "We are looking for a motivated driver with strong communication skills. You will be responsible for safely transporting goods on long-haul routes. Prior experience in the trucking industry is preferred."

Instead of: "The successful candidate will possess a strong work ethic, be detail-oriented, and have the ability to lift up to 50 lbs. Previous experience with operating complex machinery is a plus."

Try: "We are seeking a reliable and detail-oriented team member to join our growing team. You will be responsible for operating equipment to load and unload goods. Training will be provided on all equipment. Reasonable accommodation will be made upon request."

- Focus on qualifications: clear and concise postings ensure the focus is on skills and experience, reducing the potential for unconscious bias based on disability.
- Use clear language. Common software tools can help you measure the reading level of your materials – some people with disabilities will benefit from written information that is easier to process.
- Add a statement outlining your company’s interest in hiring persons with disabilities and in creating a diverse and inclusive work environment. Here are some samples:

Statements about Company Commitment to a Disability-Inclusive Workplace

Example 1

[Company Name] is committed to providing accessible employment practices, in compliance with applicable legislation. Applicants are asked to make accommodation requests to [Company Name] and we will make every reasonable effort to ensure that those requests are met throughout the recruitment and hiring process.

Example 2

[Company Name] is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity. We are committed to using employment processes that reflect legal requirements and create a welcoming experience. Assessment and selection processes used for recruitment will be available in an accessible format to applicants with special needs, upon request. If contacted for an interview, please advise the Recruiter if you require an accommodation for one of the grounds protected by human rights codes.

Example 3

[Company Name] believes in and is committed to promoting diversity in our workforce. We do not make hiring or employment decisions based on characteristics such as race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, family status and others that are protected under the relevant human rights code. We are committed to providing reasonable accommodation and will work with you to meet your needs. If you are a person with a disability or other characteristic that means you might require assistance during the application process, please don't hesitate to reach out! We celebrate our inclusive work environment and welcome members of all backgrounds and perspectives to apply.

Learning from Experience

Monitor your outreach and recruitment results:

- Create a simple filing system where you can keep track of your successes. This can give you valuable information for purposes such as:
 - Reporting on your company’s accessibility efforts
 - Identifying gaps and new opportunities
 - Saving time and costs for future accommodation requests

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- Flagging trends in accommodation requests so that you can design a more sustainable and built-in approach to accessibility
- Engaging with important stakeholders – internally to the company and also externally
- Consider a basic record-keeping system such as:

Occupation				
How we reached out				
What disability(ies) were involved				
What we did and date(s)				
What the outcome was				
Info we have on file (and where)				
Other comments				

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I avoid over-promising about our ability to accommodate people with disabilities? I do not want to create unrealistic expectations.

Welcome early discussions with potential applicants about what would work best for them. Most accommodations related to recruiting cost nothing at all – such as flexible interview times, alternative interview formats, breaks during interviews, or sign language interpreters. For more information about the selection and hiring process, see the THRC resource on [Disability Inclusive Hiring Practices](#). For accommodating on the job, your organization’s growing experience will help to describe what is feasible and what might be difficult to accommodate. Look at this tool for ideas about practical accommodations in the trucking and logistics industry: [Common Types of Industry Accommodations](#).

If I accommodate for some applicants, does that create unfairness for other applicants?

If an applicant requests a reasonable accommodation for their disability or other protected human rights ground, it is leveling the playing field – not creating an unfair advantage. Remember, accommodation does not mean changing standards or requirements, it just means removing barriers that would prevent a qualified candidate with a disability from demonstrating their skills and performing the job duties.

What are the benefits to creating an inclusive recruitment process?

You attract a wider pool of talent, find the best person for the job, and build a more diverse and innovative team. Inclusive workplaces also boast higher employee morale and productivity.

Is it safe to hire drivers with disabilities?

Drivers with disabilities can be just as safe as non-disabled drivers with proper training and accommodation. If an applicant applies to a driver role and they are unable to perform the duties of the job even with accommodation, you could suggest they apply to a different role.

What are my legal obligations regarding accommodation for disabilities in Canada?

Federal, provincial and territorial human rights legislation prohibit discrimination based on disability, as well as on other protected grounds. You must provide reasonable accommodation to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities, unless it would cause undue hardship to the organization.

Undue Hardship

A situation that occurs when a particular accommodation adjustment in the workplace would create an overly detrimental financial impact to the company or create risks to health or safety.

This important concept is also addressed in the THRC Tool: [Disability-Inclusive Hiring Practices](#).

Find more information on accommodation regulations for workplaces in various jurisdictions below:

Federal:

- [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#)

Provincial:

- [Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission](#)
- [British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal](#)
- [Manitoba Human Rights Commission](#)
- [New Brunswick Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Québec Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Yukon Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Inclusion & Accessibility - Nunavummi Disabilities Makinnasuaqtiit Society \(nuability.ca\)](#)
(non-profit association)