Employment

Know Your Rights – Legal Information Handbook

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CNIB FOUNDATION

Disclaimer

This content is provided as general information and is not legal advice. If you need advice about a specific legal problem, contact a lawyer or a community legal service.

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To learn more about the Know Your Rights – Newfoundland and Labrador Project, please visit our Know Your Rights – Newfoundland and Labrador webpage.

Table of Contents

My Legal Rights 5

Q: What legal rights do I have when it comes to employment in Newfoundland and Labrador? 5

Duty to Accommodate & Undue Hardship 5

Bona Fide (“in good faith”) Occupational Requirement 7

Q: Where do my legal rights come from? 7

Q: Who must comply with Newfoundland and Labrador's employment laws? 8

Q: I work in a federally regulated industry. Do Newfoundland and Labrador employment laws apply to me? 8

Q: What can I do to enforce my legal rights? 8

Common Scenarios 10

Looking for Work 10

Q: I'm looking for a volunteer position. Am I entitled to receive accommodations as a volunteer? 10

Q: There’s a requirement in a job advertisement that I can’t meet because of my disability. Should I still consider applying for the job? 10

Q: A job posting is not in an accessible format. What can I do? 12

Q: I got an interview! But I'm not sure when to disclose my sight loss to my prospective employer. What should I do? 12

Q: I had the qualifications and performed well during the interview, but I didn't get the job. I feel that I have been discriminated against because of my sight loss. What can I do? 13

At Work 14

Q: My sight loss is affecting my ability to do my job. What can I do? 14

Who should I disclose my disability to in the workplace? 14

Q: I’ve been denied promotions and other opportunities within my workplace because of my sight loss. What can I do? 14

Q: I require accommodations to do my job effectively. How much information am I required to disclose to my employer about my disability? 15

Q: My employer has provided me with accommodations, but they aren't working. What can I do? 15

Q: My employer has advised me that due to various reasons (e.g. incompatible software, etc.) they are unable to accommodate my sight loss. What can I do? 16

Q: Do I have to pay for my employment-related accommodations? 16

Leaving Work **17**
Q: I had to leave my job because my sight loss prevented me from performing my duties. What now? 17
Getting Help **18**
Legal Services and Information 18
Essential Non-Legal Services 20
Other Helpful Resources 21
CNIB Services (Non-Legal) 23
Vision Loss Rehabilitation 26
Wayfinding 26

My Legal Rights

Q: What legal rights do I have when it comes to employment in Newfoundland and Labrador?

A: Under Newfoundland and Labrador laws, people with disabilities have important legal rights when it comes to employment:

- You have the right to be treated equally in the workplace **without discrimination** because of your disability.
- You have the right not to be terminated or laid off because of your disability.
- You have the right to receive **accommodations** for your disability from your employer, prospective employer, or employment agency up to the point of **undue hardship**.
    - Your employer must provide you with accommodations in a way that respects your dignity, meets your individual needs and promotes your integration and full participation in the workplace.
    - Accommodations in the workplace include things like providing special equipment, modifying tasks, and creating new policies that enable you to succeed at your job.
- You have the right to challenge employment practices that you believe are based on unlawful discrimination.
- You have the right to work in an environment that is free from harassment.

Duty to Accommodate & Undue Hardship

An employer/prospective employer's legal "duty to accommodate" means that they are legally required to provide you with the supports you need to succeed in the workplace or during a job competition. The term "accommodation" is not easily defined and will vary from case-to-case, however, accommodations should be customized to meet your needs and to promote your integration and full participation in the workplace.

In most cases, the duty to accommodate will arise after the employee has made a request for accommodation. In some instances, however, the duty to accommodate will arise without an accommodation request being made, for example if the employer has reason to believe an employee is experiencing difficulties as a result of a disability.

The duty to accommodate involves a two-step process:

1. Procedural: Requires the employer to conduct *individual* assessments of an employee's needs and capabilities. This will likely involve the assistance of health care professionals.
2. Substantive: Once the employee has been assessed, the employer has a duty to make efforts to provide the employee with accommodations.

The duty to accommodate, however, has a limit and this limit is called "undue hardship. "Undue hardship" is a legal term. It means that if an employer can show that it is very difficult for them to provide you with a certain type of accommodation, then they don't have to provide it.

It's usually difficult for an employer to claim undue hardship because they have to show clear, direct evidence of undue hardship that is not based upon assumptions or stereotypes. While the determination of what constitutes undue hardship is case-specific, some of the commonly considered factors include:

1. Whether the cost of the accommodation is so high that it will significantly interfere with the organization's ability to operate.
2. Whether the accommodation will create serious health and safety risks.
3. Whether the accommodation would prevent the employer from carrying out the purpose of its business.

Even if an employer shows that a certain type of accommodation will create undue hardship for them, they may still have a legal duty to provide you with the next best type of accommodation.

Bona Fide ("in good faith") Occupational Requirement

There is an important exception to an employer's legal duty to accommodate you. Employers do not have a legal duty to accommodate you if you are unable to meet a *bona fide* ("in good faith") occupational requirement of a job because of your disability. What this means is that if a discriminatory policy, standard or rule is essential to performing the requirements of a job and is impossible to accommodate without causing undue hardship, then it may be permitted.

Here's an example of a *bona fide* occupational requirement:

For the job of an airplane pilot, a certain degree of sight is an essential requirement to perform the work safely. If someone can't meet this requirement because of their disability, an employer does not have a legal duty to accommodate them.

If you are uncertain as to whether a job requirement is *bona fide*, you should consider consulting with a lawyer who practices employment or human rights law to see what **options** may be available to you.

Q: Where do my legal rights come from?

A: Your legal rights come from a variety of different laws, including:

- Newfoundland and Labrador's **Human Rights Act**, which prohibits discrimination based on disability in most areas of public life, including employment.
- Common Law – Laws that are made by the decisions of Courts, Boards and Tribunals.
- The **Labour Standards Act**, which sets out minimum standards that most employers must comply with.
- The **Occupational Health and Safety Act**, which creates safety standards within the workplace.
- The **Labour Relations Act**, which sets out rules for unions and collective bargaining in the private sector.

- The **Public Service Collective Bargaining Act**, which regulates collective bargaining in the public sector.

Q: Who must comply with Newfoundland and Labrador's employment laws?

A: Almost all employees, employers, companies and organizations that do business in Newfoundland and Labrador must comply with Newfoundland and Labrador's employment laws. This includes:

- Employees
- Employers, prospective employers, and employment agencies, both for-profit and not-for-profit.
- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and its agencies.
- Independent contractors, unions, trade unions, self-governing professions and other occupational associations

Q: I work in a federally regulated industry. Do Newfoundland and Labrador employment laws apply to me?

A: If you work in a federally regulated industry, federal employment laws usually apply instead of Newfoundland and Labrador employment laws.

To learn more about whether federal laws apply to your employment situation, you can visit the Government of Canada's **List of Federally Regulated Industries and Workplaces**.

Q: What can I do to enforce my legal rights?

A: If you have experienced discrimination while looking for work or while working, there are things you can do to stand up for yourself.

In general, you should first try to resolve your concerns by speaking with the people who are directly involved in an informal and collaborative way.

For more resources on self-advocacy, please visit the Self-Advocacy and Essential Legal Information Handbook on CNIB's **Know Your Rights – Newfoundland and Labrador** webpage.

If your concerns can't be addressed through collaborative discussions, you should consider consulting with a lawyer who practices human rights or employment law to see if any of the following options are appropriate:

- A **complaint** to the **Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission**.
- A complaint to the **Canadian Human Rights Commission** (for federally regulated workplaces)
- A report or complaint to the **Labour Standards Division** (option for non-unionized employees)
- An application to the **Labour Relations Board** (option for unionized employees)
- A claim with **WorkplaceNL**
- A claim before a Newfoundland and Labrador Court.

You can also contact staff at the **Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission** by phone at 1-800-563-5808 (toll-free), by email at **humanrights@gov.nl.ca**, or **online**. Staff cannot provide you with legal advice, however, they can help you understand your legal rights and options. They can also assist with self-advocacy or refer you to other community or government services.

Common Scenarios

Even though there are laws to protect you from discrimination, people with disabilities still face barriers to accessing employment opportunities and fulfilling their potential in the workplace.

This section describes barriers that are commonly experienced and suggests practical next steps. Keep in mind that in most situations, you should first try to resolve your concerns by speaking with the people who are directly involved in an informal and collaborative way.

Looking for Work

Q: I'm looking for a volunteer position. Am I entitled to receive accommodations as a volunteer?

A: In general, yes. Newfoundland and Labrador's **Human Rights Act** applies to unpaid or volunteer work. Most organizations that accept volunteers have a legal duty to provide you with reasonable accommodations for your disability up to the point of undue hardship.

Q: There's a requirement in a job advertisement that I can't meet because of my disability. Should I still consider applying for the job?

A: Sometimes job advertisements include "requirements" that are not essential to doing the job in a safe or effective way. If you can't meet a requirement in a job advertisement because of your disability, and you believe that requirement is **not essential** to doing the job, then you should still consider applying for the job.

When a job advertisement includes a "requirement" that is **not essential** to doing the job safely or effectively, the employer is **not allowed to reject** your application on the basis that you could not meet that requirement. The determination of whether or not a job requirement is essential is fact-dependent. Here's an example:

Mary is looking for work. She is trained as an accountant, and she has sight loss which prevents her from driving.

Mary sees a job advertisement for an accountant position that is based in one office and does not require travel to other locations. The job advertisement includes a requirement that "all applicants must have a driver's licence".

In this example, the requirement that applicants must have a driver's licence is not essential because it does not affect whether someone can do the job in a safe or effective way.

If Mary chooses to apply for this job, the employer is not allowed to reject her application on the basis that she doesn't have a driver's licence.

How can you tell which job requirements are "essential" and which are not?

It is not always easy to know because the law on this topic can be complex. Whenever you are in doubt, it's important to get help from a lawyer who can apply the law to your specific situation.

Here's an example of when it's not entirely clear if a job requirement is essential:

Fara is looking for work. She is an experienced salesperson, and she has sight loss which prevents her from driving.

Fara sees a job advertisement for a sales associate position that will require frequent travel to different client locations. The job advertisement includes a requirement that "all applicants must have a driver's licence".

If most clients are located nearby, then Fara could take a taxi to meet clients. The cost of a local taxi will probably not cause **undue hardship** to the employer. In this case, the requirement that applicants must have a driver's licence is **probably not essential** to the job.

However, if most clients are located far away, the cost of travelling by taxi to remote locations might create an undue hardship for the employer. In this case, the requirement that applicants must have a driver's licence **could be essential** to the job. In other words, it could be a ***Bona Fide* Occupational Requirement**.

Fara should consider getting help from a lawyer who can apply the law to her specific situation.

Q: A job posting is not in an accessible format. What can I do?

A: The first step you should take when you encounter a job posting that is not in an accessible format is to contact the employer and request that the job posting be provided to you in an accessible format. Employers and prospective employers are legally obligated to accommodate employees and job candidates with disabilities up to the point of undue hardship. By advising the employer of your disability and your need for accommodations, you trigger the employer's duty to accommodate you.

If your request for accommodations is denied, consider escalating your complaint to a manager or supervisor of the person that you spoke with.

For more resources on self-advocacy, please visit the Self-Advocacy and Essential Legal Information Handbook on CNIB's **Know Your Rights – Newfoundland and Labrador** webpage.

If your concerns remain unresolved, consider consulting with a lawyer who practices human rights or employment law about the **options** that may be available to you.

If you don't want to disclose your disability to the employer before you apply for the job, you can ask a friend to make the request for you. You can also get help from a community organization, such as CNIB.

Q: I got an interview! But I'm not sure when to disclose my sight loss to my prospective employer. What should I do?

A: While you are not required to disclose your disability to your employer, it may be a good idea to do so, depending on the situation.

There's no single "right answer" about whether you should disclose your disability to an employer and when you should do so. You need to consider the positives and negatives depending on what you know about the job, the employer, the industry, and your own feelings.

It's often a good idea to disclose your disability before an interview to make sure that appropriate accommodations will be provided to you during the interview. This is especially important where written tests or other types of evaluation could be part of the interview process.

Other reasons to disclose your disability in advance of an interview are:

- To give you the first opportunity to frame your disability in a positive way that highlights your achievements
- To ensure the employer is not surprised
- To demonstrate how you are pro-active in finding solutions

There are also potential cons to disclosing your disability before an interview. For example, you may be worried that the employer could form misconceptions about you based on false stereotypes before you are able to meet them in-person.

When making this decision, it is important to keep in mind that in general, it is a violation of the **Human Rights Act** for an employer not to hire you because you have a disability.

There are many **resources** to help you decide when and how to disclose your disability to an employer. You can also reach out to CNIB for additional support.

Q: I had the qualifications and performed well during the interview, but I didn't get the job. I feel that I have been discriminated against because of my sight loss. What can I do?

A: Sometimes there are clear signs that you have been discriminated against during an interview process. For example:

- When an employer asks intrusive and inappropriate questions
- When an employer makes statements that are offensive or based on false stereotypes
- When an employer says that they cannot hire you because of your sight loss

In general, it is a violation of Newfoundland and Labrador's **Human Rights Act** not to hire a candidate because they have a disability.

If you believe that you were discriminated against during the hiring process, it may be helpful to keep a copy of the application form and take notes of what happened, what was asked, and who was present during the interview.

Even if you think it will be hard to prove discrimination, there may still be options available to you. You should consider consulting with a lawyer who practices human rights or employment law about your **options**.

At Work

Q: My sight loss is affecting my ability to do my job. What can I do?

A: Eventually, you will need to tell your employer about how your disability is affecting your ability to perform job-related tasks. When you choose to disclose your disability to your employer, you will trigger their legal duty to accommodate you up the point of undue hardship. You should inform the employer of the kinds of accommodations that you require, preferably in writing, so that the person responsible for the accommodation may make the requested accommodation.

CNIB or **Vision Loss Rehabilitation** may be able to assist with the accommodation process as well.

Keep in mind that the duty to accommodate is a collaborative process that requires co-operation from employees. Employees must, for example, provide all necessary information about their restrictions, and must consider accommodation solutions proposed by the employer.

Who should I disclose my disability to in the workplace?

It depends on the size of the employer and whether there are other organizations involved (for example, a union or a temporary placement agency). In a large company, you may want to speak with the human resources department or a workplace accessibility advisory committee.

Before deciding what to do, consider consulting with a lawyer who practices human rights or employment law about the **options** that may be available to you. You can also contact CNIB for additional support.

Q: I've been denied promotions and other opportunities within my workplace because of my sight loss. What can I do?

A: While you are not guaranteed a promotion at work, if you are passed over for a promotion repeatedly without obvious cause or reason, it may be for reasons that go against the Newfoundland and Labrador **Human Rights Act**. In general, it is a violation of Newfoundland and Labrador human rights laws to withhold a promotion or fail to consider an employee for a promotion because of their disability.

If you believe that you have been passed over for a promotion due to your disability, you should first try to resolve the matter in an informal and collaborative way.

Consider having a discussion with your employer about why you were overlooked for the promotion. Ask if there are ways you can improve or work differently to earn a promotion in the future. Make sure to ask a manager or supervisor who will actually know why you have been overlooked. Be upfront, but take care not to be confrontational. Make sure you keep a record of any communication that your employer has with you.

If the matter is not resolved and you still believe that you have been discriminated against, consider contacting a human rights or employment lawyer to fully understand your legal **options**. You can also contact CNIB for additional support.

Q: I require accommodations to do my job effectively. How much information am I required to disclose to my employer about my disability?

A: An essential part of the accommodation process is collaboration. You are responsible for collaborating with your employer to determine which accommodations best suit your needs. This means your employer will need to know some general information about your disability in order for them to provide you with effective accommodations.

If your employer asks for medical documentation about your disability, you should provide the information that is necessary to explain your need for accommodations. You are not required to tell your employer your exact diagnosis. You are not required to give your employer information that is not related to your need for accommodations.

Q: My employer has provided me with accommodations, but they aren't working. What can I do?

A: Eventually, you will need to tell your employer about how your current accommodations are not providing you with the support you need to succeed in your job. Your employer has a legal duty to accommodate you up to the point of undue hardship.

The development and implementation of accommodations is an ongoing process. Your employer is obligated to re-evaluate an accommodation periodically and explore other accommodations if the

original accommodation proves to be unworkable or ineffective. You also have a duty to work with your employer on an ongoing basis to manage the accommodation process. CNIB or **Vision Loss Rehabilitation** may be able to assist with this.

Ultimately, it is the employer's responsibility to determine an accommodation plan that fully and adequately meets an employee's restrictions. This, however, does not oblige the employer to craft a "perfect" accommodation. An employee is not entitled to insist upon a preferred accommodation if an alternative would address that employee's restrictions. One relevant consideration to keep in mind is that you have a duty to accept a reasonable accommodation when it is offered, even if it is not your preferred accommodation.

Before deciding what to do, consider consulting with a human rights or employment lawyer about your legal **options**. You can also contact CNIB for additional support.

Q: My employer has advised me that due to various reasons (e.g. incompatible software, etc.) they are unable to accommodate my sight loss. What can I do?

A: Under Newfoundland and Labrador's human rights laws, employers are legally obligated to accommodate employees up to the point of undue hardship.

There is an important exception to this rule. Employers do not have a legal duty to accommodate you if you are unable to meet a ***bona fide* ("in good faith") occupational requirement** of a job because of your disability. What this means is that if a discriminatory policy, standard or rule is essential to performing the requirements of a job, then it may be permitted.

If you are uncertain as to whether a job requirement is *bona fide*, you should consider consulting with a lawyer who practices employment or human rights law to see what **options** may be available to you. You can also reach out to CNIB and/or **Vision Loss Rehabilitation** for additional support.

Q: Do I have to pay for my employment-related accommodations?

A: Your employer cannot make you pay for your accommodations. It is your employer's duty to accommodate you to the point of undue hardship and your employer is responsible for paying the costs of your accommodations. An employer is also required to pay for any additional medical assessments that they require in the process of providing your accommodation.

Leaving Work

Q: I had to leave my job because my sight loss prevented me from performing my duties. What now?

A: If you lose your job (for example, you resign or you are laid off) and you believe you lost your job because of your sight loss, you should consult with a human rights or employment lawyer to better understand your legal **options**. A lawyer can help you determine whether your employer may have discriminated against you in a way that breaks the law. You can also contact CNIB for additional support.

Getting Help

Legal Services and Information

Legal Aid NL

Legal Aid NL provides legal services to low-income earners in Newfoundland and Labrador. In order to receive services from Legal Aid NL, you must meet their **eligibility requirements.**

To **apply** for Legal Aid and/or to learn more, visit Legal Aid NL's **Frequently Asked Questions** webpage.

The Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PLIAN)

PLIAN is an independent non-profit organization and registered charity dedicated to educating Newfoundlanders and Labradorians about the law.

As part of its commitment to increasing and improving access to justice, PLIAN provides free legal information on a variety of topics on its website, including (but not limited to) residential tenancies, family law, and wills and estates.

PLIAN also operates the **Legal Information Line and Lawyer Referral Service**. Through this service, callers can receive general legal information and assistance with navigating the legal system. Clients can also receive referrals to lawyers who are registered with the Lawyer Referral Service. Lawyers who register with this service provide clients with an initial 30-minute consultation at a cost of $40.00 (taxes included).

If you are in Newfoundland, you may contact the Legal Information Line and Lawyer Referral Service as follows:

- Via telephone at: 1-888-660-7788 (toll free) or 709-722-2643
- Via email at: **info@publiclegalinfo.com** or **a2j@publiclegalinfo.com**

If you are in Labrador, you may contact the Legal Information Line and Lawyer Referral Service as follows:

- Via telephone at: 709-896-5235
- Via email at: **labrador@publiclegalinfo.com**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission

The Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission is an independent government agency that is responsible for protecting human rights in Newfoundland and Labrador and administering the province's **Human Rights Act**.

The Commission investigates and resolves human rights complaints, provides individuals, groups and organizations with legal information about human rights, and prevents discrimination through education and learning.

The Commission also creates various public education resources (including **Guidelines** and **Frequently Asked Questions** pages) to assist people in Newfoundland and Labrador with better understanding their rights.

For more information about the **complaint process**, visit the **Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission's** website or contact the Commission **online**, by phone at 1-800-563-5808 (toll-free), or by email at **humanrights@gov.nl.ca**. Commission staff cannot provide legal advice, however, they can help you understand your legal rights and options. They can also assist with self-advocacy or refer you to other community or government services.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission

The **Canadian Human Rights Commission** deals with complaints under the **Canadian Human Rights Act**. For **federally** regulated services and activities, you may be able to bring a **complaint** about discrimination based on disability to the **Canadian Human Rights Commission**.

Essential Non-Legal Services

Office of the Citizens' Representative

The **Office of the Citizens' Representative** provides a province-wide ombudsman service.

The primary work of the Office of the Citizens' Representative is to accept complaints from citizens who feel they have been treated unfairly by government offices and agencies. The Office of the Citizens' Representative investigates complaints against provincial government departments and other agencies that are overseen by the provincial government.

The Office of the Citizens' Representative can also undertake complaints that study how governmental policies, procedures, and actions can affect a large number of people. These are called systemic complaints and can result in recommendations that have a much broader impact.

You may **contact** the Office of the Citizens' Representative by phone at 1-800-559-0079 (toll-free) or by email at **citrep@gov.nl.ca** to discuss a concern or make a **complaint**.

Labour Standards Division (Non-Unionized Employees and Workplaces)

The Labour Standards Division is responsible for administering the **Labour Standards Act** and its Regulations, which set out minimum terms and conditions of employment.

Some of the functions performed by the Labour Standards Division include:

- Visiting workplaces to meet with employees and employers and to discuss their rights and responsibilities
- Providing assistance with resolving workplace disputes
- Formally investigating complaints
- Providing seminars and presentations about workplace rights and responsibilities

The Labour Standards Division also provides a Telephone Counseling Service, wherein Labour Standards Division staff can provide interpretation and address enquiries related to the rights and responsibilities of a broad range of employment issues. You can contact the Labour Standards Division by phone at:

- Toll-free line: 1-877-563-1063
- St. John's Office: (709) 729-2742
- Corner Brook Office: (709) 637-2364

You can also contact the Labour Standards Division by email at LabourStandards@gov.nl.ca.

Labour Relations Board

The Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Relations Board is an independent, quasi-judicial body that is responsible for mediating and adjudicating various employment and labour relation matters that involve unionized employees and workplaces.

To learn more, visit the Labour Relations Board **website** or contact the Labour Relations Board by phone at (709) 729-2707

Other Helpful Resources

Workplace Accommodation Services

Workplace accommodation services can assist you in many ways including:

- Providing support and assistance with communicating disabilities to employers and prospective employers, and requesting accommodations
- Providing support to employees and employers with developing and implementing accommodation plans

To learn more about different Job Accommodation Services, contact CNIB or **Vision Loss Rehabilitation.**

Coalition of Persons with Disabilities – Newfoundland and Labrador

The Coalition of Persons with Disabilities – Newfoundland and Labrador is a charitable, non-profit organization that is dedicated to educating businesses, organizations and others about the need and responsibility for supporting accessibility and inclusion.

The Coalition of Persons with Disabilities – Newfoundland and Labrador has created a **list of valuable resources** for job candidates/employees with disabilities and employers/prospective employers.

Hire for Talent

Hire for Talent is designed to support people with disabilities in developing their careers. It provides information about a number of employment topics, including legal rights, recruitment, hiring, and retention.

Disability Alliance BC

Disability Alliance BC is an organization that is dedicated to supporting people with disabilities. Disability Alliance BC has created a **Comprehensive Guide** to assist individuals with deciding how and when to disclose a disability to current or potential employers. While this guide was developed in British Columbia, it provides helpful, relevant guidance for people across Canada.

NEADS

The **National Educational Association of Disabled Students** (NEADS) is a Canadian charitable organization that supports full access to education and employment for students with disabilities. As part of its effort to support full access to education and employment, NEADS has developed resources including:

- A **comprehensive guide to understanding the rights of employees with disabilities** and the obligations of their employers to accommodate
- A web portal for jobs called **Breaking it Down**, which includes many resources, links, and articles for job seekers

- A booklet on the **Duty to Accommodate** (Word Doc)

Government of Alberta Careers Website

The Government of Alberta's Careers website includes many employment-related resources for people with disabilities. While this website was created in Alberta, it provides a lot of helpful practical advice for people across Canada.

Conference Board of Canada

The **Conference Board of Canada** is a not-for-profit research organization. It maintains a hub of resources to support **accessible employment practices** in Canada

CNIB Services (Non-Legal)

We're here to help – contact CNIB for more services, support, and resources. Some ways we can assist include:

- **CNIB Come to Work Program**
    - CNIB's **Come to Work Program** connects job seekers who are blind or partially sighted with prospective employers. To boost participation in the world of work, CNIB's Come to Work Program also provides the following services:
        - Helping you with resume writing, job searches and job retention
        - Helping you and your employer develop and implement a job accommodation plan
        - Providing employers and employment agencies with training and education about how to accommodate people who have sight loss
- **CNIB Mentoring Program**

- CNIB's Mentoring Program provides job seekers and employees with skills and strategies to effectively engage employers. Mentors answer your questions and share their firsthand experiences in the workplace.

- **CNIB Entrepreneur Program**
  - CNIB's Entrepreneur Program provides resources and inspiration to help people who are blind or partially sighted to succeed in their business venture.

- **CNIB's PREP (Practical Readiness for Employment and Post-Secondary) Program**
  - CNIB provides assistance with post-secondary education and employment planning, as well as ongoing support. To learn more about CNIB's PREP Program, you can contact CNIB's St. John's office by phone at 1-709-754-1180 or by email at infonl@cnib.ca.

- **CNIB Resources for Employers**
  - The CNIB Foundation has created the following resources for employers to make the workplace more accessible:
    - **Workplace accommodations**: Examples of tools and technologies that can be used to accommodate people with sight loss. This site also includes a link to some quick tips around creating an accessible workplace.
    - **Creating an inclusive workplace**: Simple tips about how to be comfortable and supportive of co-workers with sight loss.
    - **Hiring someone with sight loss:** Tips for employers around making the recruiting process (e.g. job advertisements, etc.) and interviews accessible to job candidates with sight loss.

- **CNIB Virtual Programs**
  - CNIB offers a range of free virtual programs for children, youth, adults and families.
  - You can access a list of CNIB's national virtual program offerings on **CNIB's website**.

- You can access a list and schedule of CNIB Newfoundland and Labrador's virtual program offerings on **CNIB – Newfoundland and Labrador's website**.

- **Technology Training**
  - Join CNIB tech leads from across the country for programming that highlights the suite of programs, apps, products and services that will help empower you to achieve your personal and professional goals.
- **Virtual Vision Mate**
  - The Virtual Vision Mate program exists to address the feelings of isolation that many people with sight loss experience. Through the Virtual Vision Mate program, Canadians who are blind or partially sighted are connected with sighted volunteers to engage in virtual, weekly conversations.
- **CNIB Online SmartLife Store**
  - CNIB SmartLife is an interactive retail experience that gives people with disabilities hands-on access to the latest breakthroughs in assistive technologies, as well as tried-and-true favourites.
  - SmartLife's goal is not necessarily to sell products but to give customers the skills and confidence they need to make the most out of assistive tools that can help them lead better lives.
- **CNIB's Advocacy Staff**
  - CNIB's Advocacy staff can assist clients with advocating for themselves and understanding their human rights in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- **CNIB's Guide Dog Program**
  - CNIB's Guide Dog Program can assist guide dog handlers with advocating for themselves and understanding their rights. This program also provides public education to organizations about the rights of guide dog users.

Vision Loss Rehabilitation

Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada (VLRC) is a not-for-profit national healthcare organization and the leading provider of rehabilitation therapy and healthcare services for individuals with sight loss. VLRC provides people with the practical skills they need to live safely and independently. VLRC's services are tailored to the unique needs and goals of each person. VLRC's services include, but are not limited to:

- Assistance with navigating new environments and using mobility tools
- Assistance with maximizing remaining vision with optical and non-optical devices
- Assistance with developing or restoring key daily living skills, such as learning new ways to cook, shop and manage your home
- Assistance with accessing information and using technology
- Assistance with post-secondary education and employment planning, and ongoing support

VLRC has offices located in St. John's, Grand Falls-Windsor, and Corner Brook. You can contact VLRC by phone at:

- St. John's or Grand Falls-Windsor Office - 709-754-1180
- Corner Brook Office - 709-639-9167 ext. 5850 or 5851

Wayfinding

Wayfinding refers to technological tools that assist partially sighted, blind and Deafblind persons with navigation and orientation. Such tools include:

- **BlindSquare**: a GPS-app developed for people with sight loss that describes the environment and announces points of interest and street intersections.
- **Key 2 Access**: a pedestrian mobility app that allows users to wirelessly request crossing at intersections without having to locate the button on the pole. It also allows users to wirelessly open doors and obtain information about indoor spaces.

- **Access Now**: a map application that shares accessibility information for locations based on users' feedback.
- **Be My Eyes**: a volunteer-based app that connects people with sight loss to sighted volunteers, who can assist with tasks such as checking expiry dates, distinguishing colors, reading instructions or navigating new surroundings.
- The **American Foundation for the Blind**, which provides an overview of some of the apps that are available to assist consumers with reading items such as product labels and menus.

cnib.ca | info@cnib.ca | 1-800-563-2642