INSTRUCTION SHEET

**A how-to guide for navigating the CDB Advocacy Toolkit**

**Reason for the toolkit**

It is essential that provinces and territories exempt the Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) from clawing back social assistance. This modification requires governments to add the CDB to the list of exempt unearned sources of income in the social assistance regulations. However, by default, social assistance will be clawed back if no action is taken.

To ensure that people with disabilities will receive the full value of the CDB, we need to request meetings with and advocate to provincial/territorial ministers, influential politicians, and senior civil servants.

This toolkit contains several documents meant to help you advocate and engage with government decision-makers to prevent clawbacks related to the new CDB in your province or territory. The documents are designed to be used together but may be used individually if it better suits your needs. We also encourage you to tailor the documents to your organization.

**Contents of the toolkit**

The toolkit contains:

1. Instruction Sheet [this document]
2. Contact List and FAQ [for all jurisdictions]
3. Letter to Government [specific to each province or territory]
4. Meeting Handout [specific to each province or territory]
5. Talking Points [general template]
6. Flyer [for a general audience]
7. Social Media Shareables [for a general audience]
8. Maytree Policy Brief on Benefit Interactions[for background]

**Purpose of each document**

The ***Contact List and FAQ*** document includes the contact information of relevant ministers, politicians, and civil servants in each province and territory. It also includes a list of frequently asked questions about the CDB and how it could interact with social assistance.

The ***Letter to Government***, the***Meeting Handout,*** and the ***Talking Points*** are intended to help guide your interactions and discussions with decision-makers.

The ***Letter to Government*** is a document to send to your provincial or territorial government that follows the same structure as the meeting handout, but is formatted as a letter with a call-to-action to prevent clawbacks from occurring.

The ***Meeting Handout***:

* Is not a script, but a document that you may hand to the person you are talking to; it contains evidence and the main arguments of this advocacy campaign. You can also send it by email in advance of your meeting;
* Overviews the state of poverty experienced by people with disabilities;
* Describes the CDB and its intended purpose; and
* Asks that government allow for recipients to get the full value of the CDB they are entitled to – in addition to their regular social assistance amount. This change will ensure that the CDB may serve as a top-up, not a replacement of existing social assistance benefits.

The ***Talking Points*** document***:***

* Is a succinct, narrative-based document complete with key talking points that can act as a loose script;
* Includes key messages for you to reference, to which you may personalize further using the information in this toolkit, stories of people with lived experience, or your own external knowledge.

The ***Flyer***and the ***Social Media Shareables*** are meant for a general audience. The flyer can be posted, emailed or handed out, and it is meant to explain the issues and solutions to anyone who may be interested. Similarly, the shareables can help inform people about the issue or encourage them to join the campaign.

The ***Maytree Policy Brief*** is included for additional background. Published in February 2024, it examines how the new CDB could and should interact with two existing disability income supports: social assistance and the Canada Pension Plan disability benefit (CPP-D).

**Tailoring the toolkit to your organization**

The ***Meeting Handout*** template and the ***Letter to Government*** template are incomplete when you download them. To make them complete, you need to add specific information about your organization. For example, there is a placeholder for the name and a brief description of your organization. We also encourage you to add additional arguments that are informed by the work of your organization, such as evidence from people with lived experience.

**Further resources to help you engage with government**

You can also refer to the following sources for tips on how to engage decision-makers in your advocacy work:

1. Resource #1: [*Lobbying is not a dirty word*](https://theonn.ca/2018/07/lobbying-is-not-a-dirty-word/) (Ontario Nonprofit Network)
2. Resource #2: [*Sparking change: 3 ways to engage in advocacy*](https://imaginecanada.ca/en/360/3-ways-to-engage-in-advocacy) (Imagine Canada)