

Ontario Election 2022

What are Ontario's political parties promising for people with disabilities?

Introduction

The Ontario provincial election will take place on June 2nd. In the runup to the election, Community Living Ontario is combing through Progressive Conservative, NDP, Liberal, and Green election platforms and highlighting promises that are relevant for people who have an intellectual disability, their families, and the agencies that support them.

As a registered charity, Community Living Ontario cannot support one political party over another, and nothing in this document should be seen as communicating support for a particular party. This is for information purposes only.

It is also good to keep in mind that these are *promises*, and unfortunately in politics promises are often broken.

It should also be noted that the parties' platforms are evolving and changing by the day. We will try our best to keep this document updated as they evolve.

What are the parties promising?

	Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario	Ontario NDP	Ontario Liberal Party	Green Party of Ontario
Where to find links to each party's election platform	While the PCs have not released an official election platform, their proposed 2022 budget can be seen as the party's list of promises for the province. The party is also posting updates at https://ontariopc.ca/ .	https://www.ontariondp.ca/platform	https://ontarioliberal.ca/platform/	https://files.ontariogreens.ca/platform/gpo-platform-2022-en-web.pdf
On Ontario Works and ODSP, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase ODSP benefits by 5%, and create legislation to increase ODSP annually, tied to inflation. - The party has also promised to extend the \$5.5 million Ontario Community Support Program (OCSP) by another year. The OCSP “delivers meals, medicine and other essential items to low-income seniors and people with disabilities.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immediately increase OW and ODSP rates by 20%, and increase rates again as the cost of living rises. - Establish a social assistance system that raises people out of poverty no later than the end of the party's first term. - Fix “unfair and disrespectful” rules for ODSP recipients (for example, the definition of ‘spouse’). - “Overhaul Ontario’s broken social assistance system through meaningful consultation and co-design with social assistance clients.” - Reintroduce the Basic Income Pilot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase ODSP benefits by 10% in 2022, and another 10% in 2023. - Increase Ontario Works benefits by 10% in 2022. - “Replace the current complex rate structure with an inflation-protected flat rate that treats everyone equally regardless of where or how they live.” - “Redefine ‘spouse’ to give new couples receiving social assistance more support.” - Allow people to earn \$6,000 per year in employment income without clawbacks, and calculate employment-related clawbacks on an annual rather than monthly basis. - Reintroduce the Basic Income Pilot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Double OW and ODSP rates “as a first step to implementing a Basic Income,” with future increases tied to inflation. - Reduce social assistance clawbacks and eliminate unnecessary red tape.
On wages and work, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the minimum wage to \$15.50 in 2022. - Expand the Low-income Individuals and Families Tax Credit (LIFT) to reduce the amount of income tax paid by lower income workers. - Add \$269 million over three years for skills training and employment programs through Employment Ontario, and \$114 million over three years in the province’s Skilled Trades Strategy (which includes dedicated funding for accessibility and accommodation needs). - Add \$16 million to the Skills Development Fund, to aid in developing and expanding training facilities to assist people to upgrade their skills. - Add \$7 million over three years to the Investing in Women’s Futures program, which offers employment training and other supports to women experiencing trauma and mental health issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the minimum wage to \$20 in 2026, with annual increases of \$1 per year after that. - Create <i>Ontario Benefits</i> to cover all workers including those in part-time, casual, app-based, or contract jobs. This basket of benefits will include dental care and vision coverage, and follow the person, not the job. - Legislate 10 permanent personal emergency leave days for all workers, so they can stay home if they are sick or are caring for a sick child. - “Make job training accessible province-wide by bringing job training opportunities to places where Ontarians actually live.” - Increase access to workforce training for “from equity deserving communities.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the minimum wage to \$16 per hour, and “develop a living wage that factors in the cost of living in different regions of the province.” - Create a portable benefits plan that any Ontarian can purchase, including access to prescription drugs, dental care, mental health care, and parental leave. Employers without a comparable plan would be required to enroll their staff in the plan. The plan would also cover “self-employed, gig, contract and creative workers.” - Guarantee 10 paid sick days “for all workers,” and offer employers \$200 per sick day taken. - “Create a \$1 billion fund for new programs and increase operating grants to colleges, universities and training schools.” - Increase training options for Indigenous, rural and remote Ontarians. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the minimum wage to \$16 in 2022, with larger increases in cities where the cost of living is higher. - Increase guaranteed paid sick days to ten per year, with financial support for small businesses. - Introduce a ‘Gig Workers’ Bill of Rights,’ as well as a “program of portable extended health benefits for workers in the gig economy, retail and hospitality sectors.” - Over four years, “give 60,000 people the skills and experience to work in the green economy through a year of free college tuition plus a year of guaranteed work when they graduate with targeted recruitment of women, Indigenous people, and racialized communities.”

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On housing, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce their More Homes for Everyone plan, which includes a focus on “access to financing for non-profit housing developers,” reducing barriers to increasing housing supply, and changing the building code to enable faster construction of new housing units. The plan includes \$1.3 billion per year in funding to municipalities for community housing and homelessness programs. - During their first term in office, the PCs also introduced a Community Housing Renewal Strategy, which incorporated several federal-provincial programs including the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit. - The PCs recently introduced a new homelessness prevention strategy, which is to be funded at \$464 million annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring back rent control for all apartments, and ensure that new tenants pay what the last tenant paid. - Extend the portable housing benefit for 311,000 households. - Establish a new public agency – Housing Ontario – to build affordable homes that are operated by public, non-profit and co-op agencies. - Build 250,000 new units of affordable housing. - Build 100,000 units of social housing over 10 years. - Build 30,000 new supportive housing units for people living with mental health and addiction challenges. - Implement a Housing First Strategy that “guarantees all Ontarians, regardless of income or ability, have access to safe, secure, and affordable housing to build a stable life.” - Renovate and renew 260,000 units of affordable community housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Work to establish housing as a fundamental human right in Ontario and provide people with safe and reliable shelter, as well as the robust wrap-around services they need to live with dignity and stability.” - Build “1.5 million new homes” over 10 years, including 138,000 “deeply affordable” homes, i.e., 78,000 new social and community homes, 38,000 homes in supportive housing, and 22,000 new homes for Indigenous peoples. - Add \$300 million over 5 years in housing-related funding for municipalities, and offer funding incentives to local governments that meet housing targets. - Provide the co-op housing sector with \$100 million over 10 years. - “Provide municipal and non-profit partners with \$360 million annually to operate and improve social, supportive and community housing services.” - “Create a new Ontario Home Building Corporation to finance and build new, affordable homes” that could only be sold to first-time buyers. - Reinstating rent controls across the province, and put larger fines in place for “negligent landlords.” - Promote a ‘Housing First’ approach to ending chronic homelessness that will quickly move people into independent, permanent housing with comprehensive supports. - Renovate and renew 260,000 units of affordable community housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Build 182,000 new permanently affordable community housing rental homes over the next decade, including 60,000 permanent supportive homes.” - Create a seed fund for co-operative housing through direct funding and mortgage support. - Require that at least 20% of units in housing projects “above a certain size” are affordable. - Renovate and renew 260,000 units of affordable community housing. “Provide nonprofit housing providers with the support and access to capital needed to purchase rental buildings to maintain affordability” permanently. - Reinstating rent controls on all rental units, and implement vacancy control to limit rent increases for new tenants. - Extend the portable housing benefit for 311,000 households. - “Deploy temporary and permanent supportive modular housing projects on provincially owned land as quickly as possible.” - “Utilise a Housing First model to ensure that stable, permanent housing solutions are the first priority when helping those in need.”

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On disability, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase funding for Passport, Special Services at Home, Enhanced Respite, Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities, and the Ontario Autism Program (the amount of these increases has not yet been announced). - Add \$15 million over three years to the Home and Vehicle Modification Program. - During their first term in office, the PCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Introduced a new strategy for developmental services, Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion. o Added \$361 million in annual funding to the developmental services sector, which is scheduled to grow to \$471 million in 2022-2023. o Spent about \$500 million per year on the Temporary Wage Enhancement for personal support workers and direct service workers, which was made permanent in April 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make the Ontario Autism Program fully needs-based, with no caps. Funding will be based “on a person’s needs rather than their age, with care following individuals as they get older.” - Fix the assistive devices program by increasing staffing and reducing wait times. - Work with the federal government to deliver a Canada Disability Benefit. - End the practice of forcing people to reapply for disability supports after turning 18. - Cut wait lists for services like respite care, employment training, life skills, and supportive housing. - Raise the age at which kids in child welfare age out of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Implement a needs-based Ontario Autism Program for every child, including Applied Behavioural Analysis, occupational therapy, mental health and speech and language pathology.” - Build “at least 2,500 more supportive homes for people with developmental disabilities.” - Increase Passport minimum funding to \$6,000 per year. - Make Special Services at Home funding more flexible. “Enhance funding and address price-gouging through the Assistive Devices Program for things like wheelchairs, hearing aids and lifts.” - Eliminate the requirement for medical certificates for basic mobility aids. - Introduce a new Minister for Disability Issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Address the growing waitlist for Ontario Autism Program (OAP) core services by building the capacity of autism providers, and fund the OAP to bring families into the program as rapidly as possible.” Ensure OAP funds grow with inflation and a growing population. - Create a new Ontario Disability Support Program “that would provide funding for therapeutic and respite services and supports for people with all disabilities, beginning with children and youth.” - Strengthen Accessibility Standards under the AODA to ensure the standards meet the needs of people with disabilities.
On education, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invest \$600 million in a Learning Recovery Action Plan. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o \$175 million in 2022-2023 for no-fee tutoring during and outside of school hours, both in-person and virtually. o A new Student Mental Health Strategy. o Some added funding for special education to support additional school staff and other resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase funding for students with disabilities, with funding based “on actual needs with timely needs assessments.” “This will mean overall funding increases for students with special educational needs, helping schools, teachers and education assistants give children the support they need.” - Hire more mental health workers and child and youth workers within the school system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hire an additional 5,000 special education workers – “adding one new special education worker to every school.” - Conduct a “comprehensive reform” of special education, and improve transitions from school into adult services. - “Reduce wait times for school services for students with autism.” - Cap class sizes at 20, and hire 10,000 additional teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a new funding formula that includes adequate funding for special education assistants and other supports. - Provide additional funding for schools to upgrade in order to meet AODA standards. - Offer multi-disciplinary training to educators to “help them address student sensory and behavioural issues and adopt teaching strategies that support students with a wide spectrum of accommodation needs.”

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On child care, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to work towards creating 86,000 new child care spaces to meet the demand that will follow the <i>Canada-Ontario Early Years and Child Care Agreement</i>. - Reduce child care fees by half by the end of 2022, and to \$10 per day by 2025. - The PCs also introduced the refundable Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses (CARE) credit in 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that all children with disabilities are provided with high-quality inclusive child care options that fit their circumstances. - Reduce fees for before and after school child care. - Increase the standard wage for child care workers to \$25 per hour for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), and \$20 per hour for all other program staff. - Develop a wage grid and decent work standards, including benefits and a pension, paid professional development, and a strategy to help child care workers upgrade their qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce \$10 per day before- and after-school child care by September 2022. - Continue the recently-signed <i>Canada-Ontario Early Years and Child Care Agreement</i>, which brings \$13 billion in federal funds into the province for child care. - Create 30,000 new jobs in child care. - Offer free tuition for all early childhood education programs in Ontario colleges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Work with the federal government to ensure continued funding for universal access to high-quality, \$10-a-day childcare in all communities.” - Provide early child care educators with wages of at least \$25 per hour.
On health care, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce several incentives for nurses to work in Ontario, including the <i>Learn and Stay Grant</i> and a \$5,000 retention bonus. - Completely refund tuition expenses for 1,500 nurses who commit to working for two years in “underserved communities.” - Add 8,000 new PSWs to the health system. - Invest \$27 billion over 10 years in capital investments to build and expand hospitals and community health centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand access to mental health counselling and therapy services across the province by bringing therapy services into OHIP. - Create <i>Mental Health Ontario</i>, a new organization that will identify and report on mental health needs, develop a comprehensive wait list for services, and bring in province-wide mental health standards. - Reduce the waitlist for children’s mental health to 30 days, with an investment of \$130 million over three years. - Provide an eight per cent funding increase for frontline mental health and addiction agencies, and provide ongoing ‘sustainable’ funding. - Introduce targeted hospital funding to increase the number of treatment beds for people with complex needs. - Hire 10,000 additional PSWs, and give PSWs a raise of at least \$5 above pre-pandemic levels. - Eliminate Bill 124, which caps salary increase for public sector workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eliminate “any ableist triage protocols to make it easier and safer for people with disabilities to navigate the health system.” - Hire 100,000 new health care workers, and “3,000 new mental health and addictions professionals, social workers, psychologists and psychotherapists.” - Create 15 new Community Health Centres. - Create 3,000 new hospital beds. - Cover prescription drug costs through a new portable benefits plan (see above). - Repeal Bill 124, which caps salary increase for public sector workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase mental health funding to reach 10% of the health care budget. - Include mental health and addiction care under OHIP, and ensure that related services are available across the province. - Reduce mental health wait times for youth to 30 days or less. - Increase funding to community mental health by 8%. - Implement universal dental care and pharmacare programs. - Increase the minimum wage for registered practical nurses to \$35 per hour. - Increase access to family health teams across the province. - Hire 30,000 additional nurses. - Increase base hospital funding by at least 5% annually. - Repeal Bill 124.

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On home care, the parties are promising to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invest “up to an additional \$1 billion over the next three years to expand home care, improve quality of care,” and support people to stay in their homes longer. This would bring the PCs new recent investments in home care to about \$1.6 billion over three years. - Introduce a new, refundable Ontario Seniors Care at Home Tax Credit for low- and moderate-income senior households. - The PCs also introduced the Ontario Seniors Home Safety Tax Credit in 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invest at least \$1 billion new dollars in home care over four years. - Increase home care service volumes by five per cent each year. - Establish provincial standards for home and community care services, and a core basket of services all Ontarians will be able to access. - Introduce a means-tested <i>Caregiver Benefit Program</i> that would provide \$400 a month to informal caregivers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Guarantee that any senior who needs care in their own home gets it by increasing the annual budget for home and community care by over \$2 billion.” - Fund the creation of 15,000 new “assisted living homes, including small, accessible and community-based residential services.” - Raise PSW base pay to \$25 per hour. - Ensure “fair and consistent pay across home and community care, long-term care and hospitals.” - Expand the Seniors’ Home Safety Tax Credit. - Make the Ontario Caregiver Tax Credit tax-free and refundable. - “Cover more costs for assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and lifts.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase funding for home care services by 20%. - Create a standard basket of home care services that “providers must make consistently available across the province.” - “Increase high-quality homecare options for those experiencing frailty, dementia, and disability.” - “Shift to entirely nonprofit homecare providers within the public system.” - Mandate that PSWs be paid a minimum of \$25 per hour, including for time travelled between visits. - Pilot a basic income program for unpaid caregivers.