

Disability Rights Are More Than Just a Single-Issue Vote

BC Elections Toolkit

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October 2026



Contents

1. About this toolkit.....	3
2. 2026 election at a glance	3
3. Investigating parties and their candidates.....	4
Step 1: Research Party platforms	4
Step 2: Research the candidates who will be on your local ballot	5
4. Searching for disability-related policy commitments	6
5. Advocacy priorities and questions to candidates	7
Income security	7
Accessible housing	8
Transportation	9
Healthcare.....	9
Inclusive education	10
6. Making all-candidates meetings accessible	11

1. About this toolkit

This elections toolkit is a non-partisan guide for the disability community in BC. As a registered charity, Disability Alliance BC does not endorse or oppose any political party or candidate. We encourage all voters to consider the issues that matter most to them.

People with disabilities are affected by policy and legislative decisions across every aspect of our society. Disability rights are therefore not a single-issue vote. This 2026 toolkit draws on our 2024 election priorities advocacy document, while expanding to reflect the latest advocacy we've done in recent years. We encourage you to use whichever advocacy priorities and questions that matter most to you, and we also welcome you to share any additional advocacy priorities you have for the disability community on our social media channels.

2. 2026 election at a glance

Final voting day is Saturday, October 24, 2026. Advance voting is October 16 - 21, 2026. Elections BC lists several ways to vote, including advance voting, final voting day, district electoral offices and vote-by-mail (the last day to request a mail voting package is October 18, 2026). Check Elections BC before making your voting plan because locations and operational details can change.

Accessible voting services currently listed by Elections BC include:

- Assisted telephone voting for voters who meet eligibility criteria, including certain voters with sight loss or a health condition that prevents voting by other means.
- Help marking a ballot from an election official, friend or family member.
- Uncontracted Braille candidate lists, Braille ballot templates and large-print ballot posters at voting places.
- Interpreters, including ASL, tactile-signing and tracking interpreters; Elections BC also lists Video Relay Service access.

- All advance voting places and most final voting day voting places are listed as physically accessible to voters using mobility devices. If a voter cannot enter, Elections BC says they can vote outside the building.

If you encounter a voting barrier, document what happened, how it affected your ability to participate, and what would have removed the barrier. Elections BC invites accessibility feedback by email, phone, TTY, Video Relay Service, fax, mail or in person.¹ If the barrier occurs at an all-candidates meeting rather than during the voting process, contact the organizer directly.

DABC's additional accessible voting recommendations

In our 2024 election priorities document, we called for additional measures to make voting more accessible:

- Provide vote-by-mail ballots in accessible formats.
- Provide quiet, sensory-friendly rooms at polling places.
- Ensure all polling places have designated accessible parking.
- Create an option for in-person voting at home through election outreach workers for voters who cannot otherwise attend in person

3. Investigating parties and their candidates

Step 1: Research Party platforms

There are 10 political parties campaigning in the provincial general election.² Each party may or may not have a published platform. Please find below a list of these parties and their available campaign platforms.

- BC NDP: <https://www.bcndp.ca/action-for-you>
- Conservative Party of British Columbia: <https://conservativebc.ca/plan/>
- BC Green Party: <https://bcgreens.ca/our-plan/>

¹ <https://elections.bc.ca/voting/outreach-and-education/accessibility-feedback/>

² <https://elections.bc.ca/news/candidates-finalized-for-british-columbias-44th-provincial-general-election/?utm>

- CentreBC: <https://www.centrebc.ca/our-policy/>
- OneBC: <https://1bc.ca/priorities>
- Communist Party of BC: <https://cpcbc.ca/our-platform/>
- Christian Heritage Party of BC: <https://www.chpbc.ca/platform-priorities/>
- BC Libertarian Party: <https://libertarian.bc.ca/2026-platform/>
- Freedom Party of BC: <https://freedompartybc.ca/>
- CanWest Party: <http://canwestparty.ca/mission.htm>

Elections BC also has a webpage that allows users to track party platforms based on certain topics, such as housing, Indigenous relations, affordability and taxes, etc. Find more here: <https://bcelectionguide.ca/parties/>

Step 2: Research the candidates who will be on your local ballot

Not all political parties listed in Step 1 will show up on your ballot. Some candidates may be running as an Independent, meaning that they are not affiliated with any political party. Candidate nominations closed October 3, 2026, so Elections BC's candidate list is up to date:

<https://www3.elections.bc.ca/2026-provincial-election/candidate-list/>

Next is to find candidates' websites and social media accounts. Elections BC does not maintain a directory of this; however, there are some non-partisan websites like VoteMate which have attempted to gather this information: <https://votemate.org/bc2026provincial>

For candidates who are incumbents, past voting records can help you compare campaign promises with past actions. There are non-partisan websites like BC Ballot which have recorded this information:

<https://bcballot.ca/mlas/>

4. Searching for disability-related policy commitments

The following features can help voters identify whether a platform is likely to produce meaningful change for people with disabilities. A good platform will:

- Have wording that treats disabled people as rights-holders and full participants in society
- Give specific details on how law or policy will change for the benefit of people with disabilities
- Identify stable and long-term funding for their proposed changes
- Provide a timeline for when their proposed changes will take effect
- Include meaningful involvement of the disability community in the design of their proposed changes
- Consider the intersectionality of disability with other equity-denied groups
- Detail the practical elements of their proposed changes in terms of how they will affect people with disabilities in real life
- Explain if their proposed changes are under provincial jurisdiction, rather than shifting responsibility to another level of government.

Red flags

- A broad statement such as “we support accessibility/disability inclusion” with no policy, timeline or funding attached
- A one-time rebate presented as a solution to a systemic, ongoing problem
- A tax credit as a response to a problem affecting people with little or no taxable income
- A housing commitment that does not address affordability and accessibility
- A service model with no accessible alternatives
- A promise to consult people with disabilities only after the policy has already been designed

- Policy language that further perpetuates harmful stereotypes of people with disabilities.

5. Advocacy priorities and questions to candidates

Income security

Recommended Actions:

- Increase PWD income to a standard living amount and legislatively index rates to inflation
- Remove or substantially reform claw-backs that penalize people for receiving Employment Insurance or having spousal income
- Reform earnings exemptions so that people on PWD who can work are not punished for participating in the labour market
- Advance accessible employment services and workplaces, including enforcement of accommodation rights
- Design a more inclusive child and youth disability assistance program so families do not face unnecessary barriers to financial support
- Establish a supportive transition pathway to adulthood before youth with disabilities age out of services.

Questions to Candidates

- Will your party commit to raising PWD income and indexing to inflation so that people with disabilities are not forced to live in poverty?
 - What specific rate will you use?
- Will your party remove the claw-back of Employment Insurance and spousal income from PWD?
 - If not, what change will you make to ensure a disabled person does not lose financial independence because of a partner's income or because they access EI that they paid into?
- What will your party do to ensure PWD rules support, rather than penalize, people with disabilities who are able to work?
 - Will you review earnings exemptions?

- How will your government enforce accessible employment and the duty to accommodate across the public and private sectors?
- How will you prevent children and youth with disabilities from falling off a “services cliff” when they turn 18?

Accessible housing

Recommended Actions:

- Establish a dedicated rental subsidy for low-income people with disabilities, including people who need to pay more to find accessible housing
- Allocate dedicated funding for accessibility retrofits in existing social, non-profit and private rental housing
- Introduce building plans that will build more affordable, accessible two-, three- and four-bedroom homes so families are not excluded from accessible housing
- Create legislation that preserves scarce accessible units for people who need them
- Ensure meaningful involvement of disabled people in the design and development of housing.

Questions to Candidates³

- How many new affordable, accessible homes will your housing plan produce, and how will you make sure those units are actually matched to people who need accessible features?
- Will your party create a dedicated accessibility retrofit program and a rental subsidy for low-income disabled renters?
 - Who would qualify, what costs would be covered, and when would the program begin?
- What will you do to increase family-sized accessible housing?
- A single person on PWD receives up to \$500 per month for shelter, while renting a room can cost more than double that

³ We also encourage you to check out <https://accessiblehousingpledge.ca/> for further advocacy points developed by Aspen Alliance for Accessibility

amount. What specific steps would you and your party take to close the gap between the PWD shelter amount and the actual cost of housing?⁴

Transportation

Recommended Actions:

- Integrate HandyDART into the provincial bus pass program so eligible low-income riders are not charged extra because they cannot use conventional transit
- Improve public accountability for HandyDART and support reliable service that meets demand;
- Require drivers of accessible taxis and ride-hailing services to have effective accessibility training, non-discriminatory pricing, a transparent and formal complaints processes and non-digital booking options.

Questions to Candidates

- Will your party include HandyDART in the provincial bus pass program and improve accountability for HandyDART services?
 - What changes will you make to fares, governance and service standards, and on what timeline?
- How will you make taxis and ride-hailing services reliably accessible to people with disabilities across BC?

Healthcare

Recommended Actions:

- Create a comprehensive provincial Assistive Devices Program that provides coverage for medical equipment and assistive devices, available to people beyond those receiving PWD, with an immediate focus on other low-income disabled people such as low-income disabled seniors and people on Canada Pension Plan-Disability (CPP-D) income

⁴ This question has been drafted in partnership with the Victoria Disability Resource Centre

- Improve access to and coverage for home care and home support so people can live and age independently in their home rather than enter long-term care facilities
- Expand access to counselling and mental-health supports through MSP
- Develop standardized continuity planning for home support, medical equipment, power-dependent devices and essential health services during climate and public health emergencies.

Questions to Candidates

- Will your party establish a comprehensive provincial coverage program for assistive devices and medical equipment?
 - Who will be eligible beyond PWD recipients, what equipment will be covered, and will repairs, replacement and maintenance be included?
- What will you do to expand home support and home care so people with disabilities can live safely and independently in the community?
- How will your healthcare plan increase access to mental-health supports?
- How will your party ensure people with disabilities are included in emergency planning before the next climate or public-health emergency?

Inclusive education

Recommended Actions:

- Ensure school districts meet obligations to inclusive education and do not use exclusion as a routine response to unmet needs
- Fund educational assistants, communication supports, accessible learning materials, specialized services and other accommodations based on student need.

Question to Candidates

- What will your party do to stop the exclusion of students with disabilities from public schools because appropriate supports are unavailable?

6. Making all-candidates meetings accessible

Here is what organizing bodies can do to make sure their all-candidates meetings are accessible:

Built environment: Step-free entrance; accessible washroom; accessible seating dispersed throughout the room; space for mobility devices; accessible stage as needed; designated accessible parking where available

Communication access: Microphones for every speaker; CART/live captions; ASL interpretation; hearing loop systems; clear sightlines; written questions accepted

Information access: Accessible webpage; large-print copies; plain-language information; materials sent in advance; captioned recordings

Sensory access: A quiet or low-stimulation area; clear lighting; fragrance-free space; permission to enter/leave without disruption

Participation options: Hybrid/online access where feasible; telephone or written question submission; support persons welcome; flexible question-submission process

Timing and breaks: Breaks for longer events; sufficient time for discussion, inclusive of captioners and ASL interpreters

Transparency: Publish accessibility information with the event notice and give a contact for accommodation requests.