

Toolkit Overview

*An Integrated Set of Evidence-Based Resources for Canadian Employers,
Researchers, and Policy Makers*

Research Team

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A WORBE Project Deliverable

About this toolkit

This toolkit brings together the deliverables of the Building Employment Pathways for People with Disabilities Project, funded by Employment and Social Development Canada through the Workplace Opportunities: Removing Barriers to Equity (WORBE) programme. The project grant was awarded to the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), with the guideline development component led by a research team drawn from Nipissing University, Ontario Tech University, York University, and Durham College.

The toolkit responds to a documented gap in the field. A systematic review of nearly 4,900 published records and a parallel search of international grey literature confirmed that no rigorously developed, evidence-based employer guideline on disability employment practices has been produced, despite decades of disability rights legislation and employer-directed guidance across multiple countries. In response, the research team applied convergence analysis to the body of Canadian grey literature published by federal departments, provincial and territorial human rights commissions, accessibility offices, and national disability organizations. The result is a coordinated set of resources designed to be used together: an evidence-based employer guide, the academic methods report that documents how it was developed, eight standalone fact sheets that allow employers to access the recommendations for a single domain without working through the full guide, and a case studies companion that illustrates how an employer would apply the recommendations to a real workplace situation.

The toolkit serves multiple audiences. Employers, HR professionals, and hiring managers can use the employer guide, the fact sheets, and the case studies as direct, practical resources. Researchers, evaluators, and policy analysts can use the academic methods report to evaluate the rigour of the synthesis or to build on it. Senior leaders and accreditation reviewers can use the toolkit as a whole to assess whether their organization's disability employment practices align with the strongest available Canadian evidence.

What's in this toolkit

The toolkit comprises 11 documents. Each document is described below, with the filename, intended audience, and guidance on when to reach for it.

An Employer Guide to Disability Employment Practices in Canada

File: An_Employer_Guide_to_Disability_Employment_Practices_in_Canada_May2026.pdf

The flagship practical document. Presents 90 evidence-based recommendations across eight domains of the employment lifecycle: Recruitment, Interviewing, Hiring, Onboarding, Accommodation, Return to Work, Career Advancement, and Retention and Inclusive Culture. Each recommendation is traceable to its source documents and accompanied by a convergence classification, a CRAAP quality assessment, and jurisdictional notes indicating where the practice reflects a legal obligation. Intended for HR professionals, hiring managers, supervisors, and organizational leaders. Reach for the full guide when you need the complete evidence base, the source documents supporting a recommendation, or the jurisdictional notes identifying legal requirements.

A Convergence Synthesis of Canadian Grey Literature on Employer Disability Employment Practices: Methods, Evidence, and Recommendations

File: Convergence_Synthesis_Academic_Report.pdf

The methodological companion to the employer guide. Documents the systematic search strategy, eligibility criteria, the convergence analysis methodology, the CRAAP quality appraisal framework, and the full evidence base from which the recommendations are derived. Intended for researchers, evaluators, policy analysts, and accreditation reviewers. Reach for this report when you need to understand how the recommendations were developed, when you need to evaluate or defend the rigour of the synthesis, or when you are building on the work for further research or policy development.

Eight Fact Sheets (one per domain)

Eight standalone documents, each covering one domain of the employment lifecycle. Each fact sheet contains the recommendations for its domain in condensed form, with brief framing of the project and the convergence synthesis methodology. Intended for employers and HR practitioners who need quick access to recommendations for a specific practice area without working through the full guide. Reach for the relevant fact sheet first; consult the corresponding chapter of the employer guide when you need full source lists, jurisdictional notes, or the complete recommendation text.

Fact Sheet 1: Recruitment (*Factsheet_01_Recruitment.pdf*)

Fact Sheet 2: Interviewing (*Factsheet_02_Interviewing.pdf*)

Fact Sheet 3: Hiring (*Factsheet_03_Hiring.pdf*)

Fact Sheet 4: Onboarding (*Factsheet_04_Onboarding.pdf*)

Fact Sheet 5: Accommodation (*Factsheet_05_Accommodation.pdf*)

Fact Sheet 6: Return to Work (*Factsheet_06_Return_to_Work.pdf*)

Fact Sheet 7: Career Advancement (*Factsheet_07_Career_Advancement.pdf*)

Fact Sheet 8: Retention and Inclusive Culture (*Factsheet_08_Retention_and_Inclusive_Culture.pdf*)

Case Studies: Applying Evidence-Based Disability Employment Practices to Real Employer Situations

File: Case_Studies_Companion.pdf

Four worked scenarios illustrating how an employer with a particular issue would use the toolkit to support their practice. Two scenarios cover hiring: a small non-profit making its first deliberately inclusive hire, and a mid-sized professional services firm reviewing its hiring practices after a human rights complaint about an inaccessible application portal. Two scenarios cover retention: a small contracting business handling graduated return-to-work for an injured tradesperson, and a large public sector organization bringing consistency to accommodation across departments. Intended for employers who learn best from concrete examples, for HR teams developing training materials, and for any reader looking to see the recommendations applied in sequence.

How to use this toolkit

Different readers will enter the toolkit at different points. The following pathways suggest a logical starting place and route through the documents for each main type of user.

Employers, HR professionals, and hiring managers

Start with the fact sheet for the practice area you are working on. Each fact sheet contains the recommendations and a brief account of how they were developed. If you need full source documentation, jurisdictional notes, or the complete recommendation text, consult the corresponding chapter of the employer guide. If you want to see how the recommendations apply to a workplace situation similar to yours, the case studies companion offers four worked scenarios spanning small business, mid-sized firm, and large public sector contexts.

Senior leaders, executives, and board members

Start with the preface and introduction of the employer guide to understand the project's scope, methodology, and rationale. Review the introductory framing of each fact sheet for the eight practice domains to identify priority areas for your organization. The case studies offer a sense of how the recommendations translate to operational change.

Researchers, evaluators, and policy analysts

Start with the academic methods report, which documents the systematic search, the convergence analysis methodology, the quality appraisal framework, and the full evidence base. Cross-reference with the employer guide for the synthesized recommendations and their jurisdictional implications. The fact sheets demonstrate how the recommendations are translated for end users.

Accreditation reviewers, auditors, and human rights commissions

The academic methods report establishes the rigour of the synthesis and documents the evidence base. The employer guide presents the recommendations with jurisdictional notes identifying where each practice reflects a legal obligation. The fact sheets and case studies provide accessible reference material that can support organizational self-assessment against the recommendations.

Trainers, instructors, and faculty

The case studies companion is the most direct entry point for training and instructional contexts. The fact sheets work well as assigned readings for sessions focused on a single domain. The employer guide serves as a comprehensive reference, and the academic methods report supports graduate or professional-level instruction on evidence synthesis methods.

Citing the toolkit

For the toolkit as a whole:

Anyinam, C., Coffey, S., Da Silva, C., Graham, L., & Godin-Jacques, C. (2026). Building Employment Pathways for People with Disabilities: An evidence-based toolkit on disability employment practices in Canada. Building Employment Pathways for People with Disabilities Project, National Educational Association of Disabled Students.

Each component of the toolkit also carries its own suggested citation, provided within the respective document.

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