

THE DISABILITY POLICY LENS (2nd ed.)

The Disability Policy Lens was developed to assist scholars, policy-makers & advocates to analyze policy affecting people with disabilities in Canada. The 7 questions take readers through a process of considering the implications for people with disabilities of specific policies. The Lens is unique in that it is brief, and non-prescriptive. There are no correct or incorrect answers to these questions, but each has important implications that should be carefully considered when creating or amending policy.

1. Does the policy specifically mention people with disabilities? Has explicit consideration been afforded to the consequences for people with disabilities?
2. If so, how is disability defined? Who is considered “disabled” according to the policy? Does the policy refer specifically to people with:
 - physical, cognitive, sensory or mental illness-related disabilities?
 - permanent, long-standing, temporary or episodic disabilities?
 - severe, moderate or mild disabilities?Who is considered eligible for consideration under the policy? Who is included / excluded, and who decides who qualifies as disabled?
3. Which of the following 3 aims does the policy seek to achieve?
 - a. **Access** – ability to participate
 - b. **Support** – resources to address special needs
 - c. **Equity** – freedom from discriminationIf the goal is equity, does the policy define equity as:
 - *Outcome equity* – whatever it takes to achieve equal outcomes with non-disabled;
 - *Vertical equity* – special considerations to create equal opportunity for disabled people;
 - *Horizontal equity* – equal treatment; that is, the same as everyone else.
4. Does the policy view disabled people as members of a minority group with special needs, or as one of the many citizen groups whose issues must be considered in establishing policy? As individual rights holders, or as members of the collective responsible for the good of the whole population?
5. How does the policy relate to other policies (for a survey of legislation, regulations, programs related to disability in Canada, [Click here](#))
 - a. within the jurisdiction – in the same Ministry, in other Ministries (including both disability-specific and non-disability-specific policy)?
 - b. in other jurisdictions -- national, provincial, regional, municipal?
6. How is the allocation of scarce resources affected by this policy? Who wins and who loses when this policy is implemented? What would be the impact on: other disability groups; business / private sector; other minority groups; other citizens generally / taxpayers?
7. How did this policy come into effect? What is the history associated with it? Who were the champions / detractors? Where might one anticipate support / opposition?