



# Disability Rights Coalition of Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Disability Rights are Human Rights

Web: [www.disabilityrightscoalitionns.ca](http://www.disabilityrightscoalitionns.ca)

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## **The Disability Rights Coalition Calls for Strong Government Action to Meet Human Rights Remedy Timelines**

The Disability Rights Coalition is calling for strong Provincial Government action to catch up on legally-binding deadlines in the Human Rights Remedy regarding the Disability Support Program.

In October 2021, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal ruled that the Province engages in systemic discrimination against persons with disabilities. The timelines in the Human Rights Remedy to fix the ongoing discrimination were agreed to by the Province and form part of a legally binding order from a Human Rights Commission Board of Inquiry.

The Disability Rights Coalition appreciates the hard work that has been done by Disability Support Program staff to put the infrastructure in place for the Remedy. This work has led to some successes, such as a significant reduction in the waitlist for the Program. However, the Disability Rights Coalition acknowledges the work that remains to be done to implement the Remedy.

In its [most recent progress report and documentation](#), released on May 31<sup>st</sup> and now posted to the NS Human Rights Commission website, the Province acknowledged falling behind on several critical, court-mandated targets in the Remedy, including:

- Only about two-thirds of the number of individuals who were supposed to have left segregated institutions for persons with disabilities by this point in the remedy have done so.
- Virtually no progress has been made in moving adults under the age of 65 out of long-term care facilities. There are now 476 adults under 65 living in long-term care facilities, compared to 424 at the start of the Remedy. Only 6% of the spaces that were supposed to be created in a program jointly created by the Disability Support Program and the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care to transition these adults to community-based settings have been created.
- The Province is significantly behind the benchmarks in the remedy for the creation of new support options for community-based living. For instance, 0 spaces of 240 required have been created in a new program for community-based living called Home Share.
- The Province has fallen well behind requirements for the recruitment of staff for the Disability Support Program. The Province has hired 52% of the staff into a role required by the Remedy called “Local Area Coordinators,” and 37% of the staff required to fill a role referred to in the Remedy as “Intensive Planning and Support Coordinators.”

Victoria Levack, Director and spokesperson for the Disability Rights Coalition, stated:

“While the Disability Support Program is leading the work on the Remedy, the Human Rights Complaint was against the Provincial Government as a whole. Urgent efforts are required from all the Provincial Government Departments which have important roles to play in the Remedy.

The Province has struggled to create the health services in community-based settings needed to allow persons with disabilities to leave institutions. We call on the Premier to make sure that establishing the community-based health services required for the Remedy is a top priority for all the branches of the Provincial Government involved in this effort, including the Department of Health, Nova Scotia Health, and the Office of Mental Health and Addictions.”

Kim Long, the Vice-Chair for the Disability Rights Coalition’s Board of Directors, stated:

“The Disability Rights Coalition knows that recruitment of staff has been another significant reason why the Province has fallen behind of meeting the Remedy targets. We understand that the Province has a recruitment strategy to hire the staff required to implement the Remedy. We encourage the Province to pursue this strategy with the urgency it demands.

The Premier [issued a historic apology](#) to persons with disabilities and committed to urgently remedy the discrimination. We ask the Premier to show the strong leadership necessary to make the Remedy a priority for all involved Provincial Government Departments. We know this collaboration will be necessary to make the Remedy a success.”

The Disability Rights Coalition will be filing its formal response to the Province’s Annual Report to the Expert Monitor overseeing the Remedy’s progress by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

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