

Do the Rights Thing: Deaf and Disabled Women, Gender-Diverse People, and the World of Work

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Plain Language Executive Summary

A job can help people feel included and independent. But not everyone has equal access to work. Deaf and disabled women are often left out of the workforce in Canada. The same is true for gender-diverse people.

This paper looks at barriers. These barriers make it hard for Deaf and disabled women and gender-diverse people to get and keep jobs. These barriers can be physical or cultural.

A big physical barrier is transportation. People need to have a way to get to and from a job. But transportation is not accessible everywhere in Canada. It is not reliable. It can cost a lot of money.

It can also be dangerous for women and gender-diverse people. They may be exposed to more violence because they can't access transportation. They may be more isolated. They may live in poverty because they cannot get a job without transportation.

This paper also looks at cultural barriers. One of these cultural barriers is the belief in the 'ideal' worker. The 'ideal' worker is someone who is always available,

fast and able-bodied. This idea is ableist. It makes it harder for people with different abilities. They are not seen as productive or capable workers.

These barriers need to be removed. Employment needs to be more inclusive. There needs to be inclusive policies and practices. These need to include Deaf and disabled women and gender-diverse people. Fair and accessible workplaces are good for everyone – workers, employers and society.

This paper includes a business case. This shows why hiring Deaf, disabled and gender-diverse people makes sense. It shares actions that different groups can take to improve workplace access and inclusion. These actions can be taken by employers, co-workers, community groups, and self-advocates. The business case also highlights real examples of programs and supports that have helped.

The goal of this paper is to empower advocacy and to develop strategies that are meaningful. This will support Deaf and disabled women and gender-diverse people to be able to navigate the world of work.