

# Annual Report 2024-2025



# Table of Contents

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Empower Overview .....	3
Chairperson’s Report .....	4
Executive Director’s Report.....	7
Financial Advisor’s Report .....	10
IL Canada NL Provincial Representative Report .....	11
Empower Annual Services .....	14
Advocacy Services Report .....	19
Member Services Report .....	25
Career Services .....	29
Community Inclusion Services .....	31
InclusionNL: Corporate Services.....	42
Annual General Meeting Minutes 2024 .....	46
Financial Statements.....	51



# Empower Overview

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- Transition from the Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC) to Empower, the Disability Resource Centre on April 1, 2016
- Transition from Civic #4 to The Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC) in 1997-1998
- Accredited member of IL Canada
- Not-for-profit cross disability organization
- 16 full-time staff and 35-40 project staff throughout the year

## Mission Statement

Empower is a consumer-controlled, non-profit organization that provides leadership in the delivery of cross-disability services and supports while promoting a more inclusive society within Newfoundland and Labrador.

## Independent Living

“Independence is not measured by the quality of tasks we can perform without support, but by the quality of life we can have with support.”

Independent Living is:

- Having a choice
- Making decisions
- Taking risks
- Taking responsibility
- Having control of one’s own life

At Empower, the Disability Resource Centre, we break barriers every day. Barriers to access. To knowledge. To choices. Anyone with a disability can use our services. And anyone can help, through volunteering, donations, or even a career with Empower. Empower is a vital part of our community, and the need for our services is growing. With your support, you will be helping even more people find their path to independent living.

# Chairperson's Report

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The EmpowerNL team, under the leadership and direction of Kathy Hawkins, Executive Director, continues to advance ways and means to support our membership and many consumers who access the variety of services offered through Empower, The Disability Resource Centre. Thank you to Kathy and the outstanding staff team. Your dedication, commitment, and support have been second to none - we could not do what we do without you.

You will read how the services provided to our members have continued to grow. Staff reach out to members continually to understand their needs and seek their feedback on the quality of our services whenever they meet with one of our staff. Within our membership, 94.9% of members self-identify as having a disability. The majority of these individuals are between the ages of 40 and 59, followed closely by those 18 to 39. This is important information to ensure EmpowerNL is meeting the needs of its members.

The detailed information provided in this report by members of the EmpowerNL team highlights the work completed in 2024-2025. Activities in Members' Services, Technology Services, Advocacy Services, Housing Services, in collaboration with End Homelessness St. John's, and corporate services offered by InclusionNL, reach members, consumers, employers and the community, supporting housing, health care, mental health, and social skills. As our services continue to grow, we will respond to members' needs by offering new services as demand increases.

While our budgets have been reduced during this past year, we have been innovative in securing project-based funding to offer various initiatives throughout this year. With funding received through Women and Gender Equality, we were able to host a series of peer support sessions on Gender

Based Violence, including hosting a sweat lodge in collaboration with the Chief and members of the Innu first nations in Sheshatshiu, a session in partnership with the Multicultural Women's Organization of NL, the Hummingbird Network of DAWN Canada, and members of EmpowerNL. We were pleased to receive government funding from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for continued operational financing. In addition, the Community Inclusion Services and Career Services programs have been confirmed for funding. InclusionNL funding for corporate services remains outstanding, even though we have submitted proposals requesting continued support. We have been successful in creating social enterprise activities with the work of InclusionNL and anticipate this line of revenue growing in the upcoming fiscal year. We sincerely appreciate our government and funding partners for this financial support. Without this funding, our programs and services could not be maintained.

The Board continues working diligently to explore funding options for necessary building repairs and maintenance from our fixed budgets. This upcoming year, we will focus on improvements and upgrades to the exterior of our building. Special thanks to our Finance Officer, Melanie Grandy, for always having the answers to our range of finance questions.

During this year, the Board worked on our Strategic Plan 2024-2027 to ensure our directives and goals were met for this fiscal year, and underwent an extensive Board Development with the expertise of Coastline Consultants. Through this process, we have completed a jurisdictional review of IL Centres across Canada, reviewed bylaws of other Centres, and provided opportunities to identify skill assets for our Board.

The Governance & Nomination Committee has completed a revamp of our IL Awards, adding categories of awards and reviewing the current roster of ones we provide. We are looking forward to releasing our Nomination form for the IL Awards soon. Our Occupational Health & Safety Committee has

met regularly and has implemented several safety procedures for our employees and building, and the Human Resources Committee has been working on employee policies and a performance review of our Executive Director.

In closing, I extend my sincerest thanks to the EmpowerNL team, the dedicated Board Members, and all our volunteers who make progress and success possible! I also wish to recognize the services of Andrea Smith, who left our Board during this year. I would also like to thank HR Committee member Amanda Brace for all your work on our HR Committee. As your Board Chairperson, I am incredibly grateful for your commitment and dedication.

Respectfully,



Paul Morgan  
Chairperson



# Executive Director's Report

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The team of EmpowerNL has had a hectic year with the delivery of programs and services. We continue to meet the needs of our membership, as you'll read in this Annual Report.

Since last year, we have developed a new membership system at Empower. Now we are providing services to our active membership of close to 300 people and provide ongoing information and resources to those who have signed on for information purposes only. We are looking forward to growing these services in the upcoming year and developing strategies to stay connected to members who live throughout the province.

Activities at EmpowerNL are in full motion. We have hosted several events and have introduced new activities to support members' engagement with our services. The Members Services Report highlights these new groups and activities offered throughout the year.

As highlighted in our Chairperson's report, the Governance and Nomination Committee worked diligently to revamp our IL Awards this year, and we are looking forward to introducing them to our members soon. Our Christmas Dinner and Dance, held in early December at the CLB Armoury, was very well attended and a big success. Thank you to all those who worked diligently to make it happen.

This year, we recognized our volunteers in the Spring with a brunch at EmpowerNL catered by Barding House Catering. It was great to bring together all our volunteers from activities and events throughout the year and recognize the work that has been accomplished.





In April of this fiscal year, with funds received from Women's Economic Council 50-30 Challenge, InclusionNL hosted a sold-out Accessibility Symposium for businesses and employers to learn more about breaking down barriers in the workplace. Many leaders came together to participate and learn from key experts about Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility in the work environments. Areas of discussion included accessibility from lived experiences with our keynote speaker, author and member Tara Nanayakkara, as well as digital accessibility and diversity practices. Participants left equipped with an accessibility toolkit to use in their daily work practices and a network of key stakeholders keen on creating accessible spaces within our province.

Our Members have participated in many types of activities throughout the city, many of them hosted by the City of St. John's. At the same time many



new activities have been hosted here at the Centre, including groups such as Skills Development and Creative Snacks, Virtual Touring around the Globe, our Book Club and Reading Club hosted at the Library, as well as the Walking Club. Members attended festivities at the Frosty and Folk Festivals, Regatta Day, the Tuckamore Festival and many other festivals throughout the city.

Our Board of Directors and Standing Committees have been very busy throughout this past year, and we are extremely fortunate to have such a strong Board that understands our work and the Independent Living philosophies that govern our work on developing policies and practices to guide us. Thank you to each of our Board Members and especially our Board Chairperson, Paul Morgan.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kathy Hawkins  
Executive Director



International Association  
of Accessibility Professionals

MEMBER

## Financial Advisor's Report

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I am delighted to provide the Financial Advisor's Report to Empower, The Disability Resource Centre's membership.

I am pleased to advise that Beacon Accounting Professional Corporation has audited the financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, without issue. Per those audited financial statements, EmpowerNL's total revenue was \$1,221,327, and the total expenditures for the year were \$1,241,824. The net result for this fiscal year's operations was a deficit of \$20,497.

I would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the various provincial government departments that provide ongoing financial support to EmpowerNL. As well, a heartfelt thank you to all our financial patrons and funders. Your generous contributions to Empower enable us to provide the services that support people with disabilities in achieving their independence and to promote the philosophy of Independent Living.

Finally, I'd like to thank the staff and volunteers at EmpowerNL. Your commitment and dedication to Empower and its work allow us to continue to provide the vitally important services that make our communities accessible and inclusive.



Renee March, Financial Advisor

# IL Canada NL Provincial Representative Report

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Founded in 1986 by the Independent Living Movement Membership, Independent Living Canada (formerly the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres) represents the network of IL Member Centres at the national level. IL Canada performs several functions on behalf of Member Centres, including providing a collective voice on national issues, fostering and maintaining partnerships, building the capacity and scale of Independent Living in Canada, and preserving the integrity and importance of Independent Living in Canada on the national stage.

Managed entirely by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of Provincial Representatives from across Canada, the IL Canada Board of Directors has continued to reinforce our commitment to people with disabilities and our 24 Member Centres across Canada. For IL Canada, the Centres, and our consumers, it has been a year of growth and development.

This is my second year as the NL Representative for Empower, The Disability Resource Centre. For 2024-2025, Diane Krueger became Chairperson of the Board, Robin East as 1st Vice Chairperson and Pierre Hamelin as 2nd Vice Chairperson, myself as Secretary, and Suzanne Larocque as Treasurer. Our Directors/Members at Large include Sebastian Duguay-Nardini (NB Rep), Robin East (SK Rep), Pierre Hamelin (QC Rep), Vicky Levack (NS Rep), Beth Caskey (BC Rep), Janet Redmond (ON Rep), Tyler Cooley (Youth Rep), Kathy Hawkins (Member at Large), Marie Lacroque (Member at Large) and Teresa Bullegas (Member at Large).

I was pleased to attend the face-to-face meetings of our board in Toronto in May and will be attending our AGM in Ottawa in September. As a member of the Executive, I've had the opportunity to truly understand the mission and values of Independent Living Canada.



This year, we hired a new national Executive Director, Freda Uwa and a new Executive Assistant, Kohl Gray. Freda is a leader with extensive experience in accessibility, mental health, and project management, informed by her lived experience and professional expertise. Her leadership within the Independent Living Canada network brings a forceful voice on behalf of all Canadians with disabilities. Her tireless efforts to ensure accessibility, inclusion and dignity for all is best witnessed in her genuine approach and perseverance in pursuing the issues that matter most to persons with disabilities.

Having attained multiple academic honours including degrees in Nursing Leadership, Community Mental Health, and Management, Freda's career spans healthcare, policy development, program implementation, and advocacy. With her strong focus on disability rights, accessibility standards, and equity, Freda is a Human Rights Consultant with the Washington Institute of Diplomacy and a lifetime member of the World Women Leaders Network. She is dedicated to empowering individuals and organizations to drive meaningful change.

IL Canada has received approval for its grant submission to the Social Development Partnership from the Government of Canada, securing three years of operational funding. The agreement provides core funding to IL Canada and Member Centres to support the funding of IL programs for our consumers. IL Canada has also received funding through Accessibility Standards Canada to conduct research on festivals and events across the country and offer recommendations for standards development to ASC. This initiative is in its third year, and EmpowerNL is one of 4 Independent Living Centres involved in this research.

IL Canada's AGM is taking place on September 4 & 5 in Ottawa. A virtual registration is available to anyone interested in joining through Zoom. A link will be provided to all registered individuals.

I look forward to the upcoming year ahead and appreciate being voted to serve again as EmpowerNL's IL Provincial Representative. We will strive to continue to create meaningful national partnerships and support IL Centres by being a strong voice on issues of concern to its members and partners.

Respectfully,



Susan Barrett  
NL Representative



# Empower Annual Services

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Empower provides a variety of services to both individuals and groups to promote inclusion for persons with disabilities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Empower services fall under one of the following five categories and a brief overview of each of the five service categories is provided below.

- Consultation
- Information
- Individual Support
- Skill Development
- Referral

A Consultation is a service that involves in-depth work with an individual around a particular topic. For example, the Coordinator of Technology Services provides a consultation service when meeting with a student who requires technology support for educational purposes. The Coordinator will work with the student to identify challenges and try out Adaptive Technology options so the student can decide what works best.

They will discuss options around purchasing the technology followed by offering support to teach the student how best to use the technology once it is acquired.

An Information Service is simply providing information on a disability related topic. Examples would include individuals approaching Empower to obtain information on services available through a government program to assist with renovations to a home or accessing funding to assist with the cost of required medical equipment or services.

Individual Support moves beyond the providing of information and involves staff providing direct assistance to an individual or family in addressing a

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particular issue. This service could include something as basic as providing alternate formats for a consumer who requires printed material in Braille. However, most of the individual supports provided by staff involve working with members on difficult issues over extended periods of time.

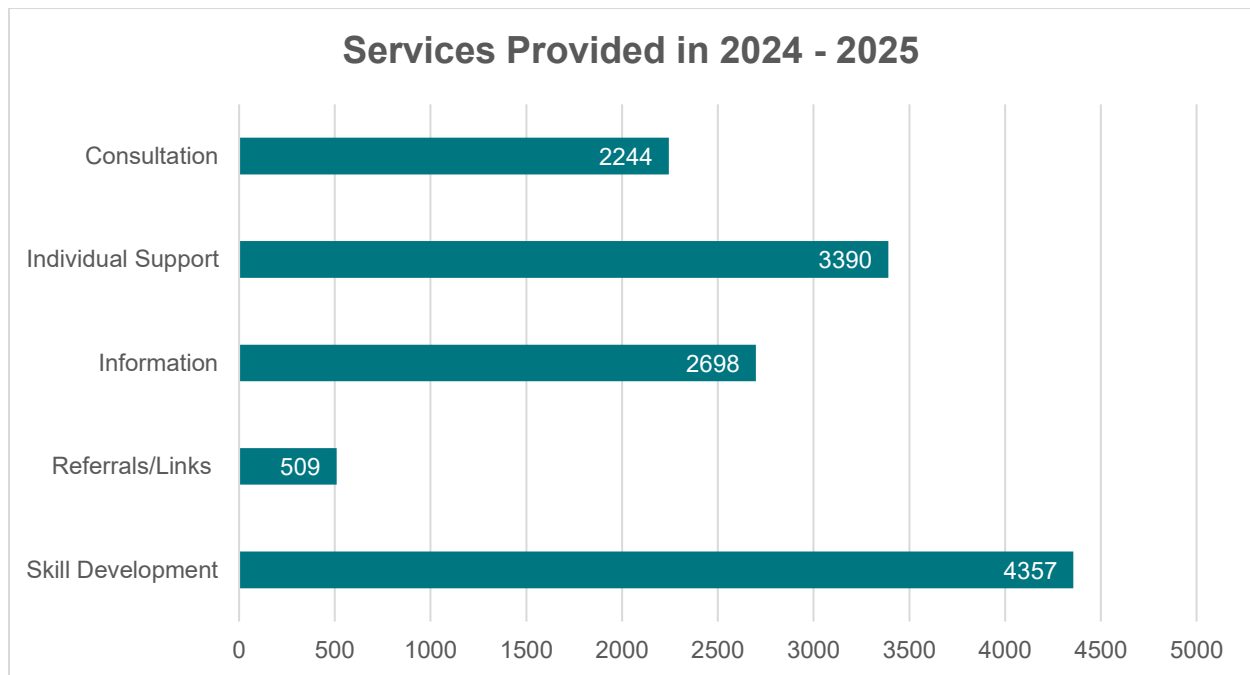
Skill Development services occur when staff provide training and instruction to an individual. For example, the Manager of Advocacy Services provides a skill development service when helping a person complete a Canada Pension Plan application form. Or our Coordinator of Member Services provides a skill development service when working with a volunteer interested in learning what is involved with volunteering at Empower.

Referral Services occur when an individual is connected to another program, service or organization. As an example, the Career Services Coordinator provides a referral service when linking a consumer who's interested in participating in a Horizons employment opportunity with Easter Seals. They would also provide a referral service when connecting jobseekers with staff at the Department of Families and Affordability to apply for "job start" funds.

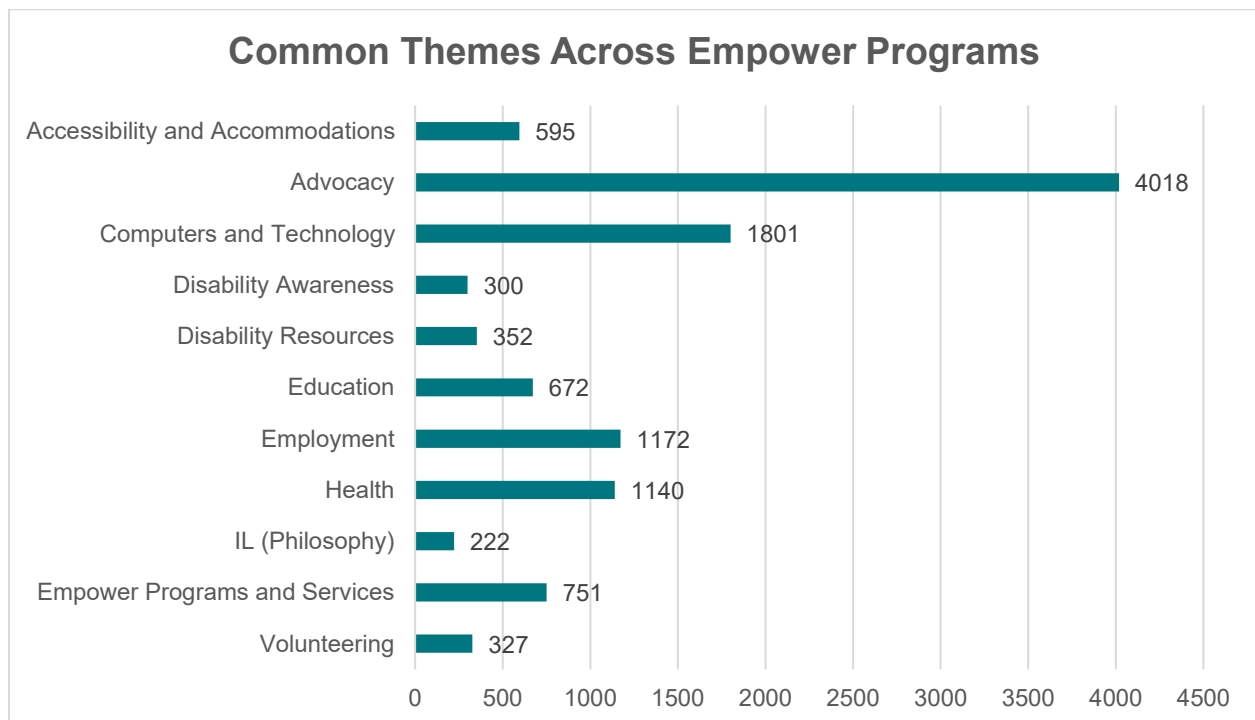
Empower programs and services primarily cover the St. John's Metro and Northeast Avalon area. However, with the addition of our two provincial programs Community Inclusion Services (formerly Adaptive Technology Internship and IL Internship) and InclusionNL, many services are provided to other areas of the province.

The charts below provide a breakdown of the areas where service is provided and the types of individuals/groups accessing Empower services.

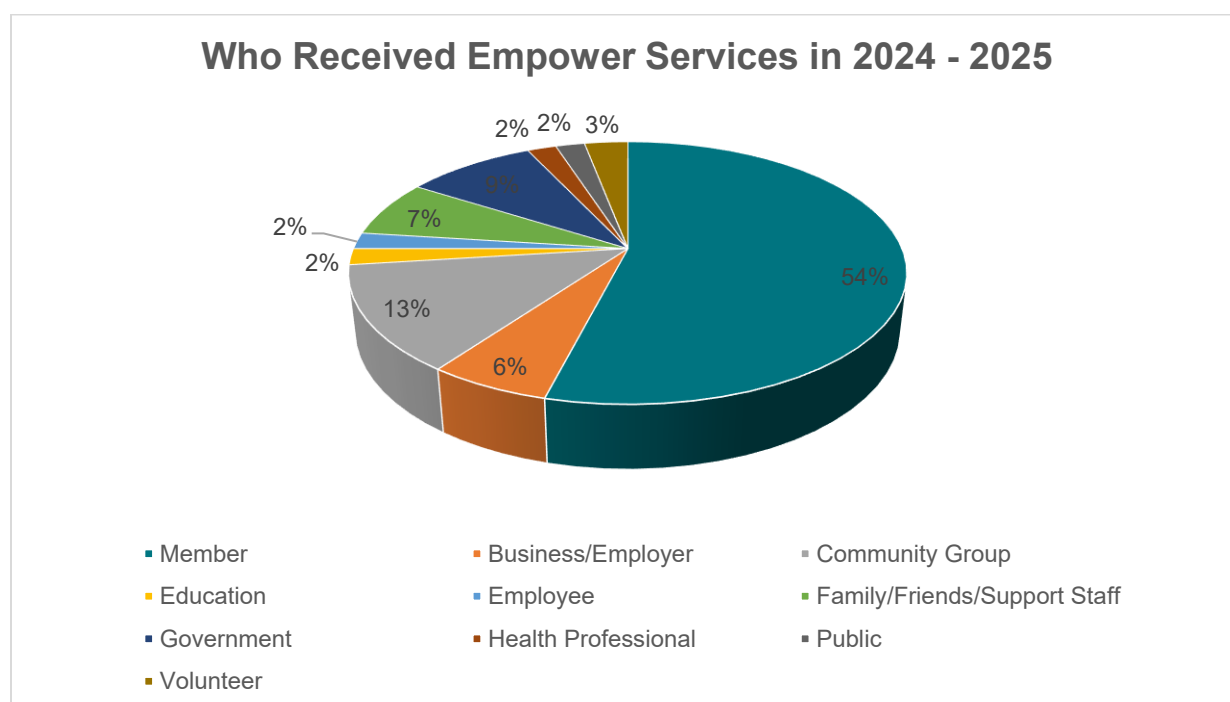




This bar chart shows the numbers of people provided with services by Empower in 2024 - 2025, in the categories of Consultation (2244), Individual Support (3390), Information (2698), Referrals/Links to other programs or services (509) and Skill Development (4357).



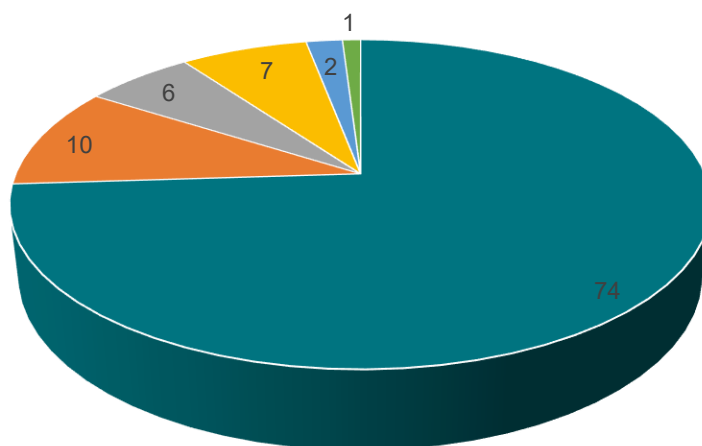
This bar chart shows the common themes across all Empower programs and services. The themes are accessibility and accommodations (595), advocacy (4018), computers and technology (1801), disability awareness (300), disability resources (352), education (672), employment (1172), health (1140), IL philosophy (222), Empower programs and services (751) and volunteering (327).



This pie chart shows who received services from Empower in 2024 – 2025. The categories are member (54%), business/employer (6%), community group (13%), education (2%), employee (2%), family/friends/support staff (7%), government (9%), health professional (2%), public (2%) and volunteers (3%).

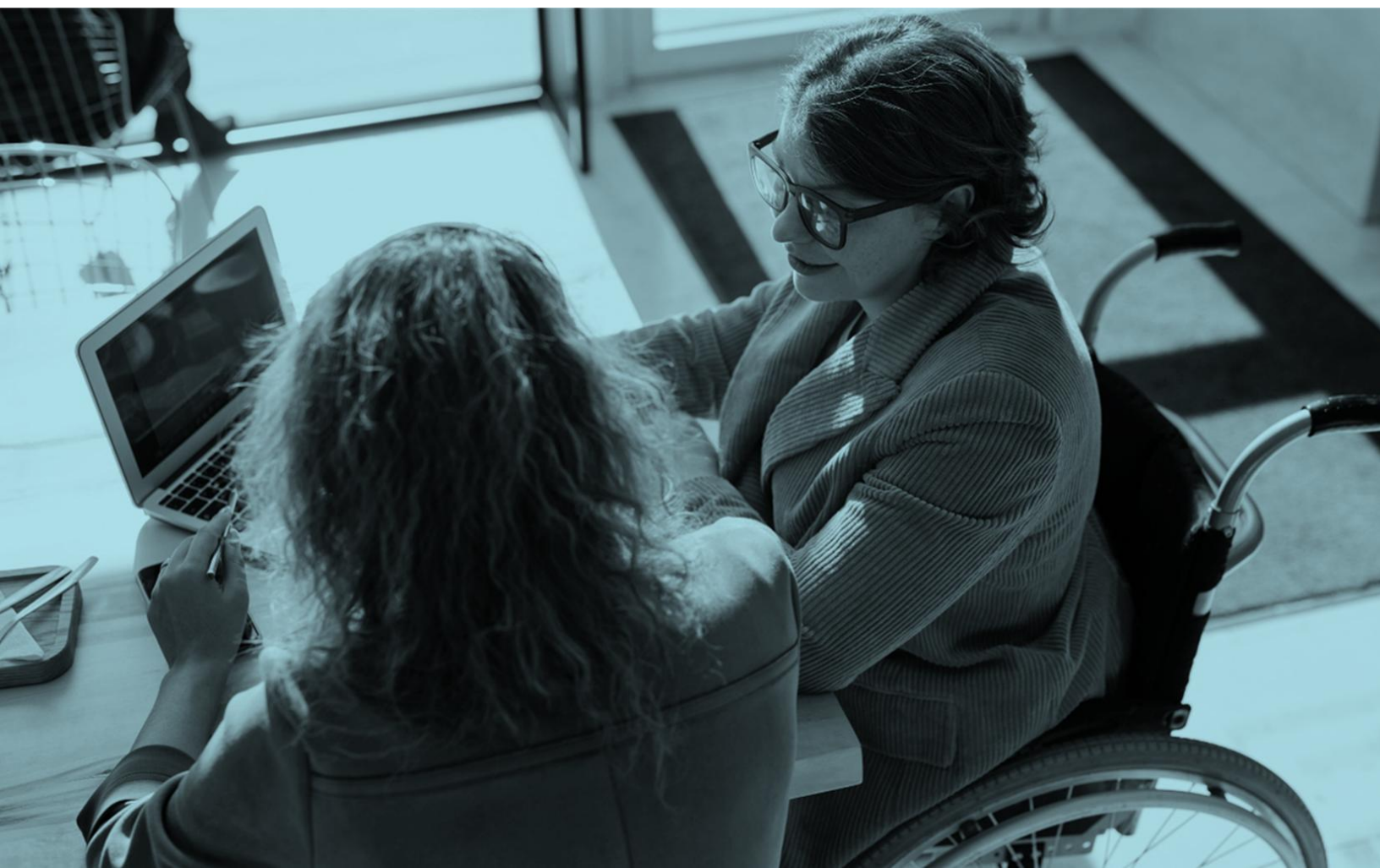


### Geographical Distribution of Empower Services 2024 - 2025



■ NE Avalon ■ Eastern ■ Central ■ Western ■ Labrador ■ National/International

This pie chart shows the geographical distribution of Empower services in 2024 - 2025, in the NE Avalon (74%), Eastern (10%), Central (6%), Western (7%), Labrador (2%) and National/International regions (1%).



# Advocacy Services Report

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It has been another successful year for Advocacy Services as we continue to support large numbers of individuals who identify as having a disability. EmpowerNL's Advocacy Services Program is the only program in Newfoundland and Labrador that provides individual advocacy services to people with cross-disabilities.

Advocacy Services ensure that the voices of individuals with disabilities are heard in every service they seek. Individuals have utilized Advocacy Services to empower themselves and enhance their ability to navigate complex systems, making informed decisions. Through the transfer of knowledge, Advocacy Services empowers and teaches people who identify with a disability to become effective self-advocates. Advocacy Services provides support to individuals in identifying their goals, personal strengths, and skills by providing information about current legislation, policies, regulations, and resources in plain language.

The Advocacy Services program operates from the point of view that there is "Nothing about us without us." It is a slogan that we are passionate about keeping at the forefront of everything we do when supporting individuals. Advocacy Services operates from a coordinated access approach, collaborating with all community stakeholders, which we have found to be key to helping the people we support meet their basic needs and achieve their goals. The Advocacy Services team takes pride in effectively working with an extensive network of community and governmental partners, which significantly contributes to the success of EmpowerNL's representation in the community. We extend thanks to our strong network of key stakeholders for their support and guidance.

## Advocacy Services Team:

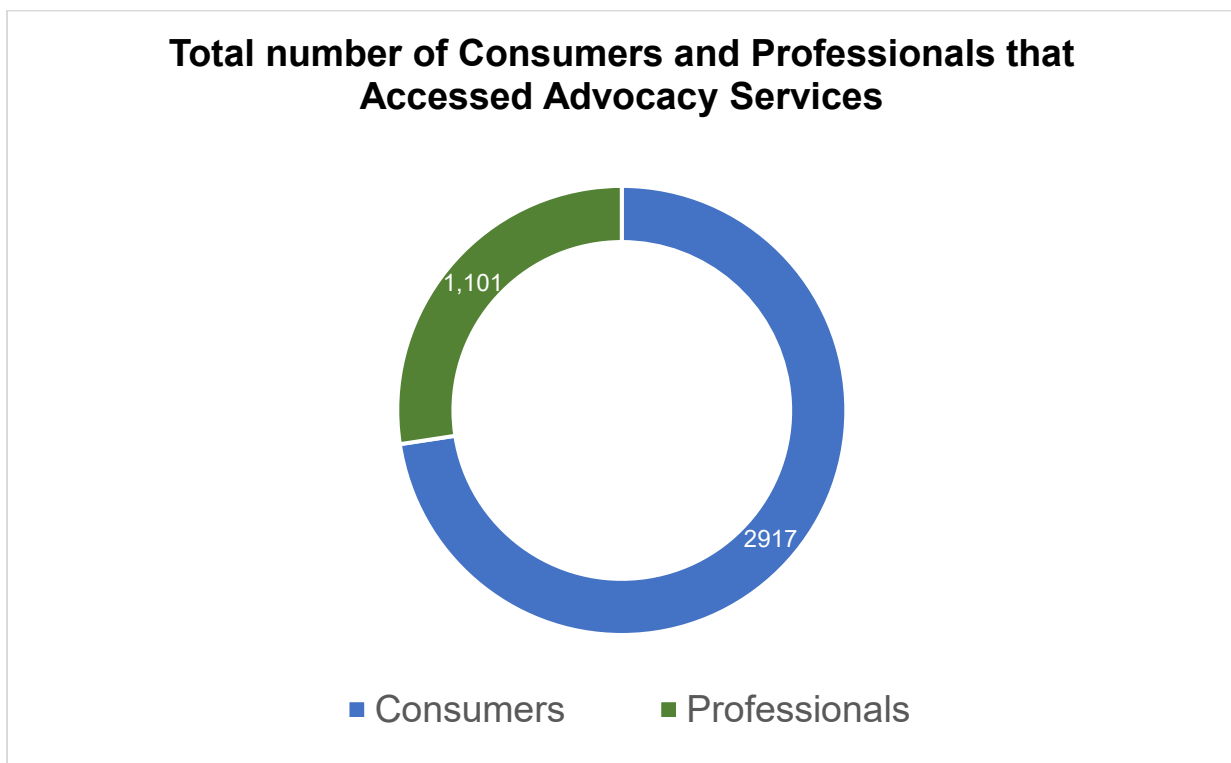
Joby Fleming - Advocacy Services Manager  
Olivia McFarlane - Advocacy Services Navigator  
Sharon Hogan - Advocacy Services Assistant  
Patrick O'Brien - Housing Accommodation Coordinator



## Advocacy Services Statistics

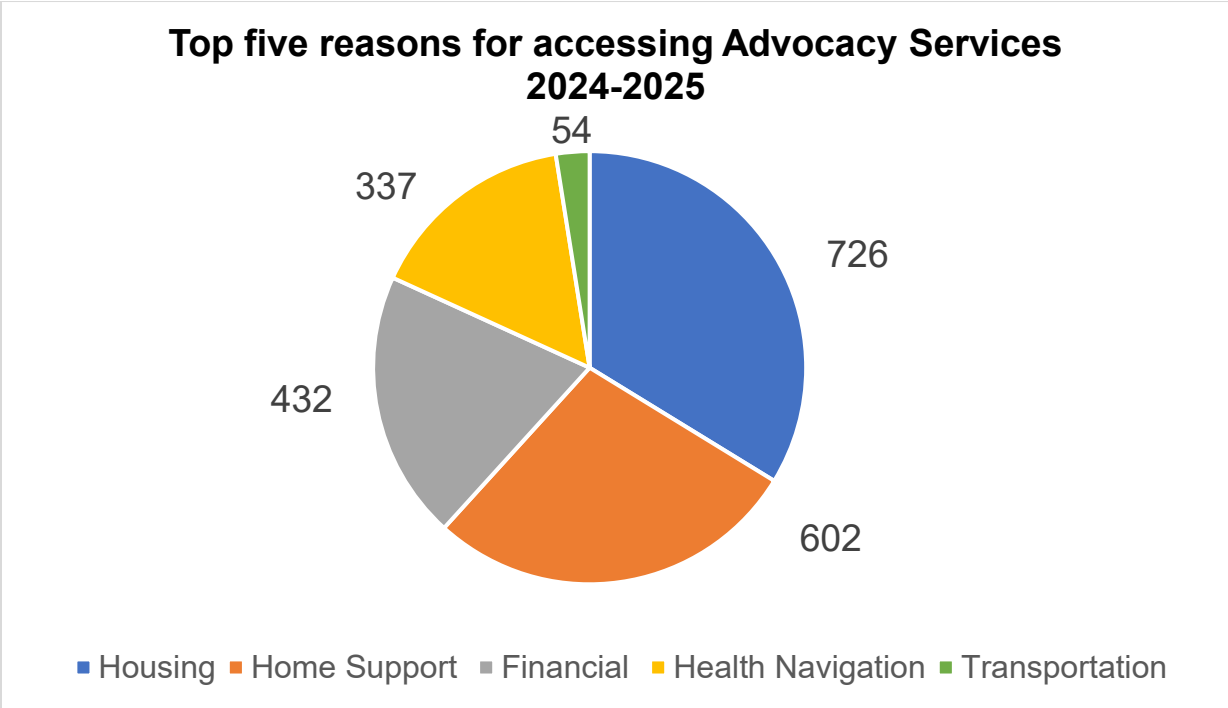
The total number of contacts for the year 2024-2025 is 4,018. In this section, we will break down the number of consumers versus professionals in contact, as well as our top five service areas.

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The pie chart above displays the total number of consumers, which is 2,917, and the total number of professionals, which is 1,101, that contacted Advocacy Services in 2024-2025.





This pie chart illustrates the top five reasons for accessing Advocacy Services in 2024-2025, which include: Financial (432), Health Navigation (337), Home Support (602), Housing (726), and Transportation (54).

### Housing Accommodations Coordinator Overview:

In collaboration with End Homelessness St. John’s, EmpowerNL’s Housing Accommodations Coordinator works within Advocacy Services to support individuals experiencing homelessness. The Housing Accommodations Coordinator collaborates with community and government agencies to help these individuals obtain and maintain safe, affordable, and accessible housing. The Housing Accommodations Coordinator assists individuals by supporting them with housing searches, apartment viewings, and initial housing setup, as well as providing case management and crisis interventions. Additionally, they collaborate with landlords to support the maintenance of successful housing for individuals.

## Key Accomplishments:

- Advocacy Services hosted another successful Community Tax Volunteer clinic, offering virtual and in-person appointments to our members.
- Advocacy Services gave four presentations to the School of Social Work at Memorial University. These four presentations were given to the Social Justice class and provided information on individual advocacy and its application in the community.
- The Advocacy Services team hosted two virtual town halls on the topic of Accessible Public Transportation. The purpose of the town halls was to create a 'What We Heard' report as part of an advocacy effort for individuals with disabilities, to ensure they are heard on their experiences with accessible public transportation. We look forward to finalizing and releasing the report.
- Advocacy Services renewed the End Homelessness St. John's Housing Accommodations Coordinator contract again this year.
- The Advocacy Services program continues the valued partnership with Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador (MUN) and the School of Social Work. EmpowerNL's Advocacy Services has provided field instruction to Bachelor of Social Work Students (first and second degree) in the fall of 2024 and winter of 2025. We look forward to continuing to provide field instruction through another placement this upcoming fall of 2025. All students who complete placements with Advocacy Services at EmpowerNL receive an enriched learning experience from a cross-disability lens.
- Advocacy Services has partnered with ILA Nova Scotia to support individuals in completing the Disability Tax Credit application.

## Participation in External Events:

- Joby and Patrick sit at the Coordinated Access to Homes table every week for End Homelessness (EHSJ).
- Joby Fleming attends Disability Network Meetings.
- Joby Fleming has sat on the Community Advisory Board (CAB) with End Homelessness St. John's since October 2021.
- Joby Fleming is the Co-Chair of the Coordinated Access to Home Working Group under CAB.
- Joby Fleming is a member of the Securing Citizenship for All steering committee.
- Olivia McFarlane is a registered Social Worker under the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers.

**"I have had nothing but positive experiences working with the Advocacy Services team with Empower! They are consistently engaged in creative, collaborative solutions to support individuals to find and maintain housing that meets their needs with dignity and respect. They are also a deeply committed partner in efforts to reduce barriers, improve services, and deepen understandings of meaningful work to reduce and end homelessness, always lifting up the voices of individuals who identify living with one or more disabilities across all levels of care."**

Community Partner, 2024



Joby Fleming  
Advocacy Services Manager



Olivia McFarlane  
Advocacy Services Navigator

**“I have gained so much confidence in myself, I feel comfortable with my ability to live an independent life that is right for me, and to ask for help when needed. This has allowed me to feel a sense of safety when I don't have the strength to fight, I know Advocacy is in my corner.”**

Member of Empower, 2024



# Member Services Report

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## Overview

Over the past year Member Services has worked to create, coordinate, and deliver a wide variety of programs, events, and supports that enhance the lives of our members, foster inclusion, and strengthen our community. This year's initiatives focused on accessibility, connection, peer support and celebration, ensuring that every member could participate fully and meaningfully.

## Annual Events & Special Initiatives

Our year was filled with engaging activities and themed celebrations that brought members, volunteers, and the broader community together:

- Volunteer Appreciation Brunch – “Making Waves”  
Honoured the dedication of our volunteers with a nautical-themed brunch, recognizing their invaluable contributions to our programs.
- Independent Living Day Canada Luncheon  
A celebratory luncheon highlighting achievements in independent living, fostering pride and awareness.
- Accessible Movie Night in celebration of National AccessAbility Awareness Week  
Members gathered to watch Crip Camp, a documentary about early disability advocacy. ASL interpretation and other accessibility measures were provided, ensuring all members could enjoy the experience.
- Annual Garden Cleanup  
Prepared our accessible community garden for the growing season, with members and volunteers working side by side.



- Annual Harvest & Soup-Making Day  
Members harvested produce from our garden, prepared soup together, and took home food hampers and homemade soup.
- Annual Summer BBQ – Camping Theme  
Included games, prizes, and a relaxed, outdoors-inspired atmosphere.
- Halloween Party & Trick-or-Treating  
Provided a fun and inclusive seasonal celebration.
- Christmas Dinner & Dance  
Brought members together for a festive evening with a traditional Christmas Dinner, prizes, and dancing at the CLB Armoury.
- Christmas Light Viewing at the Centre  
Showed a pre-recorded tour of the city's holiday lights for those unable to travel.
- Valentine's Day Mug Painting at Clay Café  
A creative and social outing for members.
- International Women's Day Spa Night  
Celebrated women in our community with relaxation, self-care, and connection.

## Monthly Activities

In addition to annual events, the coordinator organized and facilitated ongoing monthly programs, including:

- Peer Support Groups – Safe spaces for shared experiences and mutual encouragement.
- Virtual Travel Club – Exploring the world together from the comfort of our centre or members' homes.
- Creative Skills Sessions – Artistic and hands-on projects to foster self-expression.

- Independent Living Skills Workshops – Practical learning for greater autonomy.
- Book Club – Accessible reading options to include all members.
- Dinner Club – Dining at local restaurants with accessibility supports like braille/large-print menus and ASL interpretation.
- Creative Snacks – An opportunity for members to practice creativity with food.

## Community Engagement

We actively participated in diverse community events, including:

- Moose Hide Walk
- National Indigenous Day Celebrations
- Visiting The Rooms Museum
- Board Game Nights
- Frosty Festival
- Local holiday events

These outings and others strengthened relationships and broadened members' access to cultural and recreational opportunities.

## Presentations & Outreach

Our services were presented to several organizations, including NL Health Services and the Community Sector Council, building awareness of our mission and resources.

## Accessible Community Garden

The coordinator oversaw all activities in our accessible community garden, ensuring members could fully participate in planting, maintenance, and harvesting. This year, a fully accessible shed was built for the Garden Committee, providing secure and convenient storage.

## Individual Supports

The Member Services Coordinator also provided one-on-one peer support, assisting members in navigating both internal and external resources. This individualized approach ensured that members received guidance tailored to their needs.

## Conclusion

This year's programs and activities reflect our ongoing commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and empowerment. By offering a rich calendar of events, maintaining strong community partnerships, and providing both group and individualized supports, the Member Services Coordinator helped create meaningful connections and opportunities for all members.



Sherri Tucker  
Coordinator of Member Services

## Career Services

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It has been another busy year for Career Services at Empower. **145** consumers accessed services helping them with their education, employment and entrepreneurial goals. And of those **36** people found part-time or full-time employment, **13** people started short-term and long-term training opportunities, and **2** people started their own businesses.

Career Services has been offered to consumers since 1998 and is now entering its 27<sup>th</sup> year. The Career Services Coordinator has been supporting people with disabilities with their career goals for 17 years. Career Services continue to be offered through the independent living lens meaning people have more control over the path they travel and where it leads. And we are there with you, helping you gain the skills and identify the supports you need along the way.

One example of success comes from a consumer looking to return to work after parental leave, and a change in their disability. Unable to return to their previous profession, they explored their job options with the help of the Career Services Coordinator. Working together, they produced a new resume and started a job search using their LinkedIn Profile. As they considered their path forward, the Career Services Coordinator helped them picture what career was a best fit with their disability and their new family. Happily, they found full-time work through their networking efforts with the provincial government. They are now enrolled in a Master's in Business Administration program so that they can progress on their new career path.

From what I have seen, people who are getting jobs are doing three things well. They are persistent, they know what they want, and they know what they are good at doing. Despite barriers, people are getting jobs and employers are hiring people with disabilities.



My message to the people out there continuing with their job search is hang in there. Take stock of the effort you are putting into your job search. Congratulate yourself for continuing to try in the face of adversity. Try not to feel that because you haven't yet succeeded that you are failing. Every time you put yourself out there, you are succeeding!

Also remember that finding a job is a job. Keep motivated and lean on those who can encourage you. You will get a break eventually.

There are always options. Volunteering, doing courses at night, attending community events and participating in personal development opportunities can help keep you positive through a stressful job search.

And I hope this year can be your year. Maybe your job is the next one you apply to.



Stephen Quinn  
Career Services Coordinator



# Community Inclusion Services

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The Community Inclusion Program provides disability education and support to individuals and organizations at the community level. Working with all community members (including individuals, organizations and local government) to identify and overcome barriers to accessibility in all forms, Community Inclusion Services can help create solutions for barrier-free community environments and events. We can also provide professional development training, support and community development around building accessibility confidence.

This year we continue to partner in community and provide valuable information and services. We continue to build community partnerships and provide valuable service while providing meaningful work experiences to persons with disabilities.

Our team has been involved in the following activities:

- Advancing disability awareness, accessibility, and inclusion
- Promoting Empower, Disability Awareness, Inclusion, and Programs through our social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Partnering with groups to build awareness of how to reduce barriers in community
- Assisting local organizations to reduce barriers in their service delivery and events
- Researching gaps in service and resources and developing recommendations and tools where possible
- Delivering support to access services online
- Providing information and training on adaptive technology

- Creating accessible materials for internal and external use
- Engagement with the public through social media, attendance at community events, and information sessions
- Skill building and training opportunities where possible

Our team has done great work throughout the province. We have provided several information sessions, created new community partnerships, expanded on existing ones, and increased our social media profile. A list of activities and events are highlighted below.

- Holy Trinity High School – Torbay
- Accessibility Symposium – WEC
- National Accessibility Week
- Mount Pearl Chamber of Commerce Job Fair – supported 27 people with resume printing and modifications
- Workplace NL – Provided ergonomic resources



- DEAM – Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Resource Fair
- Triware's Rock Solid Convention
- MUN Nursing Students – Presentation on AT

The program provides opportunities for Facilitators to gain skills and acquire training in areas that will enhance their future employment opportunities. Facilitators gain these skills through professional training, online webinars, mentoring from other staff, and self instruction. Some of the training and skill development included:

- Deque University Accessibility Courses
- Hootsuite (Social Media) Courses
- Certificate in Accessibility for PDF Creators
- Certificate in Accessibility for Web Developers, Core Techniques
- 3D Printing Software & Hardware
- 5 LinkedIn Profile Tips for Nonprofit Professionals – Non-Profit Tech for Good with Tereza Litza
- Digital Accessibility for Nonprofits – Non-Profit Tech for Good with Michael Wilkinson, Product Director at Torchbox and Quarina Sultana, Head of Digital Engagement at the Royal National Institute for Blind People
- Mental Health First Aid
- Compassion Fatigue
- ADA Title II new regulations Webinar session

The program has been rolling out nicely and we look forward to another year of working in community, building partnerships and making our province more inclusive for persons with disabilities. Thank you to all our

partners and government funders. We look forward to working with you again in the coming year!

I would also like to thank our dedicated team for all the hard work they have put in this year. A special welcome and thank you to Thoren Tilley who has transitioned to the role of IT facilitator. He brings a wealth of knowledge to the team and has transitioned nicely to the front-line role.



Penny Abbott  
Manager, Community Inclusion Services

Thoren Tilley  
IT Facilitator

Jim Escott  
Coordinator, Technology Services

Jen Mackey  
Digital Media Coordinator

## Technology Services

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Through the Adaptive Technology Program, we help members find the right technology to meet their needs, whether it's a specialized mouse or keyboard, a software program, an iPad app, or a new mobile phone. We assist students who need support in technology and employees seeking workplace technology alternatives to reduce injury. Our services provide support to individuals ensuring they are comfortable in the way they use their devices. At Empower, we work with people both one-on-one and in groups to identify the best options and provide support in learning how to use technology effectively.

Some of the services provided within the AT program include:

- We work with individuals to identify the most suitable adaptive technology options and offer support to ensure they acquire and use the technology effectively.
- Providing information to raise awareness of adaptive technology supports and delivering training on a wide range of assistive software and hardware.
- Our Tech Space offers free public computer access, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for anyone to use computers.
- Collaborating and partnering with community organizations, educational institutions, government departments/agencies, and private businesses to expand adaptive technology services across the province and enhance awareness of inclusive technology.
- Offering materials in alternative formats ensures that everyone has access to the information they need. These formats include electronic



versions (PDF and Word), PowerPoint presentations, Braille, audio, and large print.

Our program is dedicated to ensuring that websites and apps meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). These guidelines are essential for providing access to information for people with disabilities, and we believe that inclusivity should be a priority for both businesses and governments. By adhering to accessibility standards and implementing best practices, we make sure that information and services are accessible to everyone. Our mission is to create a digital experience that offers equal access to all users.

## Tech Space

The Tech Space offers free access to computers in an inclusive and supportive environment. This year, we welcomed around 21 visitors to our facility. We're excited to announce that we now have a 3D printer available for creating assistive devices for the community. Whether you need to print resumes or enhance your computer skills, contact us today!

## Consultations

The AT Program offers individual and group consultations in many areas related to AT, including employment, education, skill development, and adaptive technology hardware/software options. In 2024-25 we completed many of these individual consultations.

Employment consultations could range from supporting an employee in using a new mouse or keyboard, to working with an intern to help them seek out future employment opportunities. (Employment consults = 64)

Education consultations typically involve working with students to help them acquire and/or use AT in their studies or working with teachers to better enable them to support students with disabilities. (Education consults = 91)

Skill development consultations are training sessions we provide to volunteers, members, job seekers, interns, and others on a variety of computer related topics. (Skill development consults = 651)

Most of the consultations we provide are related to Adaptive Technology. An individual AT consultation typically consists of a brief overview of what Adaptive Technology is, followed by a discussion of options/supports, and some hands-on training. It is an opportunity for consumers to decide what technology will work best for them. (AT consults = 144)

## Key Highlights:

- Introduction of New AT Facilitator: Thoren Tilley was introduced as the new Adaptive Technology (AT) Facilitator across the province, meeting with key stakeholders including IPGS, Grenfell College, and the College of the North Atlantic (CNA).
- Surge in Accessibility Requests: Increased demand for improved accessibility under the Accessible Canadian Act (ACA). We are seeing more requests for Website and Application Audits.
- Workplace NL: We provided ergonomic resources to Workplace NL in the form of videos, documents and websites. These resources will improve the safety and comfort of injured individuals and people who use mobility devices.
- City of St. John's: Created braille to be used in design templates for ward election voting cards.
- Ensured alternative formats for individuals who use braille, fostering inclusivity in the electoral process.

- How to Use AI for Pre-Employment Skills: Developed a webinar and website on how AI can help you with finding the right job, resumes, cover letters, interviews and the ethics of using AI.
- Town Hall for Public Transportation
- Assisted in facilitating the Town Hall Meeting, ensuring accessibility and alternate formats were available for the virtual meeting and providing technical support to attendees. Also provided guidance on marketing materials and strategies for reaching the target audience.

## Community Work

Over the past year, we've had numerous opportunities to collaborate with our community partners and participate in events focused on adaptive technology. We provided presentations and consultations to organizations such as the NL Liquour Corporation, NL Hydro, Churchill Falls, Mobile Smiles, Women's Economic Council (WEC), Jacob Puddister Memorial Foundation, NL Health Services, Provincial Airlines, Admiralty House Museum.

Financial support for this program comes from the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills (Community Partnerships Program), Thank you for your continued support and investment in the Adaptive Technology Program.



Jim Escott  
Coordinator, Technology Services



Thoren Tilley  
IT Facilitator

## Social Media

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Following another year of social media posting, feedback from followers remains overwhelmingly positive, analytics continue to show growth in followers and engagement, and staff have been very supportive in collaborating on program-specific posts that have also been well received. Highlighting staff activities in the community has also allowed us to grow and strengthen Empower's community connections.

Empower's biggest audience by far is on the Facebook platform, as it has been in existence and use for the longest period. From April 2024 to March 2025:

- We had a net of 135 new followers, an increase of 8.0%
- We had 25,788 page views, an increase of 200%
- Our page reached a total of 117,978 people, an increase of 15.9%

Our content interactions, the number of likes or reactions, saves, comments, shares and replies on our content, was 4119, an increase of 34.2%, with these interactions being split between followers at 65.6% and non-followers at 34.4%.

While we continue to monitor the suitability of X as a platform to meet Empower's social media needs, we continue to post on X due to the importance of a text-based platform for people with certain disabilities. With a 30% decline in users (22 million) over the past year, a 7% drop in brand use and a 23% decrease in ROI confidence, it's fair to say that X has been facing significant overall decline in the last several years.

From April 2024 to March 2025:

- Empower went from 913 to 906 followers, a decrease of 0.77%
- Despite losing 7 followers overall, our traffic increased 88.9% to 1,679 clicks
- As well, our post engagement rate increased 17.6% to 2.64%

Empower's post engagement rate on X averages 2.64% for the year. The highest average organic engagement rate of all industries tracked was 1.66% (for the entertainment and media industry), showing that even with the serious overall decline in X usage, Empower is still getting great engagement with our tweets.

Instagram is the newest social media platform in use by Empower. However, while our followers are slowly growing, the continued improvement of our overall reach has been by far the best on this platform. From April 2024 to March 2025:

- We went from 749 to 833 followers, an increase of 11.2%
- We reached 10,042 distinct accounts, an increase of 21.1%
- We had 13,835 profile impressions, an increase of 17.7%

With Instagram post engagement at 540 for the fiscal year, a 3.6% increase, Empower's overall engagement rate on Instagram was 4.26% - a whopping 1,600%.

It has been rewarding to see the slow and steady increase in fans/followers across all platforms. But perhaps of more import is the consistent and increasing engagement of the community with all Empower's social media.

The key points to take away from this year's social media performance that will guide our strategy for the next year and help tailor posts for maximum impact are:

- Facebook continues to have Empower's largest audience, as well as the most geographically diverse. Also, it is commonly the only social media presence that organizations, businesses, and municipal governments have, especially in more rural areas. This will be the best platform with which to engage people with disabilities and other organizations across the province and may even prove an invaluable



tool in reaching those that are not online or do not have internet access.

- While our X account continues to grow and increase engagement, because X's overall demographics are the least like Empower's (by age, gender and topics of discussion), gathering interest for our content continues to be a challenge. We will continue to monitor policies/politics around this platform to ensure that it remains a fit for Empower's messaging.
- While Instagram continues to have Empower's fewest followers, the numbers show that it remains the fastest growing of our social media accounts, with the highest levels of engagement. Going forward Instagram will also be a great tool to engage with our younger followers and bring more of a focus to current community issues and events. It will be important to remain consistent with messaging while tracking trends and utilizing them to our advantage when appropriate.

In summary, this has been a very positive year for Empower's social media, which in turn helps keep members up to date with events and activities, helps educate the general public about disability and accessibility and connects Empower with other community organizations and the wider provincial community.



Jen Mackey  
Digital Media Coordinator

## InclusionNL: Corporate Services

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InclusionNL: Corporate Services celebrated its 11th year of operations in June 2025. Since we began, we have provided numerous partnerships to employers across Newfoundland and Labrador. We enjoy building new partnerships as well as maintaining and supporting current partners.

This year was busy due to the provincial obligations that required businesses and public entities to complete Accessibility Plans. These obligations were for both provincial accessibility legislation and the Accessible Canada Act. When supporting businesses to work on their accessibility plans, staff provided this support on numerous levels. We worked with multiple municipalities, such as the towns of Stephenville, Portugal Cove, and St. Phillips. During these partnerships, we reviewed various buildings and offered professional training to their Council and staff. When working with NL Hydro, we visited Churchill Falls. We completed building reviews on all public buildings in Churchill Falls while providing regular support as they worked on their 3-year plan and continued to serve as a community representative on the Accessibility Advisory Committee. When collaborating with the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation, we provided support around creating their accessibility plan, sitting on their accessibility advisory committee, and creating opportunities to do building reviews and training with their staff.

Throughout the past year, we have continued to offer most of our services through a hybrid model, offering both in-person and virtual work options to meet the needs of our business partners who are doing the same. This requires more support to ensure their hybrid work models are barrier-free.

Complete inclusion of people with disabilities is not possible without valuable partnerships with businesses, organizations, and employers.

Throughout this past year, we have developed and participated in unique online and in-person projects and business partnerships throughout the province. With our support, businesses grow their disability confidence and increase accessibility and inclusion within their work environments.

## Three Streams of Service Delivery

### Direct Employer Supports

- Staff provide direct support to businesses based on individual needs/requests. Through these partnerships, we:
  - Provide hiring support by distributing job vacancies throughout our networks, which include partnering with disability organizations.
  - Provide businesses with inclusion-related support for interviews (e.g., ASL Interpreters, Closed Captioning, etc.).
  - Provide accessibility reviews of businesses so that individuals interviewing can be confident their access needs will be met.
- Through various opportunities and professional development training sessions offered in person and online, we have successfully developed forty-five current partnerships with employers province-wide and have increased knowledge of accessibility and inclusion in various ways. These unique partnerships provide businesses with services and resources as a way of introducing accessibility and inclusion to businesses that are interested in increasing their accessibility confidence. One example is our partnership with our provincial government, where we provided six sessions to employees of the Public Service Commission and saw over 200 employees sign up for this training.

- We also provide human resources support to the Town of Portugal Cove and St. Phillips, NL Hydro, Cenovus Energy, EnergyNL, and NTV Broadcasting.

## **Conferences | Events | Festivals**

This year, staff from the program supported several businesses, community organizations, and associations that organized virtual and in-person festivals, events, and conferences throughout the Avalon region. Staff worked with organizers before their events to ensure patron accessibility. This included helping to recruit volunteers, providing them with training in accessibility practices, and providing support during consultations. This year, we have provided support to St. John's Women's Film Festival, Mount Pearl Frosty Festival, Mount Pearl Days, Accessibility Symposium, NL Folk Festival, Churchill Park Music Festival, and the Royal St. John's Regatta.

## **Research**

Our research continues, conducted in partnership with Memorial University, on the employment equity of persons with disabilities in the oil and gas, mining, and renewable energies sectors. An extension in funding allowed us to widen our literature review and seek evidence of employment equity practices internationally.



## Program Success and Milestones

- Celebrating our 11th year of operation and success. We have developed a collection of business partners with over 100 unique partnerships.
- Worked with federally regulated employers such as NL Hydro and NL Liquor Corporation to develop accessibility plans as obligated by provincial and federal legislation.
- Provided Accessibility Confidence training for more than 200 Marine NL Ferry employees.
- Completed Accessibility Reviews for Genoa Designs, Connection for Seniors, and 21 businesses in Churchill Falls for NL Hydro.
- Have promoted milestone occasions to build recognition and awareness in National Accessibility Awareness Week, GAAD, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, and the month of October as Disability Employment Awareness Month.



Amanda Lush

Coordinator of InclusionNL: Corporate Services.



# Annual General Meeting Minutes 2024

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Empower, The Disability Resource Centre  
Annual General Meeting  
September 25th, 2024, 7:00 pm via Zoom

## Minutes of Meeting

### 1. Welcome and Introduction of Board members 2023-2024:

Paul welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting at 7:08pm.  
Board Members present introduced themselves.

In attendance: Paul Morgan  
Mandy Penney  
Renee March  
Amanda Howlett  
Susan Barrett  
Kathryn (Katie) Cashin

### 2. Minutes of 2023 Annual General meeting:

Amanda Howlett read the minutes from the 2023 annual general meeting.  
Motion to approve the minutes of the 2023 AGM -  
Moved by: Stephen Westcott  
Seconded by: Katie Cashin  
Motion Carried

### 3. Chairperson's Report:

Kathy read the Chairperson's Report for 2024 on behalf of Paul Morgan.  
Motion to approve the Chairperson's report -

Moved by: Carole Barron  
Seconded by: Katie Cashin  
Motion Carried

#### 4. Executive Directors Report:

Kathy read the Executive Director's Report for 2024.

Motion to approve the Executive Directors Report

Moved by: Katie Cashin  
Seconded by: Terrie Hefford  
Motion Carried

#### 5. Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements:

Renee brought the Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements.

Motion to approve the audited financial statements for fiscal year  
ending March 31st, 2024.

Moved by: Paul Morgan  
Seconded by: Amanda Howlett  
Motion carried

Motion to approve the appointment of Beacon Accounting  
Professional Corporation as Empower, The Disability Resource  
Centre's auditors for fiscal 2024-2025.

Moved by: Carole Barron  
Seconded by: Paul Morgan  
Motion carried

#### 6. Proposed Bylaw Revisions:

Kathy brought the bylaw revisions to the membership for discussion and  
approval.

During this discussion, members voiced insights and concerns and requested clarification on revisions being proposed.

Revision 2.3: Only individuals can be members of Empower. Categories of membership shall include voting and non-voting membership.

Revision 3: Only voting members have voting privileges. If a non-voting member wishes to change their membership to a voting member, they must do so 60 days before the AGM.

Revision 3.1: Each voting member shall have one vote, except the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, hereinafter to be referred to as “The Board,” who shall have a vote only in the case of a tie.

Revision 3.4: Voting will take place in such a way as to accommodate the needs of each member present. Members unable to be present at a general (including our AGM) or special meeting, will be able to participate and vote through an alternate means approved by the Empower Board. The Board will develop and communicate policies and procedures to support this remote access for members.

Revision 4.1: Membership as a voting member will be renewed every two years. Non-voting membership renewals will be every five years.

Revision 8: The quorum for any general or special meeting shall be 10% of Empower’s voting membership as of March 31st of the fiscal/operating year just ended

Revision 8.3: In the case of an Annual General Meeting, it shall proceed by presenting the order of business and move to remote access for voting members to vote by Sept 30 of that same year. Remote access will give

members information through a secured online page to officially record their vote.

Motion to approve the by-law revisions as presented

Moved by: Kimberly Underhay ,

Seconded by: Amanda Howlett

Membership Votes at Virtual Meeting on Sept 25, 2024

11 Approved

3 Abstained

1 Against

Membership Votes as of September 30, 2024

9 Approved

0 Abstained

0 Against

Motion Carried

## 7. A. Empower Board of Directors 2024-2025

Amanda Howlett brought the names forth of the new board members and those in attendance introduced themselves.

Terrie Hefford, Kyla Mae Malayang, Hailey Pudan, Andrea Smith.

Motion to approve the four names put forth for 2024-2025.

Moved by: Stephen Westcott

Seconded by: Carole Barron

Motion Carried

## B. Empower NL Board of Directors 2024-2025:

Paul Morgan  
Mandy Penney  
Renee March  
Amanda Howlett  
Susan Barrett  
Kathryn (Katie) Cashin  
Dr. Amy Warren - currently on leave of absence  
Terrie Hefford  
Andrea Smith  
Hailey Pudan  
Kyla Mae Malayang

#### 8. Certificates of Appreciation

Kathy presented Certificates of Appreciation to Board members who retired this year:

Carole Barron  
Stephen Wheeler  
Stacey Roberts  
Sherry Mercer  
Tom Power

#### 9. Adjournment:

Motion to Adjourn the 2024 Empower Annual General meeting came at 8:20pm  
Moved by: Ed Sawdon  
Seconded by: Mary Power



# Financial Statements

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EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC. Financial  
Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2025

**EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.**

**Index to Financial Statements**

**Year Ended March 31, 2025**

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	Page
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT	1 - 2
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	
Statement of Financial Position	3
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures	4
Statement of Changes in Net Assets	5
Statement of Cash Flows	6
Notes to Financial Statements	7 - 10

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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To the Members of Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc.

### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc. (the organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2025, and the statements of revenues and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization as at March 31, 2025, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the organization in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the organization's financial reporting process.

### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

(continues)

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc. *(continued)*

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador  
September 22, 2025

*Beacon Accounting Professional Corporation*  
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

**EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.****Statement of Financial Position****March 31, 2025**

	2025	2024
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash	\$ 392,348	\$ 613,235
Accounts receivable	186,239	199,926
Harmonized sales tax recoverable	5,072	12,549
Prepaid expenses	218	228
	<u>583,877</u>	<u>825,938</u>
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT <i>(Note 2)</i>	<u>248,119</u>	<u>257,770</u>
	<u>\$ 831,996</u>	<u>\$ 1,083,708</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 82,804	\$ 177,714
Current portion of long term debt <i>(Note 3)</i>	3,324	3,324
Deferred revenue <i>(Note 4)</i>	-	147,102
	<u>86,128</u>	<u>328,140</u>
LONG TERM DEBT <i>(Note 3)</i>	<u>14,647</u>	<u>17,971</u>
	<u>100,775</u>	<u>346,111</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Operating fund	525,921	532,297
Reserve fund	205,300	205,300
	<u>731,221</u>	<u>737,597</u>
	<u>\$ 831,996</u>	<u>\$ 1,083,708</u>

**ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD**

\_\_\_\_\_*Director*

\_\_\_\_\_*Director*

See notes to financial statements

**EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.****Statement of Revenues and Expenditures****Year Ended March 31, 2025**

	2025	2024
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Other revenue ( <i>Note 5</i> )	\$ 1,016,027	\$ 1,109,886
Province of Newfoundland and Labrador operating grant	<u>205,300</u>	<u>205,300</u>
	<u>1,221,327</u>	<u>1,315,186</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Amortization	9,651	10,783
Bank charges	932	1,589
Business taxes, licenses and memberships	2,754	2,570
Insurance	6,752	7,100
Office	17,514	23,547
Purchased services	25,347	27,518
Programs and accommodations	191,461	323,447
Professional fees	5,080	5,080
Repairs and maintenance	9,852	2,190
Salaries and wages	932,064	889,616
Telephone and communication	19,955	20,968
Staff training	3,807	4,806
Staff transportation	8,886	11,865
Utilities	7,769	7,941
	<u>1,241,824</u>	<u>1,339,020</u>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<u>(20,497)</u>	<u>(23,834)</u>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>		
Interest income	10,797	12,768
Debt forgiveness	<u>3,324</u>	<u>3,324</u>
	<u>14,121</u>	<u>16,092</u>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>\$ (6,376)</u>	<u>\$ (7,742)</u>

See notes to financial statements



**EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.****Statement of Changes in Net Assets****Year Ended March 31, 2025**

	Operating Fund		Reserve Fund		2025	2024
<b>NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	\$	532,297	\$	205,300	\$ 737,597	\$ 745,339
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES		(6,376)		-	(6,376)	(7,742)
INTERNALLY RESERVED		-		-	-	-
<b>NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR</b>	\$	525,921	\$	205,300	\$ 731,221	\$ 737,597

See notes to financial statements

**EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.****Statement of Cash Flows  
Year Ended March 31, 2025**

	2025	2024
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	\$ (6,376)	\$ (7,742)
Items not affecting cash:		
Amortization of property, plant and equipment	9,651	10,783
Debt forgiveness	(3,324)	(3,324)
	(49)	(283)
Changes in non-cash working capital:		
Accounts receivable	13,687	(175,959)
Accounts payable	(94,910)	124,808
Deferred revenue	(147,102)	(289,811)
Prepaid expenses	10	-
Harmonized sales tax payable	7,477	15,133
	(220,838)	(325,829)
<b>DECREASE IN CASH FLOW</b>	(220,887)	(326,112)
Cash - beginning of year	613,235	939,347
<b>CASH - END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 392,348</b>	<b>\$ 613,235</b>
<b>CASH CONSISTS OF:</b>		
Cash - Operating account	\$ 108,751	\$ 136,411
Cash - Savings accounts	283,597	476,824
	<b>\$ 392,348</b>	<b>\$ 613,235</b>

# EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.

## Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2025

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### 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### Basis of presentation

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNFPO).

#### Cash and short term investments

The organization's policy is to present bank balances under cash and cash equivalents, including bank overdrafts with balances that fluctuate frequently from being positive to overdrawn. Also included in cash and cash equivalents are term deposits with a maturity period of three months or less from the date of acquisition.

#### Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment is stated at cost or deemed cost less accumulated amortization and is amortized over its estimated useful life on a declining balance basis at the following rates and methods:

Buildings	4%	declining balance method
Computer equipment	30%	declining balance method
Computer software	30%	declining balance method
Furniture and fixtures	20%	declining balance method

#### Revenue recognition

Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc. follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions.

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

The operating fund accounts for the organization's program delivery and administrative activities. This fund reports unrestricted resources and restricted operating grants. This fund also represents resources that have been invested in capital assets.

The reserve fund represents balances reserved for significant building repairs and eventual building expansion.

#### Contributed services

The operations of the organization depend on both the contribution of time by volunteers and donated materials from various sources. The fair value of donated materials and services cannot be reasonably determined and are therefore not reflected in these financial statements.

*(continues)*

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# EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.

## Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2025

### 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES *(continued)*

#### Financial instruments policy

The organization considers any contract creating a financial asset, liability or equity instrument as a financial instrument, except in certain limited circumstances. The organization accounts for the following as financial instruments:

1. cash and cash equivalents
2. accounts receivable
3. accounts payable and accrued liabilities

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value when acquired or issued. In subsequent periods, financial assets with actively traded markets are reported at fair value, with any unrealized gains and losses reported in income. All other financial instruments are reported at amortized cost, and tested for impairment when there are indicators of impairment. Transaction costs on the acquisition, sale, or issue of financial instruments are expensed when incurred.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash and cash equivalents and accounts receivable.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable.

#### Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Such estimates are periodically reviewed and any adjustments necessary are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

### 2. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2025 Net book value	2024 Net book value
Land	\$ 39,402	\$ -	\$ 39,402	\$ 39,402
Buildings	296,159	101,390	194,769	200,928
Computer equipment	43,454	31,704	11,750	14,687
Computer software	2,460	2,431	29	41
Furniture and fixtures	38,312	36,143	2,169	2,712
	<b>\$ 419,787</b>	<b>\$ 171,668</b>	<b>\$ 248,119</b>	<b>\$ 257,770</b>

**EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.****Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended March 31, 2025****3. LONG TERM DEBT**

	<b>2025</b>	2024
Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation forgivable loan.	\$ 17,971	\$ 21,295
Amounts payable within one year	<u>(3,324)</u>	<u>(3,324)</u>
	<u>\$ 14,647</u>	<u>\$ 17,971</u>

Principal repayment terms are approximately:

2026	\$ 3,324
2027	3,324
2028	3,324
2029	3,324
2030	3,324
Thereafter	<u>1,351</u>
	<u>\$ 17,971</u>

**Building Upgrades and Forgivable Debt**

During the 2013 fiscal year end, the Centre received funding of \$49,822 from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation for design work completed for a new facility to be constructed on the current site. The Centre intends on accessing outside funding to complete the project. The funds are non-interest bearing and forgivable on a monthly basis of \$277 over a period of 15 years. Forgiveness commenced on September 1, 2015 and is due to mature on August 1, 2030.

The total balance recorded as building upgrades at March 31, 2025, is \$46,958 (2024 - \$46,958). No amortization has been taken on this balance as construction has not commenced.

**4. DEFERRED REVENUE**

	<b>2025</b>	2024
NorthPine	\$ -	\$ 88,863
Employer Support Services Program	-	30,000
Shed Funding	-	13,750
Women's Economic Council	-	9,357
Social Enterprise	-	3,706
IL Canada Festival Project	-	822
Association for Community Living/Ready, Willing and Able	-	604
	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 147,102</u>

**EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.****Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended March 31, 2025****5. OTHER REVENUE**

	2025	2024
Community Inclusion	\$ 422,744	\$ 520,232
Other Contracts	103,346	4,842
NorthPine	88,863	50,628
Ready, Willing and Able	87,515	166,997
End Homelessness St. John's	85,741	87,328
Women's Economic Council	66,575	-
Career Services	53,228	53,227
Inclusion NL	51,516	153,450
IL Canada	36,972	38,094
Youth Venture	17,603	16,397
Donations	1,924	13,029
Social Enterprise	-	5,662
	<b>\$ 1,016,027</b>	<b>\$ 1,109,886</b>

The organization is funded by an annual operating grant (2025 - \$205,300; 2024 - \$205,300) from the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The organization also receives grants and donations on an annual basis from various levels of government for specific programs and projects (2025 - \$1,016,027; 2024 - \$1,109,886). The organization is dependent upon these annual operating grants in order to be able to carry out its mandate.

**6. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The organization is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments. The following analysis provides information about the organization's risk exposure and concentration as of March 31, 2025.

**(a) Credit risk**

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The organization is exposed to credit risk from customers. The organization provides credit to its clients in the normal course of its operations.

**(b) Liquidity risk**

Liquidity risk is the risk that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The organization is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of its receipt of funds from its customers and accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The organization considers that it has access to sufficient funds to meet its current and long-term financial requirements.

Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant other price risks arising from these financial instruments.



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