

Nfld. & Labrador

Persons with disabilities back on the job hunt once Target closes

CBC News · Posted: Jan 27, 2015 6:05 AM NT | Last Updated: January 27, 2015



Target employees with hearing impairments will soon be back on the job market, as the store heads into liquidation. (CBC)

[comments](#)

There still isn't a firm date for when the two Target Canada stores in Newfoundland are set to close, but employees will be out of a job soon enough.

Among the hundreds losing work are about a dozen persons with disability, which Target went out of its way to hire.

- [Target in Canada: Read CBC News coverage of Target Canada closure](#)

Kelly Warren is part of the St. John's store's staff, as one of the workers who fill the racks and stock the shelves.

Warren has a hearing impairment, and said through an interpreter that her job at Target has been an "absolutely awesome" experience.



Sean Wiltshire says Target Canada has been a "spectacular" employer for persons with disabilities. (CBC)

The way Target Canada has hired on employees with disabilities hasn't gone unnoticed.

Sean Wiltshire runs Avalon Employment, an employment agency for persons with disabilities. He said Target set new standards for hiring practices.

"They were nothing short of spectacular as an employer," said Wiltshire.

"They challenged people to do jobs that they've never done before, but they supported them in learning how to do it. That's something you don't see every day."

The company hired seven people with impaired hearing at the St. John's store alone.

Store manager John Pritchett admits he was a bit apprehensive about it at first, but quickly realized there was no need to be worried.

"It really was fairly easy, once you let your inhibitions go away and you say, 'I'm just communicating with the person and the two of us will figure it out,'" said Pritchett.

He added that hiring people with disabilities makes perfect business sense; Pritchett said employers get everything they could want from an employee, and then some.

"You do become very attached, which has made the current uncertainty they face going out into the job market all the more heartbreaking," he said.

Meanwhile, Warren admitted she's worried about what's coming next, but Pritchett and his team are going to help.

Pritchett will be organizing a job fair for the store's soon-to-be former employees.

©2020 CBC/Radio-Canada. All rights reserved.

Visitez Radio-Canada.ca