



# Accessibility Plan

Department Justice Canada



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# Message from the Deputy and Associate Deputy Ministers

Dear Readers,

The publication of the first Accessibility Plan for the Department of Justice Canada marks a monumental milestone in a long-awaited and long-overdue journey. Making our department, and more importantly, our nation a better home for persons with disabilities is something we, at the Department of Justice, believe in and support whole-heartedly. The spectrum of disabilities is a broad and dynamic one, with variable degrees of impairment, duration, and differences in how apparent the impairment may be. It is our responsibility to provide a safe, welcoming environment for all, adapted to diverse needs of our employees and Canada's population as a whole.

Our pursuit of better opportunities, services, and experiences for persons with disabilities is a critical part of a greater movement to improve equity for all groups who face systemic and attitudinal barriers. At the moment, 6.2% of us working at Justice self-report as persons with disabilities – as do 22% of Canadians. And when we look at the intersections of disability and other identity factors, such as age and race, and compare to the Canadian population as a whole, we see an even higher proportion of disabilities. Disabilities are common, and with consideration, conversation and empathy, making accommodations is no longer the great challenge it has been historically perceived to be. Simply recognizing these facts is an important step in shifting our collective mindset. As we move forward, we must share practices of unlearning and deconstruction developed in other equity-seeking communities.

To accomplish our goals, we must embed accessibility into all of our operations, our processes, and most importantly our culture, such that considering the needs of persons with disabilities becomes a prerequisite in everything we do. An accessible-by-design approach helps us make the necessary progress. In the coming years, we expect to deliver on government-wide priorities like closing representation gaps in hiring and retention for persons with disabilities, tracking and reporting on metrics like workplace accommodation wait times, and more. Through this Plan, we can do more than meet the requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act*; we can create an environment where everyone can flourish and succeed.

Each person has different needs, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to accessibility. In order to contribute to this accessible future, we must all participate in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers. We must all join this conversation and keep it going.

Representation of persons with disabilities in the Canadian population is climbing, and disability is a category through which anyone can move during some stage of life. This plan is truly for all of us, regardless of our current experience with disability. Whether or not you, your colleagues, your friends, or your families are among that 22% of Canadians living with a disability, we hope this Plan will speak to your experience. Making life better for people living with disabilities not only improves the world today. It makes life better for everyone who may experience a disability in the future - and that's all of us.

With our sincere appreciation of your readership and support,

A. François Daigle and Shalene Curtis-Micallef, Deputy Minister and Associate Deputy Minister of Justice

# Executive Summary

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) (2019) requires that Federal Departments publish Accessibility Plans. However, the mission behind this Plan goes far beyond meeting a requirement. The Act and this Plan push us toward a better future for our country – one where everyone can take part fully in society. The work we do in support of the Act and this Plan benefits everyone through the realization of a Canada without barriers, a goal the Act commits to achieving by 2040. While everyone benefits from this work, the benefit to persons with disabilities is the true mission.

In support of the Government of Canada’s goal of a barrier-free Canada by 2040, the purpose of Justice Canada’s Accessibility Plan is to create a cohesive, unifying force within the accessibility community at Justice that allows us to create meaningful change together. A dedicated network exists to support the Accessibility Plan and ensure we achieve these goals, with two Co-Champions, six Pillar Leads, an Executive lead for accessibility and an Accessibility Coordinator, the Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities, and the Accessibility Plan Task Force. To ensure the Plan itself reflects high standards for accessibility and inclusion, the development process involves intensive review for Plain and Inclusive language. Further, intersectional Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) and the perspectives of diverse equity-seeking groups inform the content.

Changing our Department’s culture to one of accessibility by default is the ultimate goal of this Plan. To do this, we align the Accessibility Commitments for Justice Canada under six Pillars:

- [Employment](#)
- [Built Environment](#)
- [Information and Communications Technology](#)
- [Communication, other than information and communication technologies](#)
- [Procurement of goods, services and facilities and](#)
- [Design and Delivery of Programs and Services](#)

Each Pillar includes an outcome statement that defines the long-term mission, a list of key barriers and solutions, and a list of actions that target the barriers and lead to the outcome. A seventh Pillar, Transportation, exists in the *Accessible Canada Act* but falls outside the scope of Justice Canada’s mandate.

The voices of people with lived experience, including diverse subgroups with intersecting identity factors, such as women with disabilities, Indigenous persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ persons with disabilities and others, are essential to our success at all points. We selected the Outcomes and Actions that define the path we lay out in this Plan with a great deal of care for and attention to the voices of those with lived experience. These Outcomes and Actions lay out specific changes that send us on a journey to a state where employees and clients of Justice Canada with disabilities should see the Department as an employer and service provider of choice.

The *Accessible Canada Act* includes a robust accountability framework. After publishing its first Accessibility Plan, Justice Canada must update and publish a new Plan every three years. It must also

establish a feedback form to allow employees and clients to inform the content of the Plan and comment on its implementation. The Department must also prepare annual progress reports to document the main concerns expressed in feedback and explain how the department responds.

## Embracing a Culture of Accessibility

The mandate of the [Department of Justice \(Justice Canada\)](#) is to support the dual roles of the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada. Justice Canada, which is made up of about 5,000 employees, has two strategic outcomes, both of which appear in its Departmental Results Framework: to ensure a fair, relevant, and accessible justice system that reflects Canadian values, and to ensure that the federal government is supported by high quality legal services. In fulfilling its requirements under the *Accessible Canada Act*, Justice Canada has the opportunity to implement meaningful change and deliver on its strategic outcomes.

A deep-seated connection exists between the Department and work on accessibility. Justice Canada is a department that enshrines Canadian values in its strategic outcomes and work advancing equity contributes in many ways to the pursuit of justice. Efforts toward improving equity and accessibility by no means start with this Plan. The Accessibility Plan draws on and integrates with the Department's continued efforts to combat discrimination and address systemic barriers. The Accessibility Plan would not be what it is today without the work leading up to its development in areas such as Duty to Accommodate, the Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Secretariat (ARADS), Employment Equity (EE), the [Policy on GBA Plus](#), Occupational Health and Safety, Workplace Wellness, Union support, National Accommodations, Communications, Information Technology, and Procurement.

A posture of learning and humility guides the work on accessibility at the Department of Justice. We expect to continuously learn, grow and refine our approach to accessibility as we hear from our employees and clients, including the general public. We also take an iterative approach. The 2022 plan is the foundation for future Accessibility Plans – which will increase the expectations, accountability and requirements needed to achieve our accessibility goals.

Through purposeful action and genuine commitment from leadership, we believe a more just and equitable future is within reach for persons with disabilities. A great deal of work has gone into publishing this Plan, but we still see that the real work begins now. Through this plan, we bring the voices of those most impacted to the forefront, and hold ourselves accountable for ensuring the future they need becomes real.



## Consultations

A co-development model inspired the approach to drafting the Accessibility Plan. The Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) at Justice acted as the key, trusted partner throughout development. While drafting the Accessibility Plan, the Accessibility Plan Team facilitated experience-based conversations with the ACPD members, then offered ACPD members the first opportunity to comment at each stage of development. Additional engagement from members of four Employment Equity Advisory Committees (Indigenous Peoples, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression, Visible Minorities, and Women at Justice) and the Black Employees' Network contributed to an inclusive and intersectional lens on our work.

### Accessible and Inclusive Feedback Methods

By relying on the guiding principle of Nothing Without Us and the goal of being inclusive and accessible, the consultation process provided participants with targeted questions, sufficient information, time, and different means of participation. In addition to working with the ACPD, the three key methods of consultation were:

- The Pillar Leads and experts within the Department conducted voluntary interviews with employees
- An employee survey allowed participants to share their individual experience anonymously
- A public feedback form was open for two years to anyone interacting with the department

### What We Heard

The consultations leading up to the publication of the Accessibility Plan amassed a large collection of data based on accounts of personal experience. In listening to these messages, some common themes emerged over time. We heard a call for:

- Centralizing tools, information, and resources
- Improving knowledge and awareness
- Building a culture of accessibility
- Reducing delays in equipping people to do their best work and
- Removing the burden of advocacy and action from persons with disabilities and sharing the responsibility moving forward

Additional examples of barriers associated with each Pillar appear in the sections that follow. Some participants responded to our questions by identifying barriers, while others responded with suggestions for solutions, and the examples below reflect this.

### Training

Throughout the consultations leading up to drafting Justice Canada's Accessibility Plan, one of the barriers that came up repeatedly was lack of knowledge. All employees at Justice Canada need the knowledge foundation to produce accessible work. Managers need knowledge of what to do when an employee faces a barrier. Specialists in the fields associated to the Pillars of Accessibility at Justice Canada need to be able to enhance their work with accessibility awareness.

Because of hearing the urgent need for knowledge and understanding related to accessibility within the Department, promoting the wealth of information related to accessibility and accessible work practices is a top priority for all contributors to the Accessibility Plan. These efforts will help employees across the department increase their accessibility knowledge by drawing their attention to the resources that exist and ensuring the resources are easy to find. Further, Pillar Leads are pursuing specialized training options for subject matter experts in their fields.

## **Accessibility Commitments for Justice Canada**

The commitments in this plan, as reflected in the actions below, are the focus of our efforts between now and December 2025. Evergreen implementation strategies connect the commitments to departmental operations under each Pillar area. Continuous engagement and collaboration with persons with disabilities ensures the implementation strategies and the actions they support lead to the best and most timely results possible.

# Employment

## Outcome

Our mission for accessibility under the Employment Pillar at Justice Canada:

Job seekers and employees with disabilities see Justice Canada as an employer of choice and can contribute at their full potential through access to employment opportunities and promotions.

## Barriers

The barriers related to Employment as reported through consultations and our feedback mechanisms fell within three categories:

### Duty to Accommodate

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Long delays in putting accommodation measures in place
- Documentation-heavy processes requiring medical reports and specialist opinions
- Having to repeat the accommodation process with every change in position and
- Stigma as an obstacle to making accommodation requests

### Recruitment

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Create awareness and provide training on unconscious bias
- Offer internships and short work contracts to see if an individual feels comfortable in the environment and
- Design selection processes and assessment tools with accessibility needs in mind at the onset

### Retention and Promotion

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Allow and encourage flexible hours and part time work
- Use talent management plans and mentoring to encourage and promote from within the department
- Ensure that all employees are respected and feel valued
- Use disability inclusion policies to make sure everyone has the same opportunities for advancement

- Provide assistance in preparing for promotions
- Ensure representation of persons with disabilities at the management level and
- Stop the stigma associated with disabilities

## **Actions**

The Department is taking concrete steps to remove and/or prevent those barriers, including:

**Justice Canada establishes a central point of contact for all questions and requests related to accommodations, built around the Workplace Accessibility Passport system to reduce wait times, documentation requirements, repetition, and stigma.**

Supporting actions include:

- adopting the [GC Workplace Accessibility Passport](#)
- establishing a central point of contact for all questions and requests related to accessibility and accommodations and
- creating and maintaining a list of all accessibility training courses and tools available to employees

**Justice Canada practices inclusive and accessible hiring such that all candidates, including those with disabilities, have the opportunity to demonstrate their capacities.**

Supporting actions include:

- improving the accessibility of candidate assessment with tools and resources
- participating in initiatives that promote inclusion (such as [FIPCD](#) and [FSWEP](#))
- reducing and mitigating the effects of bias<sup>1</sup> through training and guidance and
- recruiting employees with disabilities according to workforce availability

**Justice Canada provides employees with disabilities with opportunities to enhance career satisfaction and advancement.**

Supporting actions include:

- providing talent management and mentorship
- providing language training that is accessible and meets accommodations and
- improving support for managers to increase awareness

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<sup>1</sup> Persons with disabilities with intersecting identity factors such as members of racialized groups and members of official language minority communities might be disproportionately impacted by bias, racism and discrimination.

# Built Environment

## Outcome

Our mission for accessibility under the Built Environment Pillar at Justice Canada:

Clients and employees of Justice Canada, including those with disabilities, can make best use of all Justice occupied facilities through barrier-free access.

## Barriers

The barriers related to the Built Environment as reported through consultations and our feedback mechanisms fell within three categories:

### Mobility

#### Movement around and within Justice Canada facilities

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Ensure ramps are in place at ground-level access points and regular maintenance occurs in all seasons
- Halls, doorways, and security gates must be wide enough to pass through in a wheelchair, with room for work materials and other assistive devices
- Elevator doors must allow time for people with restricted mobility to enter and exit
- Automatic door openers need to be in place and maintained, with temporary solutions in place when out of order
- Temporary circulation routes that are put in place due to maintenance or construction must take accessibility into account

### Environment

#### Qualitative and experiential elements of a healthy workplace such as lighting, noise levels, and décor

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Ventilation and heating/cooling system noise must be low enough to hear speakers at a comfortable volume
- Microphones and speakers must be available in larger or more crowded meeting spaces, and speakers (both presenters and audience members who ask questions) must use them
- Designated accessibility-friendly space and seating room should exist in gathering and meeting spaces, especially for large scale events

- For the two preceding points, ease of microphone access must play a part in the layout design
- Artificial light may cause irritation, stress, and pain, so areas with sufficient natural light are required
- Motion detection-based automatic lighting systems cause painful interference with hearing aids
- Furnishings with static positioning only fit certain people, so adjustable furniture is preferable

## **Guidance**

### **Wayfinding information, signage, and interactions with personnel**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Alarm systems that use only sound to alert people of an emergency exclude persons with hearing-related disabilities, so alarm systems must include other sensory stimuli and communication methods
- A communication barrier usually exists between commissionaires and sign language speakers and/or persons with hearing-related disabilities, so commissionaires should be equipped with technology or training to address this

## **Actions**

The department is taking concrete steps to remove and/or prevent those barriers, including:

### **Justice Canada reviews the built environment in partnership with persons with disabilities to identify ways to make Justice buildings more accessible and inclusive.**

Supporting actions include:

- conducting accessibility assessments of all Justice occupied buildings and their surroundings to identify accessible features (completed)
- conducting extensive consultations within Justice to identify improvements to the accessibility of our office environment (completed and on-going)
- tracking and monitoring implementation of improvements, and
- regular engagement and consultation with the Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities (ACPD)

### **Justice Canada develops tools to enhance use of the built environment.**

Supporting actions include:

- maintaining and updating the Accessibility Considerations Checklist in consultation with the ACPD
- creating and maintaining the Building Accessibility Brochure that identifies the accessibility features of each building and
- consulting with working groups and committees to review, test and implement new, innovative accessibility solutions in the workplace

**Justice Canada supports and contributes to the development of new office standards that create a barrier-free environment.**

Supporting actions include:

- incorporating accessibility features to space retrofits and new builds per the Accessibility Considerations Checklist and current accessibility and building code standards
- piloting initiatives in consultation with persons with disabilities to identify recommendations to improve accessibility in the built environment and
- monitoring changes in the Canadian Standards Association related to accessibility in the Built Environment



# Information and Communications Technology

## Outcome

Our mission for accessibility under the Information and Communications Technology Pillar at Justice Canada:

Information and communications technology provides all users, including those with disabilities, with leading edge tools that enhance capacity and improve efficiency.

## Barriers

The barriers related to Information and Communications Technology as reported through consultations and our feedback mechanisms fell within three categories:

### Planning and Acquiring New Digital Systems and Technology

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Awareness of new and emerging accessible and enabling technology is not up to date, or this information does not reach a wide audience and
- It is difficult to obtain speech recognition software, or this software is inconsistently available, when it should be readily and consistently available

### Adapting and Updating Existing Programs and Technology

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Automated closed captioning in MS Teams is inaccurate and unreliable, and unusable in French
- The chat function in MS Teams reads out in real time when using a screen reader, making it hard to hear the person who is speaking in the meeting
- Internal digital systems do not receive regular updates as new accessibility technologies emerge

### Providing User Training and Guidance

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Employees require an internal point of contact for support in working with [AAACT](#) (Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology)
- A catalogue of accessibility functions and assistive technology is not available, or is not reaching its target audience

- There is no, or employees are broadly unaware of, readily available training or assistance for using LEX and Justice’s Digital Workspace with assistive technologies like screen readers (this also applies to Government-wide intranet resources like GCDocs and GCconnex)

## **Actions**

**Justice Canada incorporates accessibility considerations into the planning and acquisition of new digital systems and technology, and performs routine scanning to monitor for emerging advancements in accessible technology.**

Supporting actions include:

- Developing an IT software procurement checklist that ensures IT managers have considered accessibility when procuring a software via sole source or RFP

**Justice Canada enables accessibility features in existing programs and technology, and assesses current programs and technology for accessibility features to identify gaps.**

Supporting actions include:

- preparing a testing guide to assess old and new systems
- prioritize which systems to be tested first (i.e. based on number of users)
- prioritizing the order in which to update systems
- performing a review and analysis process
- reporting on the level of accessibility compliance and
- providing recommended actions to improve accessibility

**Justice Canada develops a plan to establish a centre of expertise to support employees in becoming aware of and understanding how to use tools and systems to ensure internal and external applications are accessible.**

Supporting actions include:

- creating training videos for developers on making systems more accessible and
- collaborating with the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) to develop, promote, and deliver IT accessibility training tailored for different audiences within the department

# **Communication, other than information and communication technologies**

## **Outcome**

Our mission for accessibility under the Communications Pillar at Justice Canada:

Clients, partners, and employees of Justice Canada, as well as the public, can engage and communicate with the department through means that work for them, in language and formats they can easily use and understand.

## **Barriers**

The barriers related to Communications as reported through consultations and our feedback mechanisms fell within four categories:

### **Plain Language**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Simpler language should be used
- Review plain-language writing and editing practices for a broad general public audience that includes those with disabilities

### **Sign Language and Official Languages**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Sites and survey questions could also have a sign-language video option
- Develop a guide that includes how to hire an ASL (or LSQ) interpreter
- Offer all employees the option to take sign language courses

### **Alternate formats, including templates and tools**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Accessibility of communications for employees and the public should be given the same priority as official languages
- Templates for decks should include large font and high-contrast colours
- Text on websites should have audio options

### **Culture and visibility**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Communication should establish an identity of diversity and inclusivity
- Include images of persons with physical disabilities in Justice brochures, videos, and the website
- Tell stories of staff with disabilities to lower cultural barriers and raise awareness of physical and invisible disabilities

## **Actions**

### **Justice Canada develops and implements a Plain Language Strategy to raise awareness among all employees and improve readability across internal and external communications.**

Supporting actions include:

- Awareness activities and learning opportunities to increase plain language capacity across the department and
- Expand our offering of Justice Publications available in braille and alternative formats

### **Justice Canada events offer Sign Language interpretation in both Official Languages.**

Supporting actions include:

- Promote and socialize guidance on best practices for events and
- Work with the translation bureau and other suppliers to make best use of available interpreter resources

### **Justice Canada updates core departmental templates and tools for MS Word, MS PowerPoint, and PDFs to meet accessibility requirements and include basic user guidance to maintain accessibility in the templates.**

Supporting actions include:

- Develop accessible branding and

Work with Information and Communications Technologies Lead to:

- Conduct inventory and needs analysis of templates and
- Develop user guidance

### **Justice Canada integrates disability inclusion and accessibility awareness into the department's communications outputs such that Canadians and departmental employees, including those with disabilities, see themselves considered and reflected.**

Supporting actions include:

- Implement and promote the accessibility feedback form on our website
- Review and update the “about our organization” section of our website and the photo gallery and
- Applying accessibility planning to Justice’s growing digital footprint, including on Social Media

# Procurement of goods, services and facilities

## Outcome

Our mission for accessibility under the Procurement Pillar at Justice Canada:

Justice Canada project and technical authorities consider accessibility requirements when relevant in their specifications for procuring goods, services, and facilities, so that the deliverables provide the necessary accessibility features.

## Barriers

The barriers related to Procurement as reported through consultations and our feedback mechanisms fell within three categories:

### **Lack of awareness of accessibility when defining procurement requirements (current requirements and future requirements)**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Sole-sourcing and fast-track procurement shouldn't forgo accessibility considerations
- Benchmark with other departments and consider best practices or available standards in accessible procurement, especially with PSPC
- Leverage end user feedback when defining procurement statement of work

### **Availability of goods or services with accessibility features**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Project/Technical Authority in collaboration with contracting officers should conduct more market research and analysis

### **Lack of industry standards for certain goods or services**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Ensure the contractor has included accessibility considerations in the proposals

## Actions

**Justice Canada considers accessibility in all procurement actions, providing consistent guidance on applying considerations during the procurement process.**

Supporting actions include:

- Procurement officers play a challenge function and guidance role related to accessibility considerations with project and technical authorities
- Provide procurement officers with opportunities to increase their knowledge of accessibility requirements and
- Monitor and review the use of the accessibility justification form

**Justice Canada provides guidance and analysis to identify goods and services with accessibility features, and maintains a reference list for use in delivering advice and guidance during procurement actions.**

Supporting actions include:

- Maintain a list of accessibility standards for goods and services
- Facilitate conversations among procurement officers regarding accessibility and
- Improve awareness of accessibility considerations in procurement across Justice

# Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

## Outcome

Our mission for accessibility under the Design and Delivery of Programs and Services Pillar at Justice Canada:

Persons with disabilities have a better user experience when engaging with Justice Canada because the department considers their needs throughout service design, implementation, and review.

## Barriers

The barriers related to the Design and Delivery of Programs and Services as reported through consultations and our feedback mechanisms fell within three categories:

### **Lack of consultation with persons with disabilities during the service design phase**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Consultation is key to designing accessible services and programs
- Consideration should be given to the impact of policies, programs and procedures on individuals with invisible disabilities and chronic conditions
- If Justice only accepts applications online this may be a barrier for some

### **Inconsistent maintenance or lack of upkeep of existing accessible services**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- There is a need for a web-based interactive voice response system to replace outdated TTY through an operator
- Assess departmental efforts to share information with the public, including access to justice and Public Legal Education and Information, in this context

### **Lack of guidance, training, and advance preparation to enable employees who deliver services to meet clients' accessibility needs**

The barriers and solutions we heard about included the following:

- Legal services units indicated administrative processes as an accessibility barrier, e.g., lengthy processes for contacting the legal unit
- Overall absence of official guidelines and policies governing how to design and offer inclusive services



- The onus often appears to be on service recipients to self-identify and then proactively seek accommodations

## **Actions**

### Consulting and Integrating Feedback

**Justice Canada includes persons with disabilities throughout the new service lifecycle, from design to implementation.**

Supporting actions include:

- Include persons with disabilities in validation of needs and service design testing and
- Experiment with automated accessibility checks when designing new services or platforms

**Justice Canada continuously reassesses accessibility as part of cyclical service review.**

Supporting actions include:

- Validate that all services offered by Justice have feedback mechanisms and that they are accessible, to allow persons with disability to raise issues
- Include questions on accessibility when requesting feedback and collecting data on client service
- Use data collected through feedback mechanisms to make informed service improvement decisions related to accessibility and
- Participate in conversations about accessibility issues and solutions with other federal organizations and different levels of governments (provincial, territorial and municipal) to exchange lessons learned and identify partnership opportunities

## **Raising Awareness**

**Justice Canada socializes existing service accessibility guides and tools with all employees, and dedicates additional support to those designing services.**

Supporting actions include:

- Support capacity building in user-centred design and strategic change management best practices in relation to accessibility

# Transportation

Transportation is the seventh pillar of accessibility under the *Accessible Canada Act*. We list it in this plan as required by the *Act*, but is not included in the scope of Justice Canada's mandate.

## Accountability

The accountability structures in place in the *Accessible Canada Act*, the Accessible Canada Regulations, and within the Department of Justice ensure we maintain momentum toward our goals. The actions for each Pillar are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely), which means measurement and tracking are built-in.

The Accessibility Plan Team monitors quarterly tracking of implementation status against the actions, and maintains open communication within the Accessibility Network (Co-Champions, Pillar Leads, the Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities (ACPD), and the Accessibility Plan Task Force) regarding the feedback form.

Leading up to annual reports on the Accessibility Plan, the Accessibility Plan Team retains records of feedback, maintains continuous engagement with the ACPD, and performs consultations to monitor for changes and identify new goals. The same processes support the redevelopment and publication of a new Accessibility Plan every three years.

Time and again, we hear how much accountability matters to persons with disabilities at Justice. The accessibility community within Justice recognizes and values the importance of the Accessibility Plan in fulfilling the needs and expectations of persons with disabilities.

## **A New Narrative**

Persons with disabilities, like all individuals, hold tremendous potential. However, for persons with disabilities, removing barriers is the difference between knowing that potential exists and living out that potential. There are few experiences more empowering than seeing ourselves live up to our potential, and making that experience of empowerment possible for persons with disabilities creates an opportunity to define a new model for our society. By removing barriers and fostering accessibility, we change the narrative. When it comes time to write the next Accessibility Plan for Justice Canada, we hope to hear new themes emerging from our conversations about the experiences of persons with disabilities – themes of hope, and of progress.

So let's write a new story together. It may be a challenging one, and we may stumble along the way, but little by little, we will make progress. And after all, isn't progress far more human, and far more beautiful, than perfection?

# General

We have contact forms for employee and client feedback on:

- [the implementation of the Accessibility Plan](#) and
- [barriers to accessibility and inclusion](#)

At Justice Canada, the person who receives your feedback on barriers and the accessibility plan is the Accessibility Coordinator. Feedback will be acknowledged through the same means by which it was received, unless it was received anonymously. You can also contact the Accessibility Coordinator to request a copy of the Plan or the feedback process description in an alternate format.

Available alternate formats:

- [Braille \(a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers\)](#)
- [Audio \(a recording of someone reading the text out loud\)](#)

Alternate formats also include:

- Print
- Large print (larger and clearer font)
- Electronic (an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities)

## Contact Us

### Telephone

613-957-4222\*

### TDD/TTY

613-992-4556

\*For Canadians who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired, access can be achieved via their own interpreter or via Canada VRS, which provides an interpreter: <https://srvcanadavrs.ca/en/>

### Fax

613-954-0811

### Mailing Address

Department of Justice Canada  
284 Wellington Street

Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada K1A 0H8

**E-mail**

[AccessibilityPlan-Plandaccessibilite@justice.gc.ca](mailto:AccessibilityPlan-Plandaccessibilite@justice.gc.ca)

# Glossary

## AAACT

The Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology program (AAACT) is committed to making the Public Service of Canada a barrier-free, inclusive workplace, with many services. AACT is making this vision a reality by supporting departments who offer programs and services to Canadians and building accessible workplaces with equal opportunities for all employees.<sup>2</sup>

## Accessibility

Accessibility is the combination of aspects that influence a person's ability to function within an environment. It is about giving equal access to everyone.<sup>3</sup>

## Accessibility Passport

The GC Workplace Accessibility Passport helps address the obstacles federal public service employees and applicants with disabilities face in obtaining the tools, supports and measures to perform at their best and succeed in the workplace. It facilitates recruitment, retention, and career advancement for persons with disabilities.<sup>4</sup>

## Accessible

Accessible refers to a place that is easily reached, an environment that is easily navigated or a program or service that can be easily used or obtained. This includes certain aspects of our environment that have been adapted for use by people who identify as people with disabilities.<sup>3</sup>

## Accessible/Accessibility Technology

Technology present in the workplace or at home that gives employees and clients the resources they need to perform to their highest potential, without internal or external barriers.<sup>5</sup>

## Accommodation

It is the modification of a work environment and the creation of a welcoming workplace for any employee that is ill, injured or identifies as having a disability, so that they can stay at work or successfully return to work from an absence due to illness or injury, and perform job functions efficiently and safely.<sup>6</sup>

## Barrier

A barrier can mean anything - including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice - that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment,

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<sup>2</sup> [Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology \(AAACT\) – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Interim Accessibility Plan – agriculture.canada.ca](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Accessible Technology Program \(canada.ca\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Accommodation – Canada.ca](#)

including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.<sup>7</sup>

### **Bias**

A preconceived judgment that is held by a person and that influences their perception of or their behaviour towards another person or group of people.<sup>8</sup>

### **Culture of Accessibility**

Culture is reflected in the attitudes and behaviours within the organization and determines what is encouraged or discouraged. Employees face implicit expectations that will affect the decisions they make each day as part of their work. This can be seen in many aspects of your day-to-day activities.

A culture of accessibility is the attitudes that promote a fair, accessible workplace for all employees, that are seen everyday at work.<sup>9</sup>

### **Disability**

Disability means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment - or a functional limitation - whether permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.

- **Seeing** disabilities affect vision, including total blindness, partial sight and visual distortion
- **Hearing** disabilities affect ability to hear, including being hard of hearing, deafness or acoustic distortion
- **Mobility** issues affect ability to move your body, including the required use of a wheelchair or a cane, or other issues impacting your mobility. Issues with flexibility or dexterity affects ability to move joints or perform motor tasks, especially with your hands
- **Mental health** issues affect psychology or behaviour, such as anxiety, depression or social/compulsive disorder or phobia or psychiatric illness
- **Sensory/environmental** disabilities affect sensitivity to light, sounds or other distractions, as well as allergens and other environmental sensitivities
- **Cognitive** disabilities affect ability to carry out tasks involving executive functioning, such as planning and organization, learning information, communication and memory, including autism or Asperger's syndrome, attention deficit disorder, and learning disabilities
- **Intellectual** disabilities affect your ability to learn and to adapt behaviour to different situations
- **Chronic health conditions or pain** affect ability to function on a regular or episodic basis due to migraines, Crohn's disease, colitis, and other disabilities or health conditions<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> [Accessible Canada Act \(justice.gc.ca\)](https://www.justice.gc.ca)

<sup>8</sup> [EDI – New Entries accessible – July](#)

<sup>9</sup> [AccessAbility Playbook: Play 7 – Be part of an accessible culture \(ceacs-cesca.github.io\)](https://ceacs-cesca.github.io)



Other source:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/arc/reference-guide.html#h2.3-h3.1>

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination means treating someone differently or unfairly because of a personal characteristic or distinction, which, whether intentional or not, has an effect that imposes disadvantages not imposed on others or that withholds or limits access that is given to others.<sup>3</sup>

Other source:

[What is Discrimination? \(chrc-ccdp.gc.ca\)](http://chrc-ccdp.gc.ca)

### **Duty to Accommodate**

The duty to accommodate is the duty of employers to make sure that their workplaces are inclusive and allow all workers to participate fully. This duty relates to the grounds of discrimination in human rights laws.<sup>10</sup>

### **Gender Identity**

Gender Identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from the gender typically associated with their sex assigned at birth. For some persons, their gender identity is different from the gender typically associated with their sex assigned at birth; this is often described as *transgender* or simply *trans*. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation.<sup>11</sup>

### **Inclusion**

Inclusion is the act of recognizing, valuing and building on differences in identity, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, experiences and perspectives while respecting human rights.<sup>3</sup>

### **Jargon**

Special words or expressions that are used by a particular profession or group and are difficult for others to understand.<sup>21</sup>

### **Nothing Without Us**

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<sup>10</sup> [Duty to accommodate | Public Service Alliance of Canada \(psacunion.ca\)](http://psacunion.ca)

<sup>11</sup> [Gender Identity and Gender Expression – Canada.ca](http://Canada.ca)

<sup>21</sup> [Jargon definition – Google Search](http://Google Search)

Nothing Without Us is an accessibility strategy used for the Public Service of Canada to communicate the message that persons with disabilities will be involved in the developmental and implementation of new policies concerning accessibility.<sup>12 13</sup>

### **Official language minority communities**

Official language minority communities are groups of people whose maternal or chosen official language is not the majority language in their province or territory – in other words, Anglophones in Quebec and Francophones outside of Quebec. For the purposes of its granting programs, the Canada Council defines OLMC individuals, groups and arts organizations as those who self-identify as belonging to one of these groups.<sup>14</sup>

### **Plain Language**

Writing that is easily understandable on first reading. This does not include over-simplifying or leaving out critical information. Plain language actually makes critical information accessible for everyone.<sup>15 16</sup>

### **Procurement**

The action of acquiring goods and services by departments and agencies to ensure that workspaces are accessible and usable by everyone, including persons with disabilities.

This ensures that the goods and services the government buys are accessible and usable by everyone, including persons with disabilities.<sup>20 16</sup>

### **Racialized group**

A group of people categorized according to ethnic or racial characteristics and subjected to discrimination on that basis.

Ethnic characteristics include culture, language and religion. Racial characteristics include skin colour, hair texture and facial features.<sup>8</sup>

### **Sexual Orientation**

A person's physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to, and/or intimate relations with, individuals of a different gender, the same gender, no gender, or more than one gender. A person's understanding of their sexual orientation may change.<sup>17</sup>

### **Systemic barrier**

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<sup>12</sup> [Accessibility in the public service – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Progress Report on Implementation of “Nothing Without Us”: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada \(2019-20\) – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Official language minority communities | Canada Council for the Arts](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Canada.ca Content Style Guide – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Glossary – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Accessible procurement – Advancing socio-economic goals, increasing competition and fostering innovation – Better Buying – Buying and selling – PSPC \(tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Internationally recognized sexual orientation or gender identity or expression \(SOGIE\) definitions \(REV-OVS-13-3-1\) – Canada.ca](#)

Systemic barriers are policies or practices that result in some individuals from underrepresented groups receiving unequal access to or being excluded from participation in employment, services or programs. These barriers are systemic in nature, meaning they result from institutional-level practices, policies, traditions and/or values that may be “unintended” or “unseen” to those who do not experience them, but that have serious and long-lasting impacts on the lives of those affected (e.g. on their career trajectories and/or mental and physical health).<sup>18</sup>

### **Visible Minority**

Visible minority is defined for federal employment equity purposes. Visible minority refers to whether a person is a visible minority or not, as defined by the *Employment Equity Act*. Persons, other than Indigenous peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> [Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research \(sshrc-crsh.gc.ca\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Visible minority of person \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)