



Canadian Northern Economic  
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de développement  
économique du Nord

# **Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency**

## **Accessibility Plan (2022-2025)**

### **Progress Report**

**December 31, 2023**

**Canada** 

## ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT FOR CANADIAN NORTHERN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CanNor)

CanNor is committed to fostering and preserving an inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible workplace where every employee is able to contribute to their fullest and to feel safe in bringing their authentic selves to work. Our vision is an organization that is representative of the population we serve, where the principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) are seamlessly embodied in everything we say and do, and where every employee feels responsible for upholding those principles. We know that accessibility is a journey and we are always looking for ways to enhance accessibility for employees and the clients we serve.

CanNor adheres to the philosophy “inclusion by design” which provides an inclusive and accessible work environment for employees where seeking accommodation is not required.

### GENERAL

The Accessibility Plan (2022 – 2025) and Progress Report (December 31, 2023) are available on CanNor’s website at the following link [Accessibility at the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency \(cannor.gc.ca\)](https://www.cannor.gc.ca/Accessibility-at-the-Canadian-Northern-Economic-Development-Agency)

To submit feedback on CanNor’s Accessibility Plan (2022-2025), this Progress Report, barriers within CanNor or accessing programs, or to obtain copies in alternate formats, please contact:

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The following tables detail the Activities that CanNor committed to in the Accessibility Plan (2022-2025) and new Activities identified through consultation with employees. New activities are identified by an asterisk (\*).

## Employment

CanNor is committed to a workforce representative of the population we serve. We strive to ensure that HR systems and processes that impact recruitment, development and promotion are barrier-free.

The following activities have been completed or are currently underway.

ACTIVITY	ACTION TAKEN
<p>Create a compendium of recruitment tools and resources for managers and HR Advisors, with a focus on guides and best practices for barrier-free hiring. Promote the use of best practices during recruitment processes.</p>	<p>Information was shared with all staff about the Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit developed by the Public Service Commission. The Toolkit provides hiring managers and human resources professionals with information, practical tips, resources and strategies to apply an inclusive lens to their hiring activities.</p> <p>In addition, information sessions for hiring managers on the amendments to the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> were promoted.</p> <p>Human Resources Advisors will discuss the Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit at the beginning of every recruitment process and will continue to work with managers in identifying and addressing biases and barriers during the recruitment process.</p>
<p>Create and implement new wording for job advertisements detailing CanNor’s commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.</p>	<p>Completed – new wording developed and used in CanNor job advertisements</p>
<p>Implement the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport to facilitate conversations between employees and their managers about the tools and supports required for employees to perform at their best in the workplace.</p>	<p>CanNor has implemented the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport.</p> <p>Employees and managers were provided with information about the Passport and its implementation by e-mails and information sessions conducted by the Office of Public Service for Accessibility (OPSA).</p> <p>Twice a year a reminder about the Passport will be sent to all employees.</p>

	Letters of offer contain information about the Workplace Accessibility Passport and information will be included as part of the onboarding process.
Provide employees and managers with resources and/or training to enhance understanding of accessibility in the workplace.	Ongoing promotion of tools and resources, e.g. information about the Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Technology (AACT) team is included in all letters of offer, information sessions promoted to all staff, etc.

The following activities are planned:

ACTIVITY	PLANNED COMPLETION
Conduct an employment systems review to identify and address systemic and attitudinal barriers to employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and other employment equity groups. The review will be conducted in accordance with the <i>Employment Systems Review Guide</i> developed by the Public Service Commission and the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer.	2024/2025 fiscal year
Investigate and implement tools to expand CanNor’s reach to recruitment of persons with disabilities.	By March 31, 2024
Ensure that CanNor’s Accommodation process is streamlined to remove unnecessary approvals and to allow for timely implementation.	2024/2025 fiscal year
Upon release of the new self-identification process and forms from Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO), launch a self-identification campaign to inform employees of the new expanded process.	2024/2025 fiscal year: OCHRO plans to launch the new process in 2024.

## Built Environment

Some CanNor employees in the Iqaluit office occupy Crown Housing through lease agreement with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC). CanNor recognizes the challenges with availability of housing in Iqaluit and will continue to work with employees and PSPC to identify appropriate housing and solutions to accessibility issues.

The following activities have been completed or are currently underway.

ACTIVITY	ACTION TAKEN
Consult with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to conduct accessibility assessments in CanNor offices and engage with federal partners to address physical barriers	<p>Iqaluit office: meeting held with landlord and PSPC to discuss accessibility in the office. Plans have been sent to the landlord re: doors that need to be made accessible.</p> <p>New (additional) office space being built in Iqaluit is fully accessible.</p> <p>Offices in Whitehorse and NCR are fully accessible.</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety bulletin board lowered in Iqaluit office (issue identified in the Employee Accessibility Survey).</p> <p>Reminders re: scent-free workplace sent to all employees quarterly (issue identified in Employee Survey).</p> <p>Information re: building issues (e.g.: elevator maintenance) including updates on resolution progress are promptly shared with employees.</p>
Consult with all employees to identify gaps in the built environment and workplace culture that contribute to a lack of accessibility	Completed through Employee Accessibility Survey conducted in February 2023. Results were used in the development of CanNor’s Accessibility Action Plan.
Liaise with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to identify barriers in Crown Housing and develop a workplan to address those barriers	Ongoing discussions with PSPC to identify accessibility issues and discuss solutions. CanNor has advised PSPC that CanNor will pay for the cost of any modifications required, up to the point of undue hardship.

	<p>CanNor is working with PSPC to identify an accessible unit for employee housing (used by CanNor employees from other locations when visiting the Iqaluit office). This unit will also be available if required by a new employee needing crown housing.</p> <p>This activity will continue in 2024/2025 fiscal year.</p>
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The following activities are planned:

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>PLANNED COMPLETION</b>
Consult with PSPC to conduct accessibility assessments in CanNor offices and engage with federal partners to address physical barriers.	2024/2025 fiscal year: Yellowknife Office – accessibility review to be completed.
Liaise with Public Services and Procurement Canada to identify barriers in Crown Housing and develop a workplan to address those barriers.	2024/2025 fiscal year.
Develop and distribute procedure for employees to identify accessibility issues in the built environment, including general concerns and issues of immediate safety.*	By March 31, 2024.  Procedure will be distributed through InfoNorth.
Develop and distribute procedure for employees to identify accessibility issues in Crown Housing, including general concerns and issues of immediate safety.*	By March 31, 2024.  Procedure will be distributed through InfoNorth.

## Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Accessibility is the digital equivalent of accessibility in the physical environment. CanNor believes that it is essential that all employees and clients can access information, perform tasks and receive the same service using information technology.

The following activity has been completed:

ACTIVITY	ACTION TAKEN
Provide information and training to employees related to the accessibility features of current interactive tools and software.*	Ad-hoc one-on-one training is being provided when requested.

The following activities are planned:

ACTIVITY	PLANNED COMPLETION
In consultation with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), conduct an assessment of CanNor's digital accessibility using the <i>Government of Canada ICT Accessibility Scorecard</i> and develop a plan to improve upon deficiencies.	2024/2025 fiscal year.  Incremental hardware and software enhancements are made annually.  Information is being gathered about the scorecard and the assessment will be conducted in FY 2024/25.
Promote the tools and resources available for managers and employees such as the <i>Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology (AACT)</i> team, the <i>Centralized Enabling Workplace Fund</i> , and the <i>Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport</i> .	2024/2025 fiscal year.
Provide information and training to employees related to the accessibility features of current interactive tools and software.	2024/2025 fiscal year: Information and training materials are being researched. Information and training will be offered to all employees.

## Communication (other than ICT)

CanNor is committed to communication products and activities that are accessible by default. Clear, direct and easy to understand communication removes barriers, and allows everyone to fully use the information and serves, participate in consultation and conversations and attend events.

The following activities are underway:

ACTIVITY	ACTION TAKEN
Integrate the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) <i>Guidelines on Making Communications Products and Activities Accessible</i> when planning and developing communications products and activities.	Ongoing.  The Communications team has regular discussions about ensuring the accessibility of products and activities. The guidelines were discussed at the December 2023 Communications team meeting.
Promote the use of the <i>Digital Accessibility Toolkit</i> .	Information was sent to all staff highlighting areas of interest in the Toolkit.
Continue to meet all accessibility standards for internal and external web content.	Ongoing discussions are held with ISC/CIRNAC who have the expertise in this area.

The following activities are planned:

ACTIVITY	PLANNED COMPLETION
Provide information via written documents, links to resources and/or information sessions to employees on plain language.	March 31, 2024.
Provide information via written documents, links to resources and/or information sessions to employees on how to make documents (including e-mails) more accessible.*	2024/2025 fiscal year.



## Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Accessible procurement is about identifying accessibility barriers and how requirements can be defined to meet the needs of a broad range of end-users.

The following activity is underway:

ACTIVITY	PLANNED COMPLETION
Liaise with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) during the procurement process to ensure that accessibility is a primary consideration in the process.	2024/2025 fiscal year.

## Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

The *Nothing Without Us* strategy identifies the need to ensure that persons with disabilities, including employees and clients, have barrier-free access to programs and services.

The following activities are underway:

ACTIVITY	PROGRESS
In consultation with persons with disabilities, identify barriers to accessing programs and funding.	A Client Survey was launched in December 2023. The feedback received will be used to update CanNor’s Accessibility Action Plan.

The following activities are planned:

ACTIVITY	PROGRESS
Build accessibility into all new policies and programs.	2024/2025 fiscal year.
Review existing program and funding information and, where necessary, prepare in alternate format.	2024/2025 fiscal year.  Feedback received from the Client Survey will be used to complete this activity.  Ongoing: program and funding information available to the public and clients through the CanNor website meets the Government of Canada’s accessibility requirements.
Consult with all employees to identify barriers to receiving accessible training that meets their needs.	2024/2025 fiscal year.  The employee survey identified barriers in training accessibility, however, no details were provided. CanNor will consult with employees to determine specific barriers and work to obtain more information.

## Transportation

CanNor has a corporate vehicle in each of the Iqaluit, Yellowknife and Whitehorse offices for employees to use in carrying out work-related responsibilities. The current vehicles are not accessible.

There are unique challenges with travel in the North that have caused CanNor employees to experience challenges with accessible travel to the point of concern for safety (e.g. difficulty getting on/off small aircrafts due to limited accessibility options).

The following activities are planned.

ACTIVITY	PLANNED COMPLETION
Explore, in consultation with Public Services and Procurement Canada and with other Federal Departments in Iqaluit, Yellowknife and Whitehorse, availability of an accessible vehicle for employees.	2024/2025 fiscal year
Where a CanNor employee is unable to be accommodated by public transport safely, in a way that preserves their dignity, CanNor will work with the employee to explore alternatives that allow them to complete their responsibilities.	Ongoing

## General

The following activities are planned:

ACTIVITY	PLANNED COMPLETION
Develop and distribute information about leading effective meetings.*	2024/2025 fiscal year
Explore options for improving the sound in the boardroom especially for persons with hearing loss.	By March 31, 2024: Video Conferencing improvements in progress. New and additional displays are being purchased for deployment this fiscal year. Dual screen conferencing rooms pilot to be deployed in Yellowknife in January 2024. Additional microphones have been purchased and are to be deployed before the end of January 2024.
Introduce a policy within CanNor that documents will be provided in advance of meetings to allow for review in advance.*	2024/2025 fiscal year

## CONSULTATIONS

As this Progress Report was being written, the Accessibility Committee was briefed on the progress made in working towards completion of the activities identified in the Accessibility Action Plan to give them the opportunity to provide input into any areas of concern. The Committee was provided the opportunity to comment on and provide input into the Report prior to publishing.

## FEEDBACK

The [Accessibility Plan published on CanNor's website](#) provides information about how to provide feedback on the Plan, barriers within CanNor or accessing CanNor programs.

The ["Accessibility Feedback Process"](#) encourages feedback on the Accessibility, experience of accessibility at CanNor or any other matter related to accessibility; options for feedback are provided.

No feedback has been received since the publication of CanNor's Accessibility Plan in December 2022.