

Farm Products Council of Canada

Accessibility Plan : Progress Report

2023

General

The Farm Products Council of Canada (FPCC) is a micro organization and a portfolio partner to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). FPCC occupies Building 59 on the Central Experimental Farm in the NCR, a standalone building owned by AAFC. AAFC provides significant administrative support services to FPCC, including access to many of their IM/IT systems, applications and infrastructure.

Any feedback on barriers or the accessibility plan can be sent to the Director of Corporate and Governmental Affairs – FPCC, by using the contact information below.

Farm Products Council of Canada
960 Carling Avenue, Building 59
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A0C6

By phone: 613-759-1639

By email: fpcc.corporateemail-courriercorporate.cpac@fpcc-cpac.gc.ca

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: No feedback regarding barriers to accessibility or feedback on the plan have been received.

Employment

Barriers to accessibility in employment are assessed on an ongoing basis.

FPCC is serviced by the AAFC HR team and as such, FPCC is able to leverage the knowledge and tools of our portfolio partner. General guidance and recommendations for addressing potential barriers are provided by AAFC throughout each hiring process. AAFC's experts also provide support and feedback during the process of drafting FPCC specific policies and procedures, again allowing their accessibility expertise to be leveraged and incorporated into our internal direction.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: Barriers to accessibility continue to be assessed on an ongoing basis. Research this year into availability and implementation of tools required to overcome visual impairments was promising, leading to the conclusion that tools can be made available should they be required.

The built environment

FPCC occupies Building 59 on the Central Experimental Farm in the NCR, a building owned and operated by AAFC. FPCC and AAFC share the responsibility for significant changes to the building and are working together to ensure it reflects current accessibility standards.

As FPCC staff have worked remotely for the majority of the past two years, no actual barriers have been identified recently by employees or visitors. However, renovations were just completed that included redesigning a previously inaccessible area to make it accessible for those with mobility challenges.

In addition, some environmental sensitivities have been addressed by opting to install laminate flooring when and where possible in order to reduce the dust and allergens normally found in carpeting. The small footprint of the building will allow systematic replacement of flooring throughout the office to continue over the coming fiscal years.

As FPCC staff return to the office more regularly over the coming months, increased feedback will be solicited from staff and appropriate actions will be taken to ensure the building is, and remains, highly accessible.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: No barriers to accessibility were identified in the building during the year. Flooring continues to be replaced during construction projects to lend to environment cleanliness. However, the construction process itself creates a barrier for those with environmental sensitivities. As this is a temporary barrier only, it can be managed through remote work options.

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

FPCC has identified one specific barrier to accessibility in ICT.

Third party documents posted on our website may pose a barrier to accessibility. The documents are posted on FPCC's website as a result of formal Complaint and Public Hearing processes and, not being owned by FPCC, do not always conform to Government accessibility standards.

FPCC will continue to follow policy updates and engage with the 3rd parties as well as AAFC to find solutions that would allow for progress in this area.

FPCC is committed to maintaining a high standard of accessibility, as defined in the Standard on Web Accessibility and the Standard on Optimizing Websites and Applications for Mobile Devices. The FPCC Web page provides direction on how to

obtain published information in alternative formats such as regular print, Braille or other appropriate formats.

In addition, FPCC is reliant on AAFC for all IT infrastructure (e.g. network, laptops, mobile, landline). As such, FPCC works closely with AAFC on the implementation of upgrades in functionality, including accessibility.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: FPCC continues to work towards solutions to this barrier. FPCC has not received any requests for accessible format copies of third party documents during this calendar year.

Communication, other than ICT

FPCC's internal communications with staff, and external communications with stakeholders are regularly done in multiple formats to ensure accessibility. In person meetings, virtual meetings, one on one discussions, group discussions, emails and information management tools are all methods used to communicate various messages to various audiences. For items of significance, multiple methods are used to ensure messages are able to reach audiences more fully.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: FPCC continues to communicate through a variety of means. FPCC has not received any feedback to identify barriers in internal or external communications.

The procurement of goods, services and facilities

FPCC has no facilities responsibilities. Facilities services are provided by AAFC.

The size of FPCC's budget ultimately results in few procurement opportunities. However, FPCC has ensured that goods procured for use in the office are appropriate for those of different abilities. For example, newly procured workstations are suitable for sit/stand work, and, collaborative areas include a variety of seating options, allowing more options for those of different abilities.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: N/A

The design and delivery of programs and services

FPCC's regulatory role is threefold, namely: Council meetings, Complaint hearings and Public hearings.

Council meetings are not public. They can be in person, virtual or hybrid. Accessibility needs of Council members and supporting staff are considered on a case by case basis.

Complaint hearings are by invitation to Complainants, Respondents, Observers and Interveners. They can be in person, virtual or hybrid. Accessibility needs of Council members, supporting staff, Complainants, Respondents, Observers and Interveners are considered on a case by case basis.

FPCC has not held a Public hearing since 2018. Accessibility will be taken into consideration in future Public hearings.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: During 2023, FPCC continued to hold meetings in person, virtually and in a hybrid format. Virtual participation was used when temporary mobility impairments were identified by participants.

Transportation

FPCC does not maintain any vehicles nor does it provide any transportation services to visitors or staff.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: N/A

Consultations

As a micro organization, direct consultation with staff and Council members is regular and ongoing. As a portfolio partner, FPCC also makes use of AAFC tools, policies and procedures which are informed from more significant consultations and feedback. FPCC will continue to accept and solicit feedback in order to continue to engage with stakeholders regarding accessibility.

Progress as of December 31st, 2023: Being an organization of 18 staff with a very focused stakeholder population, FPCC management is in regular contact with all employees, candidates and stakeholders. Consulting them directly to address their specific needs and any other needs they may identify is the most efficient way of implementing the plan in such a small organization.