



Canada Border
Services Agency

Agence des services
frontaliers du Canada

Canada

Canada Border Services Agency: Accessibility Plan 2026 to 2028



Canada Border
Services Agency

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frontaliers du Canada

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This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

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Message from senior leadership

At the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), we believe that accessibility is essential to public service. It is not just about removing barriers - it is about ensuring that everyone can participate fully, with dignity and respect.

Accessibility is a long-term transformation that touches every part of our work - from how we hire and support employees to how we design services and interact with the public. As a modern border management and enforcement organization, the CBSA is continuously reviewing its processes to make sure that we can meet the needs of the world. That is why we are continuing to work closely with persons with disabilities, employee networks and community partners. Their insights are helping us shape a stronger, more inclusive CBSA.

Over the last 3 years, we have partnered with academia and completed accessibility audits and evaluations of our initiatives. We have worked with the persons with disabilities community to test our new tools and technologies and have also built a community of employees and leaders who are engaged in making CBSA accessible and barrier-free. We have listened to feedback, learned from lived experiences and taken meaningful steps to improve how we work and how we serve.

This plan reflects our commitment to doing better. It is part of our broader efforts to modernize the agency, improve service delivery and use public resources responsibly. We are integrating accessibility from the start by designing programs, services and spaces that are accessible and inclusive by default.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this plan. Your voices are helping us move forward. Together, we are building a barrier-free CBSA, one step at a time.

Sincerely,



Erin O'Gorman
President



Annie Beauséjour
Champion for Persons with
Disabilities



General

This section provides information about our accessibility statement, ways to contact us and a high-level summary of this updated Accessibility Plan. We will explain how you can provide feedback and/or request alternative formats of this document.

Accessibility statement

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is committed to advancing accessibility in everything we do. We work with employees, clients, external partners and the disability community to identify and remove barriers, and to build a more inclusive organization.

Our vision is to be an accessible border management organization where employees can contribute their best every day, and clients feel respected and well served. We recognize that accessibility is essential to delivering high-quality public services and creating a workplace where everyone belongs.

The CBSA is committed to an accessibility-first approach in the development and design of programs and services.

Contact information and feedback process

At the CBSA, we want to hear from our employees and the public. You can give feedback on the 2026 to 2028 CBSA Accessibility Plan, our Annual Accessibility Progress Reports, or any barriers you face when interacting with us.

Please use our [accessibility feedback form](#), or alternatively please provide feedback by:

Mail: Marie-Claude Meunier, Assistant Director
Accessibility Office
Canada Border Services Agency
191 Laurier West
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0L8

Email: [CBSA.Barrier Free-Sans Barriere.ASFC@cbsa-asfc.gc.ca](mailto:CBSA.Barrier-Free-Sans-Barriere.ASFC@cbsa-asfc.gc.ca)

Phone: 1-800-461-9999, select preferred language then press 0

Teletypewriter: 1-866-335-3237

Here is how it works:

Use a TTY device to call the TTY number.

The relay answering machine will invite you to leave a text message. Type your message including your request.

In person: Accessibility feedback can be provided directly to an employee at a physical service location.

Social media: Send us a private message with your accessibility feedback on this plan, our Annual Accessibility Progress Reports or our feedback process.

[X \(Twitter\)](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

All feedback related to accessibility will be acknowledged in the same way that it is received.

Submit anonymous feedback

Feedback can be provided anonymously. To ensure feedback is anonymous, please do not include any identifying information such as an email address, phone number or return address.

What happens to the feedback

All feedback is shared with the appropriate area within the CBSA for resolution. It is also analyzed for trends and is used to inform future priorities and plans.

Annual progress reports are published in December of year 1 and 2 of each Accessibility Plan. The annual reports outline the nature of the feedback received and share how the feedback is taken into consideration.

Alternate formats

Documents can be requested in the following alternative formats:

- print
- large print
- braille
- audio and video formats
- an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities

Timeframes to receive alternate formats:

- Braille or an audio/video format: 45 days after the day that the request is received
- Any other format: within 15 days after the day that the request is received

You can request alternative formats by mail, email, phone, teletypewriter, social media or in person. Ways to make a request for alternative formats can be found under the [Contact information and feedback process](#) section above.

Executive Summary

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is proud to share our second Accessibility Plan. This plan covers 2026 to 2028 and builds on the foundation of our first plan. It reflects what we have learned from employees, clients and the persons with disabilities community.

We know that accessibility is not a one-time project. It is a long-term commitment. This plan focuses on actions that will make a real difference and last over time. Given limited resources, we are focusing on the areas where we can make the biggest impact.

We continue to focus on the 7 priority areas set out in the [Accessible Canada Act](#):

1. Employment
2. The built environment
3. The procurement of goods, services and facilities
4. Communications, other than information communications technologies
5. Information and communication technology
6. The design and delivery of programs and services
7. Transportation

As a Class 1 transportation service provider, we also follow the *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations* and the *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations*. These form our eighth priority area: Provisions to meet Canadian Transportation Agency regulations.

To help shape this plan, we asked people to share their experiences and ideas. We received feedback through 2 national surveys:

- 2,255 CBSA employees completed the internal survey
- 422 members of the public completed the external survey

We learned about barriers in hiring, workplace accommodations, digital tools, signage, kiosks and more. We also heard about the importance of plain language, inclusive design and respectful service.

This plan includes clear actions to remove barriers and improve accessibility. We will track our progress, share updates each year and adjust our approach as we learn more.

Our goal is simple: to be a border management organization that works for everyone. This plan is another step forward in building a barrier-free CBSA.



Employment

At the CBSA, about half of our employees work on the front lines at border crossings across Canada and around the world. They often work in busy, high-stress environments, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our frontline staff need specialized training in law enforcement, immigration, customs and emergency response to deliver the agency's mandate.

Because most of our frontline employees carry duty firearms and tools, they are required to meet physical and psychological fitness requirements. These requirements are in place to ensure their safety as well as to protect the public. As such, we have adapted our representation goals to be realistic based on the operational realities we face.

Our commitment to an inclusive workplace starts with our employees. We have worked closely with the persons with disabilities community to understand the community's concerns and challenges. Last year, we consulted broadly with employees and job candidates and received 2,255 responses to our questionnaire. For the next 3 years, we are focused on addressing the top 4 identified barriers.

Barriers

- **Accommodation process is unclear** - Employees and job candidates don't always know how to ask for workplace accommodations or get the right office equipment.
- **Inconsistent practices** - Managers apply rules differently across the organization, which causes confusion and affects job satisfaction.
- **Stigma and attitudes** - Some employees, especially neurodivergent and frontline staff, don't feel safe sharing their needs because of stigma or fear of it impacting their career.
- **Barriers in hiring** - External candidates face technology and system issues during the job application process, which can cause them to drop out or give up.

2026 to 2028 employment goals

1. The CBSA is a representative organization

Representation of persons with disabilities at the CBSA increases from 8.9% to 10% by 2028.*

*Note: This is below the workforce availability of 12.1%, as per the 2022 Canadian Survey for Persons with Disabilities, to account for the expected lower representation rate of persons with disabilities on the frontline.

2. Managers and human resources specialists are more "accessibility confident"

At least 80% of sub-delegated managers across the CBSA and human resources specialists have completed accessibility related training by 2028.

3. Employees with disabilities are satisfied with their jobs



The average positive response for employees with disabilities at the CBSA in the Public Service Employee Survey increases by at least 5% by 2028.

Employment actions

To meet our goals, we will continue building on successes from our last plan and focus on strengthening supports for managers, human resources specialists and others who support employees and job candidates.

Ongoing actions

- Raise awareness on non-visible disabilities in partnership with employee groups and disability organizations and organize events and activities to promote disability inclusion.
- Participate in the Canada Accessibility Network to learn and share best practices.
- Encourage the hiring of persons with disabilities who have qualified in hiring processes and supporting hiring in all job groups and levels and include goals to advance and support inclusion in performance management agreements.
- Promote and explain the accommodation process during job application processes to ensure that those who require them, know how to obtain them.
- Provide training and awareness sessions to managers, human resources specialists and employees on disabilities, accessibility and inclusion.
- Follow recommendations from audits and evaluations that improve inclusion and accessibility. Audits and evaluations may be internal in nature or led by central agencies including but not limited to the Public Service Commission, the Office of the Auditor General, the Canadian Transportation Authority.
- Help hiring managers to identify, mitigate and reduce barriers as required by the *Public Service Employment Act*.
- Continuously work towards addressing gaps between the agency's current practices and the [Employment Standard](#) (CAN-ASC-1.1:2024(Rev-2025)).
- Collaborate with the CBSA's Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee to address key employment issues for the community.

By December 2026

- Review the current process for providing employees with office equipment and workplace accommodations to make it more efficient.
- Share resources that communicate the differences between accessibility related accommodations and the duty to accommodate process to demystify the process and ensure requests are being sent to the right areas.
- Communicate and clarify the accommodation process during staffing processes to ensure candidates know their rights.
- Implement the Government of Canada Digital Accessibility Passport initiative

- Create a survey to learn more about candidate experiences and consult persons with disabilities on potential solutions.
- Develop and pilot an awareness session on accessibility for frontline managers.

By December 2027

- Launch the candidate survey to collect information and regular data from job candidates that will help us continuously improve our staffing processes.
- Review the learning roadmaps for different communities of practices to ensure that accessibility and inclusion requirements are current.
- Build accessibility into the learning roadmap for different communities of practices to ensure that training is useful for their line of work.
- Launch accessibility awareness sessions for frontline managers to help them normalize conversations around disabilities and know how to better equip employees.

By December 2028

- Roll-out updated engagement strategy to support disability inclusion and awareness across the agency.
- Launch an Employment Systems Review as per the requirements of the *Employment Equity Act* to understand barriers faced by employees in designated employment equity categories.

The built environment

At the CBSA, we manage infrastructure and real property accommodations across Canada. This includes offices and operational locations at air, land, rail, marine and postal sites at over 1,200 locations. We are committed to creating and maintaining physical environments that are accessible, safe and inclusive for everyone.

Guided by the [Accessible Canada Act](#), universal design principles and federal and provincial accessibility standard and guidelines, we are working toward barrier-free environments that promote independence, dignity and full participation.

Given the broad scope of our infrastructure, we rely on accessibility feedback to understand the barriers faced. In response to accessibility feedback, we have fixed accessibility buttons on doors, improved the accessibility in our customs halls to include counters that are wheelchair accessible, and more.

Last year, we consulted with employees and stakeholders to better understand barriers in the built environment and conducted a number of accessibility audits of our spaces.

Barriers

- **Inaccessible facilities that do not support diverse needs** – Identified barriers have included lack of automatic doors, heavy doors, narrow hallways, steep ramps, high service counters and inadequate restroom facilities. These barriers are a result of

legacy infrastructure that are not aligned to today's accessibility standards. Barriers for people with invisible disabilities and limitations include lighting and sound which impact the sensory environment.

- **Lack of inclusive and accessible workspaces** – Identified barriers in the office environment include lack of height-adjustable workstations, ergonomic seating, wayfinding signage, quiet spaces, low-sensory environments and flexible work spaces for diverse work styles.

2026 to 2028 built environment goals

Over the next 3 years, we will focus on removing known barriers and preventing new ones. Barriers in the built environment not only limit physical access but also hinder full participation in CBSA services, potentially compromising both the quality of service and the dignity of those affected. Creating flexible spaces and using inclusive design from the start is key to creating spaces that are welcoming and usable for all individuals. For employees, creating an accessible and inclusive work environment supports employee wellbeing, productivity and job satisfaction.

1. Identifying barriers in CBSA workspaces

At least 12,000 square metres at CBSA land border crossings and facilities are audited with an accessibility lens by December 2028.

2. Improved employee experience related to the physical environment

100% of accessibility feedback is responded to and actioned or integrated by December 2028.

3. Preventing new barriers through inclusive design

CBSA technical design guides for the variety of modes (air, marine, and rail) are advanced by 2028.

Built environment actions

To meet our goals, we will continue building on past efforts and focus on strengthening design standards, feedback processes and preventing barriers in CBSA workspaces. Given the costs of infrastructure investments and the limited budget, the agency will need to prioritize investments in areas that have the largest impact for users.

Ongoing actions

- Plan and coordinate accessibility audits of priority spaces (CBSA land border crossings and accessibility feedback) by using the latest federal accessibility standards to assess and document the findings.
- Investigate and respond to 100% of accessibility feedback.
- Review Public Service Employee Survey results related to physical work environment stress.

- Develop and update CBSA design standards and guidelines for air, land, marine, and rail modes.
- Tracking employee stressors as it relates to the physical environment using available employee survey data and integrating findings into ongoing work to improve the work environment.

Procurement of goods, services and facilities

Procurement plays a key role in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for persons with disabilities. By choosing goods and services that are inclusive by design, we help build a culture of accessibility across our workplaces and programs and services we deliver.

Public Services and Procurement Canada leads procurement practices for the federal government and provides guidance to improve accessibility. Shared Services Canada supports the implementation of accessibility standards, especially in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). We are reliant on these central agencies to provide leadership and guidance on accessibility best practices.

Barriers

- **Limited awareness of accessible procurement practices**
Some employees and managers involved in procurement processes are not aware of accessibility requirements or best practices. This can lead to missed opportunities to prevent barriers before they are introduced.
- **Inconsistent consideration of accessibility in procurement**
Accessibility requirements are not always considered when purchasing goods and services. This can result in tools and resources that are not usable by all employees or clients and may introduce new barriers into the workplace.
- **Lack of industry readiness**
Lack of industry accessibility standards for certain goods and services may mean that the industry is not capable of providing fully accessible goods and services.

2026 to 2028 procurement goals

1. **Increase awareness of accessibility obligations in procurement processes By December 2028**
80% of procurement specialists self-identify as accessibility confident in an internal CBSA survey, and 50% of delegated managers self-identify as accessibility confident in an internal CBSA survey by December 2028.

2. **Accessibility is integrated into procurement processes**

Accessibility considerations are incorporated in contracts at least 60% of the time by 2028. Explanations for not including accessibility considerations are included in all cases.

Procurement actions

To meet our goals, we will promote training provided by central agencies, improve guidance and track progress across procurement activities. We have updated our procurement system to allow for better tracking and monitoring of accessibility considerations.

Ongoing actions

- Promote and raise awareness of available training offered by Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada and ensure that procurement specialists as well as sub-delegated managers enroll in the workshops.
- Track and report on accessibility considerations within the procurement process and acquisition system, to identify gaps as it relates to client requirements.
- Evaluate internal employee knowledge and competence as it relates to accessibility and update internal training and guidance materials to support procurement specialists in the challenge function responsibilities .

By December 2026

- Launch procurement surveys to assess employee accessibility confidence.
- Promote participation in Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada training on accessibility in procurement.
- Begin tracking the inclusion of accessibility considerations in CBSA's acquisitions system.
- Share updated examples of accessible procurement practices with employees.

By December 2027

- Increase participation in accessibility training, ensuring that at least that half of the target goal is reached.
- Continue tracking procurement processes that include accessibility considerations and including information on the findings as to the challenges to the inclusion of accessibility in the procurement process.
- Consult and work with employees and the persons with disabilities community to identify, discuss challenges and improve guidance.

By December 2028

- Evaluate progress of the accessibility confidence of procurement specialists and managers and update the training and guidance materials to align with updated standards and best practices.
- Continue tracking and promoting accessible procurement practices across the agency.

- Share detailed results and lessons learned to inform the next Accessibility Plan.

Communications, other than information communications technologies

Accessible communications are essential to ensuring that the CBSA delivers on its mandate to serve all people equitably, including persons with disabilities. Whether the audience is the travelling public, stakeholders or employees, information must be clear, inclusive and available in formats that can be used by everyone. Removing barriers in communications fosters trust, improves service delivery and helps create a workplace culture that reflects the CBSA's commitment to accessibility and to principles of the [Accessible Canada Act](#).

Barriers

The CBSA has identified the following barriers in communications other than ICT:

- **Inaccessible visual content**
Images shared on social media are not consistently accompanied by alternative (alt) text, making these inaccessible to a person who uses a screen reader.
- **Limited awareness among employees**
Many employees are not fully aware of their obligations or the available tools and resources for creating accessible communications. This can lead to inconsistent practices when developing content for internal and external audiences.
- **Accessibility resources are hard to find**
Accessibility-related guidance, tools and templates are spread across multiple documents and web pages, making it difficult for people to quickly locate the right resources when needed.

2026 to 2028 communications goals

1. **Social media content is accessible**
100% of social media posts will be verified in advance of publication and will be accompanied by meaningful alternative text.
2. **Improve employee awareness and capacity on accessibility**
At least 2 communications campaigns are launched each year to promote and create awareness on accessibility.
3. **Employees have access to the right tools**
Employees and managers will be able to access accessibility resources in a dedicated section on the intranet by 2027 enabling them to easily find information on how to improve and support accessibility initiatives.

Communications actions

To meet our goals, we will focus on improving employee awareness, centralizing resources, and ensuring that visual content is accessible across all communication channels.

Ongoing actions

Over the next 3 years, we will take the following steps to address accessibility barriers in communications other than ICT:

- Review and implement practices that require the verification of social media posts to ensure they are compliant to accessibility standards (e.g. plain language, alt text).
- Develop a dedicated accessibility section on our intranet (Atlas) to serve as a central hub for guidance, templates and best practices on accessible communication.
- Launch annual campaign that promote accessibility inclusion which cover topics including but not limited to:
 - hosting accessible meetings and events
 - creating accessible documents and emails
 - writing in plain language, and
 - developing accessible web and social media content
- Create internal communications products to promote accessibility inclusion and awareness

Information and communication technology (ICT)

Ensuring that information and communications technology (ICT) is accessible is essential for the CBSA. This section sets the foundation for removing digital barriers that can exclude citizens and employees with disabilities, while supporting the CBSA's values of equity and respect.

Barriers

- **Many CBSA digital tools and applications are not fully accessible**
This prevents some employees and clients with disabilities from working or using CBSA services efficiently and equitably.
- **Incompatibility with adaptive technology**
Some CBSA systems do not work well with adaptive technologies such as screen readers, magnifiers, or voice recognition software. Employees may also experience delays in getting the tools and support they need.
- **Inconsistent practices for including accessibility**

Accessibility awareness and integration remain inconsistent across IT governance, policy, and project management processes. Accessibility is not yet a routine checkpoint in planning, design, and approval stages.

2026 to 2028 ICT goals

1. Accessible digital tools and applications

CBSA will continue to assess and improve its ICT applications and tools to meet recognized accessibility standards (CAN/ASC EN 301 549). 70% of high-priority applications are assessed and improved for accessibility by 2028.

2. Accessibility testing in all new and upgraded systems

Accessibility testing will be included in the development and upgrade of all new CBSA ICT systems. At least 75% of new or modernized applications are tested for accessibility before release by 2028.

3. Employees have the right adaptive technology and support

The Adaptive Technology Program will ensure employees with disabilities have timely access to the right tools and support and that by 90% of employees will be satisfied with the program's service by 2028 and that there will be at least a 2% increase each year of employees who confirm they have the accessible technology they need to do their jobs.

4. Accessibility is integrated into IT governance and oversight

Accessibility will be formally built into IT governance, project approval gates and the Authority to Operate process:

- 100% of relevant IT governance policies are updated by December 2026.
- 100% of new projects after 2027 include accessibility sign-off in the Authority to Operate process.
- 2 to 4 accessibility awareness briefings are delivered annually to governance committees.

ICT actions

To meet our goals, we will assess and improve our systems, expand access to adaptive technology, and build accessibility into our IT processes.

Ongoing actions

- Keep an updated list of applications and prioritize high-priority, public-facing systems.
- Conduct accessibility assessments and track remediation progress.
- Build accessibility into project planning, testing, and approval processes.
- Conduct user satisfaction surveys and analyze results to improve services.
- Provide personalized adaptive technology support and maintain an equipment inventory.

- Deliver accessibility awareness briefings and maintain governance checkpoints.

By December 2026

- Assess high-priority applications for accessibility.
- Review new ICT project proposals at the design stage.
- Begin accessibility testing for new or upgraded applications before launch.
- Launch Adaptive Technology user satisfaction surveys and track service timelines.
- Update governance policies to include accessibility checkpoints.
- Establish a formal accessibility sign-off in the Authority to Operate process.
- Deliver 2-4 accessibility awareness briefings to governance committees.

By December 2027

- Maintain accessibility design reviews in project planning.
- Broaden accessibility testing for new applications.
- Improve satisfaction with adaptive technology support.
- Maintain deployment timelines for adaptive technologies of under 15 business days.
- Track accessibility signoffs in the Authority to Operate process.
- Integrate accessibility checkpoints into project documentation.

By December 2028

- Maintain accessibility testing and governance integration.
- Reach high satisfaction with adaptive technology support.
- Embed accessibility across IT governance, design, and change management.
- Use lessons learned to inform the next Accessibility Plan cycle.

The design and delivery of programs and services

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is responsible for [managing and delivering 18 programs and services](#). To ensure that persons with disabilities have equal and equitable access to these programs and services, we have developed accessibility guidelines and frameworks. These tools help us design policies and services that are accessible by default and support employees in providing inclusive service with confidence.

Building on the foundation of our first Accessibility Plan, we have gained valuable knowledge that has shaped our priorities for this updated plan. We are making progress toward meeting accessibility standards and regulations, and we are committed to continuous improvement.

We are moving forward by:

- using draft standards from Accessibility Standards Canada to define what “barrier-free” means and to guide our policies and services

- receiving feedback through CBSA's Accessibility Feedback Process to help identify barriers in service delivery
- consulting with internal and external partners, including the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, the Interdepartmental Committee on Accessible Air Transportation, and non-governmental organizations
- participating in academic research to better understand barriers faced by air travellers with visible and non-visible disabilities

Barriers

- **Negative attitudes and biases**
A lack of awareness or negative attitudes about disability and disability rights can lead to discrimination and exclusion.
- **Inaccessible service delivery**
Inaccessible policies, programs, and services result in exclusion or unequal access for persons with disabilities.
- **Inconsistent integration of consultation results**
The CBSA's programs and services are not always informed by the lived experiences of impacted partners and communities.

2026 to 2028 programs and services goals

1. **Employees are more "accessibility confident"**
At least 80% of employees with responsibility for the design, review and maintenance of programs, policies and services have attended at least one policy design and review workshop by 2028.

Note: Program areas are responsible for identifying employees for monitoring.

2. **Improve compliance to accessibility standards**
At least 25% of agency policies and programs have been reviewed for compliance against the Design and Policy standard by 2028.
3. **Service and program areas address accessibility needs and identified feedback in consultations**
At least 85% of feedback received from members of the public are properly reviewed and responded to each year.
4. **Consultation results inform service design**
At least 80% of policies and programs that are designed or newly developed ones are done with meaningful consultation by impacted partners and communities.

Programs and services actions

To meet our goals, we will strengthen employee awareness, improve service design and ensure that consultation results are reflected in our programs and services.

Ongoing actions

- Deliver accessibility-focused workshops to employees who design, review, and maintain policies and programs.
- Provide practical tools and templates to support inclusive design.
- Promote success stories and lessons learned through internal communications.
- Encourage peer-to-peer learning and mentorship opportunities for employees working in program and policy design.
- Conduct regular reviews of policies and programs using accessibility standards.
- Provide guidance to program leads on applying accessibility standards.
- Integrate accessibility checkpoints into approval processes.
- Analyze feedback received through the Accessibility Feedback Process.
- Engage persons with disabilities in co-design sessions for new or updated initiatives.
- Maintain a consultation log to document how input influences decision-making.
- Share summaries of consultation outcomes with stakeholders.

By December 2026

- Deliver accessibility workshops to employees involved in program and policy design.
- Review 8% of existing policies, programs, and services for compliance with accessibility standards.
- Establish a formal process to review and respond to accessibility-related feedback.
- Begin tracking consultation input in program and policy development.

By December 2027

- Continue delivering workshops and promoting accessibility tools.
- Review an additional 8% of policies, programs, and services (16% cumulative).
- Expand co-design sessions with persons with disabilities and affected communities.
- Share consultation summaries and resulting changes with stakeholders.

By December 2028

- Reach 80% participation in accessibility workshops.
 - Review an additional 9% of policies, programs, and services (25% cumulative).
 - Ensure 80% of updated and newly developed programs include input from persons with disabilities.
 - Evaluate progress and use lessons learned to inform the next Accessibility Plan.
- 

Transportation

Employees of the CBSA are involved in a wide variety of interactions that may involve the transportation of people. We manage a complex fleet of vehicles which are usually used by frontline employees to conduct operational activities, such as the arrest and detention of individuals, or the transportation of individuals in our custody and care from one operational site to another. We also use contract services to provide shuttle services that transport employees between major office sites.

Barriers

- **Transportation policies and procedures**
Some of the CBSA travel and transportation policies may unintentionally exclude persons with disabilities or create unequitable access.
- **Attitudes and awareness**
Some employees may not fully understand disability rights or the importance of accessible transportation. This can lead to exclusion or discrimination.

2026 to 2028 transportation goals

1. **CBSA is compliant to training obligations as per sections 16-19 of Accessibility Regulations:** 100% of employees who are required to take Accessible Obligations Training have done so by 2028.
2. **Members of the public have information on accessibility options and limitations:** information on agency's accessibility options as well as known limitations are posted online for 100% of our Ports of Entry by 2028.
3. **CBSA meets its obligation to ensure those in our custody and care have access to accessible transportation:** we have reviewed our procedures as it relates to the transportation of those of in our custody and care, and ensure they are inclusive of accessibility standards by 2028.

Transportation actions

To meet our goals, we will improve employee awareness and review transportation policies to identify and remove barriers.

Ongoing actions

- Share identified barriers with federal partners and advocate for improvements in areas outside our direct control, such as designated parking, snow removal and federal travel policies



- Collaborate with partners (e.g. airport authorities) to identify ways to improve processes to support traveller experience and hold events and activities that increase awareness on efforts to advance accessibility (e.g. airport tours, consultations etc.)
- Support operational areas in identifying roles that require accessible transportation training and track completion rates

By December 2026

- Review and update the Transportation Obligations training and ensure employees who require the training complete it within the mandated timeframes.
- Publish information on accessible travel-related information so individuals with accessibility needs can plan their travel for all major Ports of Entry.
- Review the list of positions and employees who require Accessible Obligations training to ensure that they are relevant and aligned to the spirit of the regulations
- Identify data sources to support the review accessible transportation practices and policies.
- Review travel and transportation procedures for accessibility considerations and consult with impacted communities to inform the development of guidelines and job-aids.

By December 2027

- Begin collecting data to identify accessibility barriers in transport of those in our custody and care to inform future planning considerations.
- Update transportation guidelines to include options for alternative, accessible transportation solutions for those in our custody and care as well as employees who travel between worksites.
- Issue job-aids and communication to remind employees of their responsibilities and obligations as it relates to accessible transportation using the [Technical Guide on Accessible Travel Journey](#) and or any related standards.

By December 2028

- Assess data collected and use findings to inform the next Accessibility Plan (2029 to 2031).

Provisions to meet Canadian Transportation Agency regulations

As a Class 1 Transportation Service Provider under the [Accessible Canada Act](#) and Regulations, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) also follows the Canadian Transportation Agency's 2 regulations:

- *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations*
 - *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations*
- 

Part 1 Requirements applicable to transportation service providers

This section explains how we meet the obligations laid out in the Canadian Transportation Agency's *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations*:

Sections: 3(1), 4(1), 4(2), 5(1), 5(2), 6, 7, 8, 9, 10(1), 10(2), 11(1), 11(2) 12, 13, 14(1), 14(2), 15, 16(1), 16(2), 17,18, 19(1), 19(2), 20(1), 20(2), 21, 22, 23(1), 23(2), 23(3)

Communication of information to people with disabilities

General information – alternative formats: As per section 4.1, the agency is committed to sharing information in ways that work for persons with disabilities, using the tools they prefer. The agency has developed a list of businesses who offer braille, large print, audio, and other alternative formats which can be ordered as needed to support communication efforts. We are working towards ensuring alternative formats are consistently available across all our offices and operational locations.

Process time: The agency is striving to ensure that we provide persons with disabilities assistance without delay, as per section 4.2, if an alternative format is requested. Travellers must be processed without delay, and any needed alternative formats or technology must be provided. If a traveller cannot be processed right away, this does not justify sending them to secondary screening. We are exploring ways to develop a more productive relationship with airport authorities and relevant personnel to facilitate seamless and inclusive transfers throughout a traveller's journey.

Information to be published: As per section 5, we share specific information on our website including:

- We follow the [Accessible Canada Act](#) and the Canadian Transportation Agency's regulations.
- Services offered for people with disabilities.
- Details about how individuals can submit their accessibility feedback.

Clarification: The CBSA has an external website. Section 5(2) does not apply.

Communication: As per section 6, CBSA personnel must consider the person's communication needs when interacting with a person with a disability. We also acknowledge the need to continue improving our provision of assistance through special services:

- Sharing information in a way that works for them (with tools, as needed) for persons with disabilities.
- Providing information in large print, braille, or electronic format if it is in paper form.
- Offering visual information if information is shared in audio format and vice versa.
- Responding quickly if someone asks for information in a different format, considering:
 - the nature of a person's disability,
 - whether the person uses an assistive device, and
 - whether there are other methods of communication

We are continuing to remove barriers now, and in the future, we are working with partners—like airlines, port authorities, and ground transportation providers—to make travel more accessible. [Personnel training](#) is also an area of priority to ensure our personnel apply best practices for interaction with persons with disabilities.

Telephone systems: As per section 7, we have a toll-free phone number 1-800-461-9999 and a teletypewriter line 1-866-335-3237 that people can call for information. Where these phone numbers are listed, we must:

- offer email or relay service options for people who are deaf or have difficulty communicating
- share details on [how to use these services](#) with the phone number

Website: As per section 8, we continue to update our website, which includes making sure the website follows accessibility guidelines, including the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. We:

- offer options for persons with disabilities that do not rely on the website
- share contact information for those services along with the website address
- make sure the website follows accessibility guidelines

Website – requirements: As per section 9, we continue to provide and improve website, mobile website, and applications made available to persons with disabilities for a Level AA conformance set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. We are updating priority content on our internal website to meet Level AA, with ongoing improvements underway.

Public announcements inside terminals: As per section 10(1), we have existing site-specific plans for managing emergencies, including ensuring the safety and security of the public. These plans are adapted to the infrastructure and logistics of that particular site. At larger sites, including those with an owner-operator, announcements may be made using audio or video systems (for example intercoms, video screens). In smaller sites, announcements may be made in-person.

Public announcement – safety or security: As per section 10(2), any public announcement relating to safety or security inside a terminal will be made by announcement in an audio and visual format. In smaller sites, announcements may be made in-person.

Automated self-service kiosks: As per sections 11(1) and 11(2), the automated kiosks used by CBSA to process travellers are owned by owner-operators, which include airport authorities. We are responsible for maintaining the software and ensuring that the software meets digital accessibility standards (as per section 14, noted below).

Temporary application: As per section 12, the automated kiosks used by the CBSA to process travellers, are owned by owner-operators which include airport authorities. This temporary application does not apply to the CBSA.

Assistance with use of self-service kiosks: As per section 13, if a person with a disability asks for help using a kiosk at a CBSA site, the owner-operator has dedicated client service ambassadors who can assist. CBSA employees are also able to respond to questions and provide support as required (as per section 11 above).

Accessible self-service kiosk: As per section 14(1), kiosk software must be in good working order and properly maintained. Kiosk software is regularly maintained throughout its lifecycle.

As our kiosks near the end of their lifecycle, we will explore options to remove or reduce accessibility barriers, such as through the update of specifications.

Repairs: As per section 14(2), if a self-service kiosk is not working, we will continue to serve all travellers entering or re-entering Canada. We will work quickly with on-site and off-site technical support to fix the issue. We have backup options, like paper forms, to make sure travellers can still complete their processing when needed:

- a. We will direct the person to the nearest working kiosk that offers the same service. If they ask, we will provide help from a client service ambassador or a CBSA employee.
- b. We will allow the person to go to the front of the line and send them to a counter where they can receive the same service.

Personnel training

We are committed to training our employees to help persons with disabilities use our services (Sections 16 to 19 of the *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations*).

Under the CBSA's National Training Standards, frontline staff must take the Accessible Transportation Obligations course. It covers:

- different types of accessibility barriers
- types of assistance
- how to communicate with persons with disabilities, and
- the role of a support person or service dog

We are working to reduce attitudinal barriers by raising awareness and understanding of accessibility needs and standards. This includes promoting the importance of the Accessible Transportation Obligations course. We anticipated launching a new version of the training by the end of 2026.

Part 5 Accessibility Requirements Applicable to CBSA

Border clearance (what we call "Traveller processing")

As per the CBSA People Processing Manual – Primary Processing, border services officers will help persons with disabilities and their support persons move through the process more quickly by:

- allowing the traveller to use a dedicated inspection line and helping them if they choose to use a primary or trusted traveller kiosk
- offering help during primary processing, such as giving verbal or visual instructions, helping with a declaration card, or taking a verbal declaration

If the person needs further examination, placing and retrieving their personal items on the counter for secondary processing.



Security screening for air travellers

Security screening for air travellers, as described in the Canadian Transportation Agency's regulations, is done by the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA). The CBSA does not carry out security screening for air travellers.

The CBSA has an immigration security screening program, which is different from the screening described in the regulations. Immigration security screening is part of the process for foreign nationals who apply for a temporary resident visa, student visa, permanent residency status, or refugee status. Foreign nationals with a disability, and their support persons, will be offered faster border clearance.

Signage

Our goal is to create a barrier-free environment for employees and travellers. To meet the signage requirements set out in clauses 4.5.3 to 4.5.7 under the Canadian Standards Association B651-23, we have taken several steps to ensure compliance with the *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations'* sections 235(1) and 235(2):

We have asked for an exemption to produce larger signs. We developed a compact, durable tactile booklet with braille and raised lettering. It is given to travellers when they arrive in Canada (upon request), instead of using tactile signage for mandatory messages. The Canadian Transportation Agency has looked favourably on this alternative, which was shared with the Canadian Standards Association. The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority is also adopting CBSA's approach at departure points from Canada, to ensure that the traveller experience while entering or leaving Canada is similar and more seamless for passengers.

Since mid-August 2025, the 8 largest airports have had these alternative tactile booklets available in both official languages to assist persons with visual impairments. These booklets replace signs that do not meet the regulations because of their size, text length, or placement. We are exploring more alternative products to meet the needs of a wider range of persons with disabilities.

CBSA is taking a proactive approach by researching and testing new products. We are working with the persons with disabilities community to understand their lived experiences and listen to the types of products that reduce barriers to their independent travel.

Compliance with the Federal Identity Program: We maintain our signage program by ensuring that all signage complies with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Federal Identity Program. This means signs must be non-glare and have good colour contrast. These signs are installed in well-lit areas, and room or area entrance signs are placed next to or at the entry of all spaces, including washrooms and exits.

National Master Standing Offer: We are primarily using the National Master Standing Offer vendor for all signage needs across our facilities. This vendor manages the signage templates and specifications for the Federal Identity Program under a contract that has lasted over 20 years. This ensures consistent, high-quality signage, maintaining a government-wide "common look and feel" and is compliant with the Federal Identity Program standards.

Electronic message signage: For maintenance facilities, we fully adhere to the requirements outlined in Canadian Standards Association B651-23 (as specified in clauses 4.5.3 to 4.5.5) for electronic message signage. However, at Customs facilities where we are the occupant (for example airports and other terminals), the facility owner or operator is responsible for making sure electronic message signage meets the standards.

Mandatory declaration signage: Smaller mandatory declaration signs that meet Canadian Standards Association requirements have been installed in CBSA's customs-controlled queuing areas. This provides travellers with advance information to assist them in understanding the processing requirements. Active consultations with the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority and the Canadian Standards Association have been conducted to seek alternative solutions for larger mandatory messages.

Feedback process

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) welcomes feedback from employees and the public on our Accessibility Plan, annual Accessibility Progress Reports and to know of any barriers encountered when interacting with our agency.

Accessibility feedback may be submitted anonymously. All accessibility feedback is acknowledged in the format it was received and shared with the appropriate teams to help find solutions. We review feedback to identify trends and improve future planning.

Progress reports are published in the 2 years between Accessibility Plans. They include a summary of the feedback received and how it was considered.

For instructions on how to submit feedback, please refer to the [General information section](#) above.

Consultations

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) engaged persons with disabilities in the development of its Accessibility Plans. For this 2026 to 2028 plan, we conducted internal and external consultations to better understand barriers and identify solutions. These consultations were guided by the [Accessible Canada Act](#) and the Canadian Transportation Agency's *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations*. This section outlines our consultation approach and what we learned.

Internal consultations

Internal consultations were conducted through a national survey of CBSA employees. This employee survey was developed in collaboration with our internal Communications team and approved through our Public Opinion Research process. It was distributed in July 2025 via email, our internal website and our daily internal newsletter. Employees were invited to share their experiences, identify barriers and suggest solutions. Alternate formats were offered to support inclusive participation.

Internal consultation results were reviewed in fall 2025. Feedback from employees helped shape our priorities and will guide our barrier removal efforts going forward.

Key findings

The internal survey was completed by 2,255 CBSA employees, a 15% participation rate. A total of 49% of respondents were from frontline employees. The survey captured employee perspectives across all 7 priority areas of the Accessibility Plan. The results helped identify trends, improve our understanding of barriers and inform future actions.

The most prevalent barriers identified were:

- experiencing barriers related to returning to office, including assigned seating, improper ergonomic set-ups, lack of accessible washrooms on the floor, scent, noise, or lighting sensitivity
- experiencing barriers due to limited management awareness
- navigating inaccessible built environments
- facing challenges with the duty to accommodate process.
- encountering attitudinal barriers
- experiencing barriers in meetings
- facing challenges accessing adaptive technology
- navigating return-to-office requirements
- encountering unclear or complex language

Participants addressed specific areas of concern, such as:

Employment

- Lack of manager/supervisor understanding of (and adapting to) the culture of accessibility and inclusion as part of the *Accessible Canada Act*
- Stigma and fear of career impacts when requesting accommodations
- Lack of transparency and fairness in hiring and promotion processes
- Barriers in the application and interview process, including inaccessible formats and unclear accommodation options
- Limited awareness of available accommodations and how to request them.
- Complex and inconsistent accommodation processes.

Built environment

- Inaccessible doors, elevators, washrooms, and parking spaces
- Noise and lighting issues in open-concept workspaces
- Limited ergonomic setups due to hoteling and shared workstations

Procurement of goods, services and facilities

- Uneven and inconsistent access to tools and equipment across the regions
- Communications, other than information communications technologies
- Dense language, low-contrast templates and overuse of acronyms
- Need for plain language, bilingual materials and inclusive meeting etiquette

Information and communication technology

- Internal software has incompatibility issues with screen readers and other adaptive technologies
- Challenges with hybrid meeting setups and inconsistent captioning

Design and delivery of programs and services

- Lack of clear ownership and accountability across departments

Transportation

- Commuting challenges due to health conditions and sensory sensitivities
- Inflexible return-to-office requirements that do not account for disability-related needs
- Limited accessible parking and wayfinding for clients and employees

Additionally, participants highlighted accessibility considerations that affect multiple areas:

- delays and denials in acquiring adaptive tools due to budget constraints
- licensing expiries and security blocks preventing access to needed software
- stigma and attitudinal barriers, especially around invisible disabilities
- need for flexible telework arrangements with the same tools and support available in both the home and office setups
- desire for simplified, transparent processes with clear timelines and single points of contact from supervisors and management

External consultations

External consultations were carried out through a national survey open to members of the public and a wide range of disability and equity-focused organizations. This external survey was developed with support from our internal Communications team and approved through the Public Opinion Research process. To promote participation, we launched a social media campaign and sent email invitations to disability, community, racial equity and Indigenous organizations. The survey was open from early July to mid-September 2025. Individuals and organizations were invited to share their experiences with CBSA services and provide input on barriers and solutions. To support meaningful engagement, we offered follow-up discussions, virtual meetings and alternate formats upon request.

External consultation results were reviewed in fall 2025. Feedback from members of the public and disability organizations helped ensure the priority area action plans within this Plan are inclusive, equitable and informed by lived experience.

Key findings

The external survey was completed by 422 individuals, and captured feedback across many priority areas. The results helped us understand how accessibility barriers differ across modes of transportation and service points, and how we can improve.

The most prevalent barriers identified were:

- experiencing barriers during officer interactions
- navigating complex processes
- facing challenges with border crossing procedures
- having accessibility needs unmet
- experiencing navigation challenges
- waiting in long lines for services
- facing delays in receiving requested support

Participants addressed specific areas of concern, such as:

Employment

- Barriers in the job application process, including lengthy application requirements, inaccessible formats, submission processes and documentation required for the submission process.

Built environment

- Inaccessible counters, washrooms and kiosks.
- Barriers such as stairs, furniture and signage in CBSA offices.

Procurement of goods, services and facilities

- None reported.

Communications, other than information communications technologies

- Need for consistent use of plain language and easier navigation.

Information and communication technology

- Inability to use screen readers/adaptive technology with digital products.

Design and delivery of programs and services

- Long lineups and wait times without chairs or benches.
- Invasive or insensitive interactions with officers.
- Lack of American Sign Language (ASL) training among officers for deaf or hard-of-hearing travellers.
- Lack of support for wheelchair users.



Transportation

- Long walking distances at some airports without benches or alternative transportation options.

Additionally, participants highlighted accessibility considerations that affect multiple areas:

- The need for inclusive hiring processes.
- Confusing signage and wayfinding.
- Online forms that are hard to access or complete.
- A lack of alternative formats for multimedia and other documents.
- Kiosks not working properly at terminals (e.g. photo capture errors, inaccessible for wheelchair users or blind travellers).

Some barriers are outside of the CBSA's control. We will work with other federal departments to address them. Some of these barriers include the formal job application processes, fragrance sensitivity issues in terminals, kiosk hardware that is inaccessible to wheelchair users, and long walking distances at some airports. We will work collaboratively with those departments to resolve accessibility barriers impacting our clients.

Next steps

The CBSA recognizes the importance of ensuring that its programs and services are accessible to all individuals, including those from refugee and immigration communities. These populations often face unique challenges due to past trauma, language barriers, and systemic marginalization. The CBSA's consultation plan has already launched its first survey and will launch an additional one, specifically to address the needs of our immigration and refugee community. This new survey will outline a voluntary, sensitive, inclusive, and trauma-informed approach to gathering accessibility feedback from these groups through a targeted survey.

To reach participants effectively and respectfully, the survey will be distributed through trusted intermediaries such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), legal aid clinics, settlement agencies and community leaders. The content of the survey will focus on participants' experiences with CBSA services, including physical and digital accessibility, communication with staff, and suggestions for improvement. Optional demographic questions will be included to help identify trends and gaps, while ensuring that no personally identifiable information is collected. Participation will not affect anyone's immigration or legal status. All responses will be anonymous, and the survey will be available in plain language and multiple languages to ensure it is accessible to all.

By conducting consultations with this specific audience, the CBSA can better understand the lived experiences of these communities and take concrete steps to improve accessibility across its programs, facilities, and communications. The survey will be launched after the publication of this 2026 to 2028 Accessibility Plan. The agency is taking the necessary steps to

ensure we could consult these populations appropriately. Once the results for this survey have been received and analysed, it will help strengthen or modify existing action items in the “Design and delivery of programs and services” Action Plan within the larger Accessibility Plan.

Conclusion

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is committed to becoming barrier-free by 2040. This plan outlines the next steps we will take to remove barriers, improve accessibility and build a more inclusive organization. We will continue to listen, learn and take action. We will track our progress, share updates and adjust our approach as needed. Together, we are building a CBSA that works for everyone.

Annexes

Annex A: Glossary

From [Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat](#) unless otherwise indicated.

Ableism

Individual and societal discrimination and exclusion in the form of attitudes, prejudices, and actions that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability](#)).

Note: Ableism, like other forms of discrimination, can be conscious, unconscious, intentional, unintentional, blatant, or casual, and can be embedded in institutions, systems, or the broader culture of a society.

Accessibility

The degree to which a product, service, program or environment is available to be accessed or used by all (Source: [Accessible Canada Act](#)).

Note: This includes but is not limited to employment, physical environment, transportation, information, communications (including information and communications technologies and systems), financial security, social services, and all other facilities and services open to or provided to the public.

Accessibility confidence

While not yet formally defined by Accessibility Standards Canada or the Canadian Transportation Agency, this term refers to the level of awareness, knowledge, and readiness individuals or organizations must identify, address, and remove accessibility barriers. It reflects a proactive and informed approach to accessibility (Source: [Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat](#)).

The level of knowledge, comfort, and ability a person or organization has in identifying, addressing, and removing accessibility barriers. It reflects how prepared someone feels to take meaningful action on accessibility (Source: [Accessibility in Ontario](#)).

The ability of organizations to “manage disability as a business priority related to customer experience, talent, productivity, innovation, new product development, brand reputation and investment in human potential” (Source: [Business Disability International](#)).

Accessibility First

A principle that means accessibility is considered from the very beginning of any project or decision—not added later. It helps prevent barriers before they happen (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – Outdoor Spaces Standard](#)).

Accessibility feedback mechanism

A process that allows persons with disabilities to share feedback about barriers they face when using transportation services. Transportation service providers must accept feedback in multiple formats and respond appropriately. (Source: [CTA – Accessibility Feedback Process](#))

Accessibility support (accommodation)

An adjustment to rules, policies, workplace cultures, and physical environments to ensure that they do not have a negative effect on a person with a disability within the employment life cycle (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-1.1:2024](#)).

Allyship

The active and intentional support of disability inclusion by individuals who do not share the same lived experience including those without disabilities and those with different disabilities (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-1.1:2024](#)).

Anti-ableism

An active approach that includes strategies, theories, actions, and practices that challenge and counter ableism, inequalities, prejudices, and discrimination of persons with disabilities (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-1.1:2024](#)).

Note: Discrimination against persons with disabilities is often linked to prejudicial attitudes, negative stereotyping, and the overall stigma surrounding disability.

Assistive device

Any medical device, mobility aid, communication aid, or other aid that is specifically designed to assist a person with a disability.

Barrier

The act defines a barrier as “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 a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or functional limitation.” (Source: [Accessible Canada Act](#))

Barrier-free design

Design that removes physical, architectural, and systemic barriers in the built environment, allowing persons with disabilities to move independently, safely, and with dignity. This includes features such as accessible paths of travel, ramps, signage, and tactile indicators. (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-2.3: Model Standard for the Built Environment](#))

Consultation

The process by which an organization, in a planned and coordinated manner, seeks the input and feedback of workers and other workplace parties before it makes decisions (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-1.1:2024](#)).

Digital accessibility

The practice of making websites, apps, and digital tools usable by everyone, including people with disabilities. This includes following standards like the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-3.1](#)).

Disability

The act defines disability as "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."

Discrimination

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.

There are 13 prohibited grounds of discrimination under the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (that is, based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics (including a requirement to undergo a genetic test or disclose the results of a genetic test), disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered).

Diversity

The inclusion of different types of people. A diverse workforce in the public service is made up of individuals who have an array of identities, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, perspectives and experiences that are representative of Canada’s current and evolving

population. (Source: [Building a Diverse and Inclusive Public Service: Final Report of the Joint Union/Management Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion](#)).

Employee

A person employed in the public service.

Employer

A person or organization that employs or engages a person to perform work arising in and out of the course of employment.

Equity vs. equality

Equality means treating everyone the same. Equity means giving people what they need to succeed, which may be different for each person. Equity recognizes that some people face more barriers than others (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)).

Equity seeking groups

A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society, and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes.

Guide dog

A dog that is trained to guide a person who is blind or partially sighted and is certified as a guide dog.

Inclusive design

A design approach that considers the full range of human diversity—such as ability, language, culture, and age—so that services and spaces work for as many people as possible from the start (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-5.2.1](#))

Intersectionality

The idea that people’s experiences are shaped by many parts of their identity—like disability, race, gender, or income—and that these parts can combine to create unique barriers or advantages (Source: [Ontario Anti-Racism Strategic Plan](#)).

An analytical framework that recognizes how multiple forms of discrimination—such as ableism, racism, sexism, and others—overlap and interact to create unique experiences of exclusion or privilege. It considers both individual identities and the broader social, political, and historical contexts that shape them (Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-1.1:2024 Annex C](#)).

Persons with disabilities

The *Employment Equity Act* defines persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment and who:

- a) consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, or
- b) believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment

Persons with disabilities include persons whose functional limitations owing to their impairment have been accommodated in their current job or workplace.

Plain language

A communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended audience can: easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information (Source: [International Plain Language Federation](#)).

Self-identification

Employees providing employment equity information for statistical purposes in analyzing and monitoring the progress of employment equity groups in the federal public service and for reporting on workforce representation.

Service dog

A dog that is:

- individually trained by an organization or person specialized in service dog training to assist a person, with a need related to their disability.
- not otherwise prohibited by law.
- behaving in a controlled and non-aggressive manner while assisting the person with a disability.
- readily identifiable by visual indicators, such as a vest or harness, as a service dog required for a disability-related service.

(Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada – CAN-ASC-5.2.1](#))

Systemic barrier

A barrier that results from policies, practices, or procedures that unintentionally exclude or disadvantage persons with disabilities. These barriers can be widespread and deeply embedded in organizational systems. (Source: [CTA – Guide on Accessibility Plans](#))

Tactile signage

A system of raised pictograms, lettering and dome braille that provides information for blind or partially sighted individuals.

Teletypewriter

The teletypewriter phone number listed on the contact page refers to an alternate phone number connected to a device that enables phone communication through typed messages for people who cannot or choose not to communicate verbally, typically used by individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who have a speech-related disabilities.

Workforce availability



For the core public administration, refers to the estimated availability of people in designated groups as a percentage of the workforce population. For the core public administration, workforce availability is based on the population of Canadian citizens who:

- are active in the workforce
- work in those occupations that correspond to the occupations in the core public administration

Annex B: References

The following materials have been referenced directly or indirectly in this report:

- [Accessible Canada Act](#)
- [Accessible Canada Regulations \(SOR/2021-241\)](#)
- [Accessible Standards Canada: Centre of Expertise](#)
- [Canadian Transportation Agency's Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations](#)
- [Canadian Transportation Agency's Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations](#)
- [Consultation Report: Priorities for engagement, accessibility standards and research from 2020 to 2022 - Accessibility Standards Canada](#)

The Treasury Board Secretariat, specifically the Office of Public Service Accessibility, has published a guiding strategy for the Government of Canada titled [Nothing without us: an accessibility strategy for the public service of Canada](#). This strategy acts as the blueprint for departments when they create their Accessibility Plans. At its core, this strategy revolves around 5 interconnected goals that guide the public service in its response to the requirements of the act:

- Improve recruitment, retention and promotion of persons with disabilities
- Enhance the accessibility of the built environment
- Ensure that information and communications technology is usable by all
- Equip public servants to design and deliver programs and services that are accessible
- Foster a public service that is confident in matters of accessibility

