



Government of Canada  
Privy Council Office

Gouvernement du Canada  
Bureau du Conseil privé

Canada

# The Privy Council Office Accessibility Plan 2026–2028



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Cette publication est également disponible en français :  
*Plan sur l'accessibilité du Canada. Bureau du Conseil privé de 2026-2028*

ISSN: 2817-0806  
Cat. No CP1-34E-PDF

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## Message from the Clerk

The Privy Council Office (PCO) is fully committed to implementing the Government of Canada’s Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada. Accessibility is a human right, and it is our collective duty to advance it. Together, we can create a barrier-free Canada by 2040 in alignment with the *Accessible Canada Act*.

Since 2022, we have made strides in making accessibility and disability inclusion a part of our everyday business under PCO’s first Accessibility Plan. Building on the progress and lessons learned to date, we are proud to present our renewed plan for 2026 to 2028, which is guided by our basic values—fairness, consistency and respect for diversity—because treating all people with respect, dignity and fairness is fundamental to our work. At PCO, we are committed to a safe, healthy and accessible (barrier-free) work environment that promotes engagement, openness and transparency.

Over the next three years, our goal is to become a best-in-class accessible and inclusive organization that supports persons with disabilities. We will advance three strategic priorities to help us focus, simplify and improve our collective and individual accountabilities:

1. Modernize accessibility and disability inclusion through implementation of the digital Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport and adopting best practices from the Better Accommodation Project.
2. Advance PCO’s culture of accessibility and disability inclusion through enhanced communication and engagement with persons with disabilities and all employees.
3. Create equitable opportunities for persons with disabilities.

In living up to the principle of “Nothing without us,” the views of persons with disabilities played an important role in shaping our renewed plan. In addition, the PCO Champion for Persons with Disabilities, executives, managers, and allies were consulted. Based on the feedback received, I want to acknowledge that we still have more work to do to make PCO more inclusive and accessible.

As we act on the renewed plan, I look forward to working with all of you on improving our organization while taking pride in the work we do to serve Canada and Canadians.

### **Michael Sabia**

Clerk of the Privy Council Office and Secretary to the Cabinet

## General

### Land acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, we would like to honour Indigenous Peoples by recognizing the First Peoples of this land, including their history, truths and lived experiences. In doing so, we hope to advance reconciliation and to foster a renewed and strengthened relationship.

For the Accessibility Plan, we want to acknowledge its production on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people. We also want to recognize the diverse territories of Indigenous Peoples across Canada, on which PCO employees live and work, given our presence in ministerial regional offices. In developing this Plan, we wish to highlight the importance of intersectionality and how advancing accessibility and disability inclusion benefits everyone, including traditionally underrepresented groups.

### Background

The *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA) came into effect on July 11, 2019. Its goal is to achieve a barrier-free Canada by January 1, 2040. The ACA sets out a proactive approach to accessibility. This means that instead of waiting for people with disabilities to ask for barriers to be removed, organizations must identify, remove and prevent them.

More specifically, the ACA requires regulated entities such as federal departments and agencies to identify and develop actions to eliminate barriers across the following seven accessibility priority areas:

1. employment;
2. the built environment;
3. information and communication technologies;
4. communication, other than information and communication technologies;
5. the procurement of goods, services and facilities;
6. the design and delivery of programs and services; and
7. transportation.

The ACA also requires all regulated entities to develop and publish an accessibility plan, implement a process to receive and respond to feedback in a timely manner, and publish annual progress reports to communicate progress made.

You can find the PCO's first three-year departmental plan, [Accessibility Plan \(2023-2025\)](#), and the [accessibility progress reports for 2023 and 2024](#) on our public-facing website. PCO's Accessibility Plan (2026–2028) builds on the progress made as part of the initial plan. It is part of PCO's compliance with the ACA and regulations and demonstrates our continued commitment to equity, diversity, accessibility and disability inclusion.

## About the Privy Council Office

The Privy Council Office (PCO) serves the Prime Minister and Cabinet and is led by the Clerk of the Privy Council, who also serves as Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Public Service.

PCO serves Canada and Canadians by providing advice and support to the Prime Minister, portfolio ministers and Cabinet. In brief, PCO has three main roles:

1. Provide professional non-partisan advice to the Prime Minister, portfolio ministers, Cabinet and Cabinet committees on matters of national and international importance.
2. Ensure that the Cabinet decision-making process runs smoothly and help implement the Government's agenda.
3. Foster a high-performing and accountable public service.

PCO provides internal services to meet its corporate obligations and deliver its programs. There are 10 categories of internal services at PCO:

- management and oversight services
- communications services
- legal services
- human resources management services
- financial management services
- information management services
- information technology services
- real property management services
- materiel management services
- acquisition management services

## Statement on values and ethics

Our plan demonstrates our commitment to creating a barrier-free experience for persons with disabilities and all employees through deliberate action in applicable focus areas.

**Respect for people:** At PCO, we believe that treating all people with respect, dignity and fairness is fundamental to our relationship with the Canadian public. It also contributes to a safe, healthy and accessible work environment that promotes engagement, openness and transparency.

**Integrity:** Integrity is the cornerstone of good governance and democracy. By upholding the highest ethical standards, public servants maintain and enhance public confidence in the honesty, fairness and impartiality of the federal public sector. This is why PCO is committed to advancing the goals of the ACA.

**Excellence:** Excellence in the design and delivery of public sector policy, programs and services benefits every aspect of Canadian public life. Engagement, collaboration, effective teamwork and professional development are all essential to a high-performing organization. This is why PCO values the contribution of persons with disabilities to public service excellence and innovation.

### **Guiding principles**

We want to emphasize the following guiding principles, which align with those outlined in the ACA. They will help us as we work to achieve our goals and hold ourselves accountable over the next three years:

**“Nothing without us”** means that persons with disabilities should be consulted when developing laws, policies and programs that impact them.

**A culture of accessibility and disability inclusion** is one where persons with disabilities feel welcomed, safe and comfortable being themselves day to day and where everyone understands how people’s lives are shaped by intersecting identities.

**A barrier-free experience** means all employees and stakeholders with visible and invisible disabilities, including physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairments, can contribute whether those impairments are permanent, long-term, recurring or temporary.

**Continuous improvement** is built into our plan and initiatives through listening to, engaging with and responding to the feedback of persons with disabilities.

We **close the representation gap for persons with disabilities** by improving our strategies related to recruitment, retention, career development and promotion.

## Giving feedback

The department aims to embody a culture of continuous improvement. As we monitor the plan’s roll-out, we will continue to seek feedback from employees and managers to ensure it achieves the desired impact and results.

PCO has a [feedback process](#) for comments about accessibility barriers and the implementation of PCO’s accessibility plan. You can send feedback to the Assistant Director, Accessibility, Human Resources, Corporate Services Branch.

### Ways to submit feedback

- Online: the [Accessibility Feedback form](#)
- Email: [accessible@pco-bcp.gc.ca](mailto:accessible@pco-bcp.gc.ca)
- Telephone: 613-302-7905
- Mail: 60 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

You can provide contact information or submit feedback anonymously. PCO will acknowledge receipt in the same way the feedback was received. We will respond directly to feedback if contact information is provided.

## Alternate formats

You can request copies of our accessibility plan, progress report and feedback process description in an alternate format, for example:

- Print
- Large print (larger and clearer font)
- Braille (a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers)
- Audio (a recording of someone reading the text out loud)
- Electronic formats that are compatible with adaptive technology

You can send your request for an alternative format by email to [accessible@pco-bcp.gc.ca](mailto:accessible@pco-bcp.gc.ca) or by mail to:

Privy Council Office c/o Human Resources  
60 Queen Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A3

You can also request your alternate format by calling 613-302-7905.

## Executive summary

Since publishing PCO's first accessibility plan in 2022, the number of persons with disabilities in the federal public service has increased. Based on the results of the latest Public Service Employee Survey, the percentage of respondents self-identifying as persons with disabilities has risen from 7% in 2020 to 17% in 2024.<sup>1</sup> At PCO, this increase is also reflected in our employment equity data, where representation of persons with disabilities increased to 9.1% of our workforce as of September 2025, from 3.2% in March 2020. Our goal is to meet or exceed the new workforce availability benchmark of 11.5%.

Over the past three years, PCO has made progress on several commitments in its first accessibility plan (2023–2025) to improve accessibility and disability inclusion in our workplace. Two notable achievements include the centralized accessibility fund and the centralized process for employees to request an accommodation. Going forward, PCO will continue to identify and eliminate barriers to accessibility, while building on our successes across five of the priority areas under the ACA<sup>2</sup>, for example:

**Employment:** Changes to PCO's staffing process to include accessibility considerations and support for the recruitment and hiring process. For example, revised job postings and accommodations for candidates during interviews.

**Built environment:** Implementing recommendations from the audit assessment of all departmental offices based on Universal Accessibility Best Practices and the Canadian Standards Association standards for building a barrier-free Canada.

**Information and communication technologies (ICTs):** Implementation of the long-term accessibility plan for information management and information technology to support accessibility across all digital assets.

**Communication, other than ICTs:** Targeted training for PCO's corporate service providers to improve guidance to employees on accessibility requirements and best practices for disability inclusion.

**Procurement and services:** Access to and procurement of equipment and furniture, for example, ergonomic chairs, through a centralized fund, making purchasing items and reimbursing employees easier and faster.

To date, we have made strides in making accessibility and disability inclusion a part of our everyday business to ensure a safe, fair and accessible (barrier-free) workplace. To live up to

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<sup>1</sup> Note that Public Service Employee Survey disability definition has broadened since 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Note that two of the seven priorities in the ACA do not apply since PCO is not a front-line department that provides services directly to Canadians, therefore program design and delivery is not included as a priority area. Similarly, the transportation priority area under the ACA is not included as PCO's mandate and operations do not involve the federal transportation network.

the principle of “Nothing without us,” we consulted persons with disabilities, as well as executives, managers, allies and subject matter experts when developing this plan. Based on the feedback we received, we want to acknowledge that we still have more work to do to make PCO more inclusive and accessible.

Over the next three years, the goal of PCO’s Accessibility Plan (2026–2028) is to become a best-in-class organization through three strategic priorities. They will help us focus, simplify and improve our collective and individual accountability when supporting persons with disabilities while ensuring an accessible and inclusive workplace for everyone. The priorities are the following:

1. Modernize accessibility and disability inclusion by implementing the digital Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport and adopting Better Accommodation Project best practices.
2. Advance PCO’s culture of accessibility and disability inclusion through enhanced communication and engagement with persons with disabilities and all employees.
3. Create equitable opportunities for persons with disabilities.

They will guide our efforts to work faster through consistent collaboration and the sharing of best practices, innovations and lessons learned. Persons with disabilities will be consulted and included in the development, testing and refinement of initiatives or solutions.

Also, we will highlight the roles we can all play, as an organization and as individuals, in removing physical and attitudinal barriers at PCO. We will do this by encouraging conversations, action and accountability and making lasting and positive change.

More details regarding implementation and timelines can be found in the Accessibility Action Plan in the [Annex](#).

## Consultations

The principle of “Nothing without us” recognizes that persons with disabilities are equal participants in all areas of life and should contribute to all decision making on policies, programs, practices and service delivery that affect them. In demonstrating our department’s commitment to this principle, PCO’s Human Resources Centre of Expertise (the Centre) consulted persons with disabilities throughout every step of the renewal and development of the Accessibility Plan (2026–2028).

Before the consultation phase began, the Centre met with PCO’s Persons with Disabilities Network to inform them and ask for their support for the renewal of PCO’s accessibility plan and the approach to consultations. The Centre proposed a “meet you where you are” approach by giving members options for how they wanted to be consulted.

Network members were able to participate in focused interviews individually, in groups or through anonymous feedback using MS Forms. They could participate in person or virtually. Also, all interviewees were asked if they required any accommodations to participate. In terms of scheduling, dates were flexible so that members could participate based on their availability throughout October and November 2025.

Similarly, focused interviews were held with the following groups and individuals:

- PCO’s pillar leads,<sup>3</sup> covering the five relevant areas of the ACA;
- PCO’s Champion for the Persons with Disabilities Network;
- subject matter experts;
- managers;
- allies; and
- departmental partners, such as the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Department of Finance.

Phase two consultations followed the collection and analysis of the responses from each of the individual and group interviews. The Centre presented their findings and proposed recommendations to PCO’s pillar leads, the Persons with Disabilities Network, PCO’s Champion for the Persons with Disabilities Network, and key allies. Responses and feedback from the consultations were used to develop a draft accessibility plan and shared again to confirm key themes and proposed recommendations.

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<sup>3</sup> Pillar leads are key service providers within PCO who are responsible for accommodations and help fulfill commitments under the priority areas of the ACA. For example, Human Resources, IT/IM and building accommodations.

## **Highlights from what we heard during consultations**

### **Accommodation process**

Managed by Human Resources, the Centralized Accessibility Fund was mentioned as a key success by most employees and Pillar Leads<sup>4</sup>, given the ease and quickness in procuring equipment such as ergonomic chairs. However, employees and managers wanted to see improved guidance on navigating the accommodations process and enhanced communication through regular updates, transparency, and frequent engagement with persons with disabilities on accessibility-related services.

### **Accessibility in the workplace**

Progress has been made in improving accessibility in the built environment by implementing recommendations from the audit assessment of departmental offices against Universal Accessibility Best Practices and the Canadian Standards Association's standards for building a barrier-free Canada. The availability of assistive information and communication technologies also created a more inclusive experience for employees. Looking ahead, employees wanted more information and transparency about improvements to the physical work environment where possible.

### **Accessibility and disability inclusion**

Employees provided positive feedback on some accessibility-related training sessions and noted the impact and quality of accessibility and disability inclusion events, with a notable increase in participation by PCO employees. Going forward, persons with disabilities want to see broader organizational awareness about the value of inclusive practices and how accessibility benefits all employees (not just persons with disabilities) to promote shared ownership of accessibility goals.

### **Equitable opportunities**

Persons with disabilities identified an absence of career navigation and career development opportunities at PCO. Therefore, employees want to see concrete support in the form of targeted or joint initiatives to advance career development, identify promotional opportunities and develop retention strategies that focus on fostering employee satisfaction.

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<sup>4</sup> Definition provided in the [Glossary](#).

## Addressing priority areas in section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act*

Our plan focuses on five priority accessibility areas, which are stated in section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA). If we eliminate and prevent barriers in these areas, we can provide services that are accessible to all:

- Employment
- Built environment
- Information and communications technologies
- Communication, other than information and communication technologies
- Procurement of goods and services

PCO's mandate is to support the Prime Minister and Cabinet and help the government implement its vision, goals and decisions. As a result, certain priorities in the ACA do not apply to our department. For example, PCO is not a front-line department that provides services directly to Canadians, so program design and delivery is not one of our priority areas. The improvement opportunities in this plan fall within the information and communication technologies (ICTs), communication (other than ICTs) and procurement areas.

Similarly, we have not included transportation in PCO's accessibility plan since our mandate and operations do not involve the federal transportation network. However, we will look to improve how we identify and communicate transportation solutions to employees and guests, such as an accessible parking map.

The following sections of this plan will provide further details on each of the above priority areas. They will discuss the progress made to date, barriers identified and ongoing initiatives and planned activities.

### Employment

#### Progress to date

**Employment equity representation:** Since the first plan, representation of persons with disabilities (PwD) at PCO increased to 9.1% in September 2025 from 3.2% in March 2020. However, this percentage is below the updated workforce availability benchmark of 11.5%, and representation across PCO secretariats and branches remains uneven. Based on PCO's employment equity dashboards, notable areas with larger representation gaps for persons with disabilities include the EX-feeder and EC groups.

**Staffing:** PCO has made positive changes to staffing processes and employee orientation. For example, we revised job postings to include statements on accessibility, and candidates receive accommodations during interviews, such as additional time. PCO's HR Centre of Expertise also delivers training on accessibility and disability inclusion during the orientation session for new employees.

**Learning and training:** PCO completed a learning needs assessment on accessibility and disability inclusion. We have provided specific training and learning sessions for employees who support the accommodation process or provide guidance to PCO colleagues to ensure accessibility is considered. For example, employees from Human Resources, Accommodations, Information Management and Information Technology, Printing and Graphics Services, and Communications have taken training sessions provided by key experts such as the Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology group from Employment and Social Development Canada.

**Workplace culture:** PCO employees have improved their awareness of accessibility and disability inclusion. The increased participation in quality learning events and access to relevant Canada School of Public Service training courses are evidence of this. Resources on accessibility and disability inclusion are shared with all PCO employees in our Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Corner on PCO's intranet.

**Persons with Disabilities (PwD) employee network:** Building on the work of the PwD focus group that informed the first accessibility plan, PCO has now created a formal PwD employee network in 2024 to create a safe space to convene and advocate for the community. In 2024, the Clerk of the Privy Council appointed a champion for PwD, at the assistant deputy minister level. The champion's role is to provide guidance to the network and contribute to senior management discussions to ensure the perspective of persons with disabilities is considered.

### **Barriers identified**

**Accommodations process:** PCO's Human Resources Division and pillar leads are addressing needs and providing support as part of the duty to accommodate; however, barriers persist. For example, employees identified inconsistent communication on the status and outcomes of accommodation requests, which can lead to miscommunication or make employees less effective in their work. Employees indicated that not all managers are knowledgeable about the accommodation process or comfortable speaking with employees about accessibility and disability inclusion.

**Workplace culture and engagement:** The overall level of education and training in and awareness of accessibility and disability inclusion remains low throughout the organization. Employees and management shared a desire for increased dialogue and learning around accessibility and disability inclusion to eliminate existing barriers. Employees identified a persistent culture of ableism, bias and stigma affecting employee morale and trust. This has resulted in a culture where persons with disabilities are not comfortable providing negative feedback to service providers or management about accommodations.

**Career development:** There is a lack of career navigation and career development opportunities for persons with disabilities. Other areas of improvement include recruitment, onboarding and retention. Similarly, there is a lack of targeted support for persons with disabilities when navigating job mobility or work transitions that include accommodations. For

example, the accommodations process can be improved so that employees arriving at PCO or changing jobs within the organization have a seamless experience.

### **Ongoing and planned initiatives**

**Employment equity representation:** PCO will continue to regularly collect and track employee self-identification data to assess the effectiveness of strategies and initiatives. PCO's employment equity dashboards include disaggregated data on the representation of persons with disabilities by level, by classification and at the branch or secretariat level. The dashboards are shared with executives and employees on a quarterly basis and used to inform senior management discussions.

**Updated Self-identification Questionnaire:** In February 2026, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat released its updated, newly expanded Self-Identification (Self-ID) Questionnaire. The updated self-ID questionnaire supports the Government of Canada's efforts to build on its equity, diversity and inclusion efforts and fulfills our obligations under the *Employment Equity Act*. For persons with disabilities, the updated version provides an expanded set of identity options and uses modern, inclusive and relevant terminology, making it possible for all employees to see themselves reflected in the options.

**Digital Passport and Better Accommodation Project:** In November 2025, PCO signed a memorandum of understanding with the Treasury Board Secretariat to adopt the digital Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport (Digital Passport). The Digital Passport will provide an online platform to better support managers and employees navigating the accommodation process. It will also provide new data points to help identify areas for improvement in the accommodations process.

PCO will also establish a working group to adopt and implement best practices and solutions from the Better Accommodation Project. This will help PCO streamline accommodation processes and improve service delivery. For example, federal departments and agencies have completed sludge audits of their accommodations processes to identify inefficiencies and obstacles. They have also developed guidance materials related to medical information for workplace accommodations and are leading discussions on workplace accommodations.

**Advancing PCO's culture of accessibility and disability inclusion through enhanced communication and engagement with persons with disabilities and all employees:** PCO will improve awareness of PCO's ongoing efforts so that all employees can help build an inclusive workplace. PCO will enhance accountability by holding quarterly meetings with pillar leads, PCO's Persons with Disabilities Network and its champion to communicate ongoing progress, obtain feedback and discuss solutions.

Both qualitative and quantitative measures will be used to monitor and share the progress made in achieving accessibility and disability inclusion at PCO. An employee survey will be used to engage all employees to determine their overall awareness of the accessibility plan and

activities, while providing data to inform and improve the delivery of accommodation services to employees with disabilities and their managers.

**Creating equity opportunities for persons with disabilities:** In consultation with PwD, PCO will develop guidance for managers and employees to support career development, talent management, training (including official languages) and retention strategies. PCO will also work with the Central Agencies Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Secretariat and federal departments and agencies to ensure persons with disabilities are included in developing and participating in career development programs, including mentorship, sponsorship and other training opportunities.

## **Built environment**

### **Progress to date**

**Buildings:** In partnership with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), PCO continues to check how accessible all departmental offices are using Universal Accessibility Best Practices and the Canadian Standards Association’s [standards for building a barrier-free Canada](#).

**Facilities:** PCO is continuously improving and meeting commitments from the PSPC audit by providing accommodations in areas such as:

- washrooms and elements, for example grab bars and automatic door openers
- moving through doorways due to lack of electronic buttons
- gaining access to buildings (key card and code entry)
- using signage and wayfinding (entrances, workspaces and elevators)
- assigned workstations where seating is unassigned for open floor workspaces

### **Barriers identified**

**Work environment:** Because of the number of different work locations at PCO in the National Capital Region and ministerial regional offices, employees experience different levels of accessibility depending on the specific location in which they work. For example, PCO has several leased office spaces and different security requirements and types of buildings (for example, heritage buildings). Participating in meetings and events in another building requires employees to adjust to different levels of accessibility standards.

**Accommodating neurodiverse employees:** Across the public service, awareness of neurodiversity has improved since PCO’s first plan. However, challenges remain in identifying and implementing accommodations that meet the diverse and unique needs of neurodiverse employees. Employees and managers will need support to learn how to identify, discuss and implement workplace accommodation measures to better support neurodiverse employees and create a more inclusive workplace.

## Ongoing and planned initiatives

**Audit assessment of the built environment:** As stated earlier, PCO continues to work with PSPC to ensure all departmental offices are accessible. Spaces that have been evaluated will undergo updated audits on a cyclical basis. PCO will develop plans and strategies for improvements, as needed, following the completion of the audit assessments in PCO spaces.

For heritage buildings, implementation strategies may take additional time as the solutions may involve a multi-year implementation strategy.

PCO Accommodations and the HR team will continue to work together to review accommodation requests from staff on a case-by-case basis, and targeted solutions will be implemented to help reduce barriers and to create a more accessible work environment.

## Information and communication technologies

### Progress to date

**Information management and information technology:** In 2023, a plan was developed in consultation with Information Management, Information Technology (IT), HR, and Printing and Graphics Services. PCO continues to fulfill many of the plan's commitments across all digital assets. This includes promoting the GC Digital Accessibility Toolkit guidance through PCO's Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Corner and reviewing current digital assets on internal and external applications and sites. PCO has identified an opportunity to increase accessibility by including alternate text for all photos and using plain language in all communications as standard practice.

**Client Service Portal:** PCO has streamlined the new ticketing workflow for ergonomic IT equipment in the PCO Client Service Portal. It has updated new applications with a more intuitive and interactive format in the PCO Client Service Portal App Store. Accessibility applications are featured prominently in the catalogue, and a self-service model allows employees to request accessibility applications by clicking a button.

**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 compliance:** A thorough assessment of PCO-supported websites and web applications was completed in April 2024. Updates were completed in December 2024 to ensure the websites and applications were WCAG 2.1 compliant. All new content, including the redesigned Prime Minister's website, is being reviewed to ensure content is created and published according to WCAG guidelines. PCO continues to ensure that our social media and external communications, such as videos and reports, are accessible.

## **Barriers identified**

**IT accommodations:** For uncommon IT accommodation requests that require a case-by-case approach, further improvements could be made to create a timely and seamless experience in addressing employees' requests. For example, a proactive approach to consulting employees and involving them in choosing software or hardware can help reduce barriers. Also, additional training for IT employees can help with specialized technology accommodations.

## **Ongoing and planned initiatives**

**Information management and IT accessibility plan:** PCO will continue to implement the long-term information management and information technology accessibility plan to support accessibility across all digital assets.

**WCAG 2.0 Compliance:** PCO will finish assessing websites and web applications of entities PCO supports and updating them to WCAG 2.0 compliance. PCO will continue to ensure PCO public-facing website and web applications comply with WCAG 2.0 level AA.

**Social media:** PCO continues to improve accessibility and inclusion within the department's social media presence. PCO uses all available accessibility features on social media platforms, such as alternate text for photos and captions for videos.

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

### **Progress to date**

**Accessibility and Disability Corner:** PCO has developed a dedicated space on the department's intranet that provides employees with resources and guidance relating to accessibility, plain language writing, inclusive communication and accessible meetings.

**Alternative document formats:** The department offers alternate communication formats to the public and employees on request. These include plain-text, print and audio versions. PCO will continue to provide guidance to document owners within the department so that document templates meet accessibility standards.

**Accessible documents:** The Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Corner on PCO's intranet provides resources on how to make documents accessible. On request, the Editing Services team in the Communications Secretariat provides plain language editing and advice on accessible communication to PCO secretariats and their key clients. Copy edits include reviews for inclusive and ableist language and can include formatting and structural changes to make documents more accessible.

**Meetings and events:** To ensure PCO meetings and events are accessible, organizers strive to provide the following services when possible, depending on the nature of the event: official language interpreters, sign language interpreters, transcriptions, and sharing of key materials in advance.

## Barriers identified

**Communication and employee engagement with persons with disabilities:** We have made progress on many of the commitments in PCO’s first accessibility plan. However, employees would like more updates to stay informed about accommodations and to support their engagement on accessibility and disability inclusion issues. Employees noted that greater transparency about progress to date can avoid miscommunication and help focus efforts on addressing areas for improvement.

## Ongoing and planned initiatives

**Accessible communications:** Work is underway to review and update existing templates for accessibility. PCO will also improve awareness of document accessibility and guidance on how to create accessible documents making it easier for everyone to read, understand and interact with them, including people living with disabilities. Ongoing targeted training will be provided to PCO’s corporate service providers, and more general training will be provided to all employees. Topics to be covered include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using plain language
- Using inclusive language
- Using the accessibility features in common applications, such as the Microsoft Office applications
- Ensuring all-staff communications are fully accessible

**Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Corner:** In fall 2025, PCO Internal Communications and HR worked with the PwD Network to improve PCO’s intranet site by including additional guidance and new resources. A subsequent update will be provided following the onboarding of the Digital Passport and adoption of best practices from the Better Accommodation Project to better support employees with disabilities and their managers.

## Procurement of goods and services

### Progress to date

**Centralized accessibility fund:** The centralized fund has been a success. It has made getting equipment and furniture, such as ergonomic chairs, easier and faster. The increasing number of requests over time show how easy it is to request accommodations at PCO.

**Procurement process:** PCO reviewed the procurement process for accessibility and updated aspects such as documents, forms, templates and communications. It applied the PSPC revised template for ProServices requests for proposals. It will serve as a useful tool that considers accessibility criteria for competitive processes. The PCO procurement team can also use this language for other requirements not directly linked to ProServices.

**Contract modernization initiative:** PCO is implementing the new contract modernization initiative, which includes the Standard Contract Clause Inventory instead of the previous Standard Acquisition Contract Clauses. This new initiative promotes more accessible contracting and will include new accessibility clauses in the Standard Contract Clause Inventory on an ongoing basis.

**PCO Client Services Portal Procurement Page:** Accessibility is a mandatory consideration for procurement under PCO's Client Services Portal. Clients are now required to identify accessibility considerations that apply to their procurement request when filling out their mandatory information. In all instances where clients indicate that accessibility considerations do not apply to their procurement, they must provide a written justification to move forward with processing their request. This enables PCO's Procurement Unit to better understand how the requirement fits within operations and encourages managers to think about accessibility considerations where they may not have factored them in previously.

**Education and training on accessibility:** PCO has given the procurement team guidance on best practices for accessible procurement and supporting suppliers with disabilities. For example, procurement officers at PCO received training from the Accessible Procurement Resource Centre so they can better understand accessibility in procurement and how it relates to PCO. New procurement officers are expected to complete additional training on accessibility. All officers are required to refresh their understanding of accessibility requirements so they can better communicate them to their clients.

### **Barriers identified**

**Reliance on external partners:** PCO identified limits and constraints in the procurement process due to the reliance on external partners and their processes. This affects the timeliness of the service employees receive or how soon they receive accessible equipment.

### **Ongoing and planned initiatives**

**Continuous improvement in procurement:** PCO procurement will try to be proactive when delivering services to persons with disabilities. For example, PCO can anticipate employee needs and purchase licences for accessible software and applications. PCO procurement will continue to explore other opportunities to advance accessibility and disability inclusion in the procurement process.

## Conclusion

Over the past three years, PCO has made positive and tangible progress on the first accessibility plan (2022–2025). That said, we recognize that we still have more work to do to make PCO, and Canada’s federal public service, more inclusive and accessible.

We acknowledge that accessibility and disability inclusion is complex but an important part of everyone’s work at PCO because anyone can be part of it at any time. Ensuring we have a safe, fair and accessible (barrier-free) workplace benefits all of us.

As we look forward to implementing our renewed plan (2026–2028), our strategic priorities will guide our efforts to act faster through consistent collaboration and the sharing of best practices, innovations and lessons learned. Persons with disabilities will regularly be consulted and included.

Finally, we will highlight the roles we can all play, as an organization and individuals, in making PCO a workplace free of physical and attitudinal barriers. We can achieve this by encouraging conversations, action and accountability while making lasting and positive change in accessibility and disability inclusion.

## **Annex - Accessibility Action Plan**

Over the next three years, PCO's goal is to become a best-in-class organization that meets world-class benchmarks where possible and adopts best practices from federal departments and agencies.

To achieve this goal, this Accessibility Action Plan outlines the ongoing and new activities PCO plans to implement in 2026 and 2027 under our three strategic priorities and covers five of the priority areas under the *Accessible Canada Act*. Given this document is an evergreen document, additional activities will be reported in our annual progress reports and contribute to the renewal of the accessibility plan in 2028.

### **Strategic priority 1**

Modernize accessibility and disability inclusion by implementing the digital Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport (Digital Passport) and adopting Better Accommodation Project best practices.

#### **2026**

##### **Digital Passport**

- Test the functionality of the web application with managers and employees, including members from the Persons with Disabilities Network.
- Train managers and employees in using the Digital Passport and develop a baseline of users in year one.
- Identify and implement process changes with pillar leads.
- Promote onboarding through targeted communications and engagement sessions.
- Become, as an organization, an active member of the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport Adopter Community of Practice.

##### **Better Accommodation Project (BAP)**

- Establish a Better Accommodation Project working group chaired by PCO Human Resources and the Impact and Innovation Unit.
- Identify and implement best practices to adopt at PCO, including the use of the Better Accommodation Project Toolkit for organizations, managers and employees.

### **Built environment**

- Develop plans and strategies for improvements, as needed, following the completion of the audit assessments in PCO spaces.
- Continue to work with Public Services and Procurement Canada to address buildings where PCO has a presence.
- Have PCO Accommodations and the Human Resources team continue to work together to review accommodation requests from staff on a case-by-case basis and implement targeted solutions to help reduce barriers and to create a more accessible work environment.

### **Information and communication technologies (ICT)**

- Implement the long-term information management and information technology accessibility plan to support accessibility across all digital assets.
- Finish assessing and updating websites and web applications of entities PCO supports to WCAG 2.0 compliance, including public-facing website and web applications to comply with WCAG 2.0 level AA.
- Improve accessibility and disability inclusion within the department's social media presence.

### **Procurement of goods and services**

- Identify and maintain an ongoing list of licences for accessible software and applications to proactively or quickly purchase.
- Review activities to identify and address gaps to advance accessibility and disability inclusion in the procurement process.

## **2027**

### **Digital Passport**

- Increase uptake from managers and employees and continue training sessions.
- Report on the results of process changes and implement new process changes as required.

### **Better Accommodation Project**

- Report on results and identify priorities to action for year two.

## **Strategic priority 2**

Advance PCO's culture of accessibility and disability inclusion through enhanced communication and engagement with persons with disabilities and all employees.

### **2026**

- Establish quarterly meetings with pillar leads, the Persons with Disabilities Network and the network's champion to share progress updates, get regular feedback and discuss solutions.
- Develop a strategic communication plan, in collaboration with PCO's Persons with Disabilities Network, to include planned messages to staff, events and targeted sessions (including training) across PCO secretariats and branches.
- Participate as an organization in the Interdepartmental Accessibility Community of Practice.
- Identify and provide training to managers and employees on how to identify, discuss and implement workplace accommodation measures to better support neurodiverse employees.
- Develop an employee survey and examine results from the latest Public Service Employee Survey to inform PCO's annual accessibility progress report.
- Leverage data from the Digital Passport to monitor progress, highlight achievements and identify areas for improvement.

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

- Improve awareness of document accessibility and provide guidance on how to create accessible documents that are easier for everyone to read, understand and interact with, including people living with disabilities.
- Review and update existing templates for accessibility.
- Provide targeted training to corporate service providers and more general training to all employees on accessibility and disability inclusion.

### **PCO's intranet site, InfoNet**

- Update PCO's intranet site to include additional guidance and new resources on accessibility and disability inclusion.

## 2027

- Have reporting from quarterly meetings contribute to PCO’s annual progress report and the development of the next accessibility plan.
- Revise the strategic communication plan based on lessons learned from year one to improve awareness of PCO’s ongoing efforts and address gaps.
- Develop guidance for managers and employees on supporting and accommodating neurodiverse employees.
- Use employee survey to inform PCO’s annual accessibility progress report and the development of the next accessibility plan.
- Develop key performance indicators and include results in the annual progress report.

### **PCO’s intranet site, InfoNet**

- Subsequent update following the onboarding of the Digital Passport and adoption of best practices from the Better Accommodation Project.

## **Strategic priority 3**

Create equitable opportunities for persons with disabilities.

## 2026

- Support PCO’s Persons with Disabilities Network and PCO Champion for the Persons with Disabilities Network.
- Launch a campaign to promote the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat’s updated and newly expanded Self-Identification (Self-ID) Questionnaire at PCO. This initiative will enable the collection of data in near real time, providing a richer demographic picture of the federal workforce. In addition, the Self-ID questionnaire uses modern, inclusive and relevant terminology, making it possible for all employees to see themselves reflected. For example, questions now include disability status and type for persons with disabilities. Self-ID data will also inform decisions, programs and initiatives across the public service.

### **Employment**

- Continue to produce employment equity dashboards, including disaggregated data on the representation of persons with disabilities by level, by classification and at the branch or secretariat level.

- In consultation with persons with disabilities, develop guidance for managers and employees to support career development, talent management, training (including official languages) and retention strategies.
- Work with the Central Agencies Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Secretariat and federal departments and agencies to support career development, mentorship, sponsorship and other training opportunities for persons with disabilities.

## **2027**

- Support recruitment of members to PCO's Persons with Disabilities Network.

### **Employment**

- Reassess PCO's learning needs on accessibility and disability inclusion to identify and update existing training programs.
- Promote the use of guidance materials for managers and employees to inform performance management agreements, learning plans and access to career development initiatives, talent management, training (including official languages) and retention strategies.
- Support the second year of initiatives developed by the Central Agencies Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Secretariat and federal departments and agencies.

## Glossary

### Accessibility

The degree to which a product, service, program or environment is available to be accessed or used by all.

### Accommodation

Any change in the working environment that allows a person with functional limitations in their abilities to do their job. Changes can include:

- adjustments to the physical workspace
- adaptations to equipment and tools
- flexible work hours
- job-sharing
- relocation of the workspace within the greater workplace
- the ability to work from home
- reallocation or exchange of some non-essential tasks for others
- time off for medical appointments

Accommodations (adjustments) can be temporary, periodic or long-term, depending on the employee's situation or changes in the workplace.

### Barrier

Anything that prevents the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment. This includes:

- physical impairment
- mental impairment
- intellectual impairment
- cognitive impairment
- learning impairment
- communication or sensory impairment
- a functional limitation

Barriers can be physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal.

(Source: the *Accessible Canada Act*)

### Disability

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

(Source: the *Accessible Canada Act*)

### Employee

A person employed by the Privy Council Office

### **Persons with disabilities**

Persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment and who:

- consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment because of that impairment, or
- believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment because of that impairment

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

(Source: the *Employment Equity Act*)

### **Pillar Leads**

The following teams at PCO – Pillar Leads – are responsible for leading actions to eliminate and prevent barriers to accessibility under the five priority areas under the ACA:

1. Human Resources are the lead for employment.
2. Accommodation and Inventory Management are the lead for built environment.
3. Information Technology are the lead for Information and communications technologies.
4. Communications are the lead for Communication, other than information and communication technologies.
5. Procurement and Contracting Services are the lead for procurement of goods and services.

### **Self-identification**

Self-identification is the term used for the collection of employment equity information voluntarily provided by employees, under the authority of the *Employment Equity Act*. The information is used for the purposes of analyzing and monitoring the progress of employment equity groups and for reporting on workforce representation.

(Source: Public Service Commission of Canada Self-Declaration Information)

### **Workforce availability**

For the core public administration, workforce availability refers to the estimated availability of people in designated groups as a percentage of the workforce population.

(Source: Employment Equity in the Public Service of Canada for Fiscal Year 2017 to 2018)