CAN-ASC-5.2.1:2026 - Accessible Service Delivery

National Standard of Canada

Accessibility Standards Canada
Normes d'accessibilité Canada

Canada

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1 Accessibility Standards Canada: About us

Accessibility Standards Canada, under whose auspices this Standard has been produced, is a Government of Canada departmental corporation mandated through the *Accessible Canada Act*. Accessibility Standards Canada's Standards contribute to the purpose of the *Accessible Canada Act*, which is to benefit all persons, especially persons with disabilities, through the realization of a Canada without barriers through the identification, removal, and prevention of accessibility barriers.

Disability, as defined by the *Accessible Canada Act*, 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.

All of Accessibility Standards Canada's standards development work, including the work of our technical committees, is carried out in recognition of, and in accordance with, the following principles in the *Accessible Canada Act*:

- all persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities;
- all persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities;
- all persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities;
- all persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;

- laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons;
- persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures; and
- the development and revision of accessibility standards and the making of regulations must be done with the objective of achieving the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

These principles align with the principles of the United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, ratified by the Government of Canada in 2010 to recognize the importance of promoting, protecting, and upholding the human rights of persons with disabilities to participate fully in their communities. Standards developed by Accessibility Standards Canada align with Articles in the Convention.

Accessibility Standards Canada seeks to create standards that are aligned with its vision. This includes commitments to break down barriers to accessibility and abide by the principle of "nothing without us" in our standards development process, where everyone, including persons with disabilities, can expect a Canada without barriers.

As part of the "nothing without us" principle, Accessibility Standards Canada promotes that accessibility is good for everyone, as it can have society wide benefits. As a result, standards developed by Accessibility Standards Canada are designed to achieve the highest levels of accessibility. This means that Accessibility Standards Canada standards create equity-based technical requirements while taking into consideration national and international best practices, as opposed to focusing on minimum technical requirements.

This approach is meant to push innovation in standards and develop technical requirements that have broad positive impacts. This approach to innovation strives to improve the outcomes for all Canadians, including creating employment opportunities and solutions that contribute to Canada's economic growth.

The standards development process used by Accessibility Standards Canada is the most accessible in Canada, if not the world. Accessibility Standards Canada provides accommodations to meet the needs of Technical Committee members with disabilities. Accessibility Standards Canada provides compensation for people with disabilities to encourage their active participation. Accessibility Standards Canada ensures an accessible public review process, including accessible permission forms and multiple formats of the standard, to encourage Canadians with disabilities to comment. To facilitate an accessible experience for all, our standards are available for free on our website. This includes providing standards in multiple formats, including plain-language, American Sign language (ASL) and langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) summaries. This allows the following groups to benefit from the technical content of our standards:

- people with disabilities;
- people without disabilities;
- the federal public sector;
- private sector;
- non-government organizations;
- indigenous communities; and
- society.

Accessibility Standards Canada applies an intersectional framework to capture the experiences of people with disabilities who also identify as 2SLGBTQI+, Indigenous Peoples, women, and visible minorities. Its standards development process requires that technical committees apply a cross-disability perspective to ensure that no new barriers to accessibility are unintentionally created. In addition, standards developed by Accessibility Standards Canada align with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which were adopted by Canada in 2015 to promote partnership, peace and prosperity for all people and the planet by 2030.

Accessibility Standards Canada is engaged in the production of voluntary accessibility standards, which are developed by technical committees using a consensus-based approach. Each technical committee is composed of a balanced group of experts who develop the technical content of a standard. At least 30 % of these technical experts are people with disabilities and lived experience and 30% are from equity seeking groups including 2SLGBTQI+, indigenous peoples, women and visible minorities. These technical experts also include consumers and other users, government and authorities, labour and unions, other standards development organizations, businesses and industry, academic and research bodies, and non-governmental organizations.

All Accessibility Standards Canada standards also incorporate related findings from research reports conducted through Accessibility Standards Canada’s Advancing Accessibility Grants and Contributions program. This program involves persons with disabilities, experts, and organizations to advance accessibility standards research and supports research projects that help with the identification, removal, and prevention of new barriers to accessibility.

Accessibility Standards Canada standards are subject to review and revision to ensure that they reflect current trends and best practices. Accessibility Standards Canada will initiate the review of this Standard within four years of the date of publication. Suggestions for improvement, which are always welcome, should be brought to the notice of the respective technical committee. Changes to standards are issued either as separate amendments or in new editions of standards.

As a Standards Council of Canada Accredited Standards Development Organization, all Accessibility Standards Canada standards are developed through an accredited standards development process and follow Standard Council of Canda's Requirements and Guidance for Standards Development Organizations. These voluntary standards are intended for any organization or person seeking advice to advance accessibility and can be recommended to the Minister responsible for the *Accessible Canada Act* for adoption into regulation.

In addition to its focus on developing accessibility standards, Accessibility Standards Canada has been a leader amongst Canadian federal organizations for promoting and adopting accessibility internal to government. Accessibility Standards Canada is the first organization in the federal government to have a Board of Directors majority-led by persons with disabilities. Accessibility Standards Canada has a state-of-the-art accessible office space for its employees, Board of Directors, and Technical Committee Members. The carefully designed accessible workspace aligns with the organization's belief in the importance of equitable design.

To obtain additional information on Accessibility Standards Canada, its standards or publications, please contact:

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2 Standards Council of Canada statement

A National Standard of Canada is a standard developed by a Standards Council of Canada (SCC) accredited Standards Development Organization, in compliance with requirements and guidance set out by SCC. More information on National Standards of Canada can be found at www.scc.ca.

SCC is a Crown corporation within the portfolio of Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada. With the goal of enhancing Canada's economic competitiveness and social well-being, SCC leads and facilitates the development and use of national and international standards. SCC also coordinates Canadian participation in standards development, and identifies strategies to advance Canadian standardization efforts.

Accreditation services are provided by SCC to various customers, including product certifiers, testing laboratories, and standards development organizations. A list of SCC programs and accredited bodies is publicly available at www.scc.ca.

3 Accessibility Standards Canada legal notice for standards

Please read this Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC) legal notice (hereafter referred to as “ASC legal notice”) before using this standard document.

3.1 General

The Canadian Accessibility Standards Development Organization (operating as “Accessibility Standards Canada”) standards are developed through a consensus-based standards development process approved by the Standards Council of Canada. This process brings together volunteers representing varied viewpoints and interests to achieve consensus and develop standards.

3.2 Understanding this edition of the standard

Revisions may have been or may eventually be developed in relation to this edition of the standard. It is the responsibility of the users of this document to verify if any revisions exist.

3.3 Disclaimer and exclusion of liability

This document was developed as a reference document for voluntary use. It is the responsibility of the users to verify if laws or regulations make the application of this Standard mandatory or if trade regulations or market conditions stipulate its use, for example, in technical regulations, inspection plans originating from regulatory authorities, and certification programs.

Although the primary application of this Standard is stated in its scope, it remains the responsibility of the users of this Standard to judge its suitability for their particular purpose. It is also the responsibility of the users to consider limitations and restrictions specified in the purpose and/or scope of this Standard.

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Accessible Service Delivery

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5 Preface

This is the first edition of CAN-ASC-5.2.1, Accessible Service Delivery

This Standard is intended to align with other relevant standards, such as:

- CAN-ASC-EN 301 549:2024-Accessibility requirements for ICT products and services (EN 301 549:2021, IDT);
- CAN-ASC-1.1:2024 (REV-2025)-Employment;
- CAN-ASC-3.1:2025-Plain Language;
- CSA/ASC B651:23 Accessible design for the built environment; and
- CSA/ASC B651.2:25 Accessible design for self-service interactive devices including automated banking machines.

This Standard is intended to align with relevant acts, codes, regulations, and statutes, such as:

- *Accessible Canada Act; and*
- *Accessible Canada Regulations*.

This voluntary Standard can be used for conformity assessment.

Development of this Standard was undertaken by Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC). The content was prepared by the Technical Committee on Design and Delivery of Accessible Programs and Services, selected by ASC, under the authority of ASC management, and has been formally approved by the Technical Committee.

Note 1: This Standard was developed by consensus, which is defined as a substantial agreement implying much more than a simple majority, but not necessarily unanimity. Consistent with this definition, a member may be included in the Technical Committee list but not be in complete agreement with all the Clauses in this Standard.

Note 2: This Standard is subject to periodic review, and suggestions for improvement will be referred to the appropriate technical committee.

5.1 International agreements

5.1.1 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* protects and promotes the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities without discrimination, and on an equal basis with others. Parties to the Convention are required to promote and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities, including full equality under the law. The Convention has served as the major catalyst in the global movement towards viewing persons with disabilities as full and equal members of society.

This Standard aligns with the following Articles in the Convention:

a) Article 5 – Equality and non-discrimination

b) Article 6 – Women with disabilities

c) Article 7 – Children with disabilities

d) Article 8 – Awareness-raising

e) Article 9 – Accessibility

f) Article 14 – Liberty and security of person

g) Article 16 – Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse

h) Article 17 – Protecting the integrity of the person

i) Article 18 – Liberty of movement and nationality

j) Article 20 – Personal mobility

k) Article 21 – Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

l) Article 22 – Respect for privacy

m) Article 23 – Respect for home and the family

n) Article 24 – Education

o) Article 25 – Health

p) Article 26 – Habilitation and rehabilitation

q) Article 27 – Work and employment

r) Article 28 – Adequate standard of living and social protection

s) Article 29 – Participation in political and public life

t) Article 30 – Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

5.1.2 Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals are a global call to action. They aim to leave no one behind and address social, economic, and environmental challenges. Canada and 192 other United Nations member states adopted the 2030 Agenda in 2015. Standards can provide concrete and actionable guidance towards the achievement of the Goals.

This Standard contributes to the following Goals:

a) Goal 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere

b) Goal 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

c) Goal 10 – Reduce inequality within and among countries

d) Goal 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

e) Goal 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

f) Goal 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

6 Introduction

6.1 General

This Standard provides requirements for the realization of an equitable, inclusive, and barrier-free service delivery experience for all people throughout the delivery of services.

The purpose of this document is to promote accessible service delivery that allows all people to obtain, use, and benefit from services that are offered by service providers. Accessible service delivery provides all people with the opportunity to:

a) receive essential information about a service that meets their communication needs;

b) access a service through any means offered, whether in-person, through the phone, digitally, or through any other means of access; and

c) receive services in a manner that meets their individualized needs.

This Standard promotes equity-based requirements that go above mandatory minimums. This means that the technical requirements in this Standard strive to provide the highest level of accessibility for the widest range of users.

Service providers that apply these requirements promote inclusive service delivery that responds to the needs of the widest range of people.

In the spirit of this Standard, whenever possible, people with disabilities should be consulted and involved in the development of accessible services to achieve an equitable outcome.

It is also important to consider multiple perspectives that can make service delivery more effective and meaningful. As such, reaching out to employees who deliver a service, people who receive a service, and the public can provide ideas on how to improve the accessibility of service delivery.

Organizations working with or representing people with disabilities can also offer a perspective on the different types of barriers that people might experience. They can also connect service providers with people with disabilities to provide input and feedback on service delivery.

For the purposes of this Standard, when the service provider is referred to, this also includes any subcontractor or third parties delivering services on behalf of the service provider. When people are referred to, it includes anyone that is a customer, service recipient, or member of the general public.

The Standard respects and complements the principles, purpose, and requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act* through the following principles:

a) Services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

b) People with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use, and benefit from a service.

c) When communicating with people with disabilities, the service provider does so in a manner that is accessible to them.

6.2 Barriers this Standard aims to address

Instead of focusing on specific disabilities, this Standard focuses on the barriers to service delivery that people might experience within the following broad categories:

a) Language and comprehension barriers: Barriers related to unfamiliar language and the way information is presented, making the information hard or impossible to understand.

b) Memory, attention, and processing barriers: Barriers that make it hard to pay attention to, retain, or process information because of stress, cognitive overload, or attention-related challenges. These difficulties could arise from complex, lengthy, or dense texts, visuals, or audio, leading to reduced understanding.

c) Emotional and distress-related barriers: Barriers that trigger emotional distress or trauma responses, making it hard for people to pay attention to and understand the information.

d) Information access and navigation barriers: Barriers that make it hard to find, follow, or move through information in digital, printed, or physical environments.

e) Visual, hearing, and format barriers: Barriers caused by texts, visuals, or audio without alternate formats.

f) Digital and interactive accessibility barriers: Barriers that make digital communications hard to use for finding, understanding, and using information.

g) Environmental barriers: Barriers caused by scents and chemicals in the environment, such as some perfumes, cleaning products, or byproducts of current or recent construction.

h) Physical barriers: Barriers related to built or natural environments that make it hard for people to move around, access services, engage in personal care, communicate, or see. These barriers can arise from objects that require strength or dexterity to use.

i) Policy barriers: Barriers caused by rules, policies or practices that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded, which reinforce systemic inaccessibility.

j) Attitudinal/knowledge barriers: Barriers that are caused by ableism, stereotyping, paternalism, and/or lack of knowledge about disabilities.

7 Scope

7.1 Purpose

This Standard specifies the technical requirements for providing accessible service delivery that allows all people to obtain, use, and benefit from services.

7.2 Intended audience

This Standard is intended for any organization or person seeking to advance accessibility.

7.3 Terminology

In this Standard, three terms are defined as follows:

a) Shall: Expresses a requirement, or a provision that the user is obliged to satisfy to comply with the Standard.

b) Should: Expresses a recommendation, or that which is advised but not required.

c) May: Expresses an option, or that which is permissible within the limits of the Standard.

Notes accompanying clauses do not include requirements or alternative requirements; the purpose of a note accompanying a clause is to separate explanatory or informative material.

Notes to tables and figures are considered part of the table or figure and may be written as requirements.

Annexes are designated normative (mandatory) or informative (non-mandatory) to define their application.

8 References

This Standard refers to the following publications, and where such reference is made, it shall be to the edition listed below.

8.1 Normative

The following standards are necessary for applying this Standard in certain contexts:

Accessibility Standards Canada

CAN-ASC-1.1:2024 (REV-2025) – Employment

CAN-ASC-3.1:2025 – Plain Language

CAN-ASC-EN 301 549:2024 – Accessibility requirements for ICT products and services (EN 301 549:2021, IDT)

CSA Group/Accessibility Standards Canada

CSA/ASC B651:23 Accessible design for the built environment

CSA/ASC B651.2:25 Accessible design for self-service interactive devices including automated banking machines

8.2 Informative

This Standard refers to the following acts, codes, and statutes, and where such reference is made, it shall be to the edition listed below.

Government of Canada

Accessible Canada Act, 2019

Accessible Canada Regulations, 2021

9 Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Standard:

Accessible format — Formats that collectively present information in ways that can be perceived, understood, and used by all individuals.

Note 1: There is no one format that is fully accessible to all. Accessible formats are responsive to the needs of the person using the format.

Note 2: Examples include (but are not limited to) digital formats, audio formats, braille, print, large print, plain language, and signed languages.

Alternate method of service delivery — An approach to deliver services to people with disabilities that achieve the objective of the service, which is implemented when the original service delivery method(s) is (are) inaccessible or unusable, and cannot practicably be made accessible or usable.

Note: In developing alternate methods of service delivery, service providers might consider more than one option that achieves the objectives of the service.

Barrier — Anything that hinders a person's full and equitable participation in services.

Note: Barriers include but are not limited to the following:

1) Architectural
2) Attitudinal
3) Physical
4) Knowledge
5) Technological
6) Based on information or communications

7) The result of a policy or practice

8) The result of legislation

Source: Adapted from the *Accessible Canada Act*

Communication supports — Supports that people with disabilities might use to access, understand and express information.

Note: Communication supports include but are not limited to the following:

1) Sign language interpretation
2) Writing, email, or texting
3) Captioning
4) Audio description
5) Assistive listening systems
6) Magnification devices
7) Augmentative and alternative communication devices, including:
    a) letter, word, or picture boards; and
    b) devices and applications that convert text to speech.
8) Reading aloud
9) Rephrasing in clear language
10) Human assistance

Source: Adapted from the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* Integrated Accessibility Standards

Disability — 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: *Accessible Canada Act*

Equitable — Ensuring people have access to the resources and opportunities in the delivery of services that are necessary to obtain, use, and benefit from the service in a way that meets their unique and individual needs and preferences.

Guide dog — A dog that guides a person who is blind or partially sighted and was trained by an organization or individual certified in guide dog training.

Mobility aid — Any manual or electric wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, crutch, prosthesis, or other aid that is specifically designed to assist a person with a disability with a need related to mobility.

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: CAN-ASC-3.1:2025 — Plain Language

Service — Any activity that helps people get what they need, such as information, support, or completing tasks. Services can be delivered in-person, through the phone, digitally, or through any other means of access.

Service dog — A dog that assists a person with a need related to their disability and was trained by an organization or person with expertise in service dog training.

Note: A service dog is typically identifiable by visual indicators, such as a vest or harness, and is expected to behave in a controlled and non-aggressive manner.

Service provider — Any organization that delivers services or benefits to people.

Support person — A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with disability-related needs. They might assist a person with a disability with communication, medical needs, mobility, or other tasks. A support person might be a friend or family member, or a paid support worker.

Note: For the purposes of this Standard, a sign language interpreter or Deafblind Intervenor is considered a support person.

10 General requirements

10.1 Policies, practices and measures

a) The service provider shall develop, establish and implement easily available policies, practices and measures in plain language (complying with CAN-ASC-3.1:2025) to provide accessible services and communication through all available methods of service delivery and communication. Examples include but are not limited to:

   i) In-person

   ii) Through the phone (including TTY or VRS)

   iii) Digital service delivery

   iv) Any other means of access

   Note: People with disabilities may experience barriers to accessing some methods of service delivery or communication for reasons outside of the control of the service provider. Offering multiple means to access service or communication alleviates the effect of these barriers. However, these multiple means to access services or communications are accessible only if:

   1) people know about them;

   2) people are able to easily find information about them; and

   3) they are easy to navigate.

b) The service provider shall consult with people with disabilities when developing these policies, practices and measures.

c) To ensure that these policies, practices and measures are implemented by all staff, the service provider shall comply with CAN-ASC-1.1:2024 (REV 2025).

10.1.1 Access to policies, practices, and measures

The service provider shall ensure that policies, practices, and measures are:

a) available to the public; and

b) accessible to people with disabilities, complying with Clauses 10.3 and 12.

10.1.2 Ease of access

The service provider shall ensure that the process for requesting alternate methods of service delivery or accessible formats, or both, are:

a) easy to find;

b) simple to navigate; and

c) accessible.

Note 1: If the process to request alternate methods of service delivery or accessible formats is difficult to find or complex to navigate (for example, if you have to click through multiple menus to find it, or if the process involves filling out complex forms) this will in itself be a barrier to service, and many people with disabilities will end up going without the service due to the inaccessibility of the process.

Note 2: Whether or not something is easy to find and easy to navigate is best determined through consultation with people with disabilities.

10.2 Equitable service delivery

10.2.1 Planning for accessible service delivery

The service provider shall:

a) assess their services to ensure they meet the needs of people with disabilities, including:

   i) the different ways that people interact with the service being delivered; and

   ii) the intersectional experience of accessibility and barriers;

   Note: Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of identity factors (e.g., race, ethnicity, culture, language learning, spirituality, religion, age, disability or multiple disabilities), and how the interaction between these factors influences the way we experience service delivery. Users of this Standard are encouraged to consider intersectionality in the delivery of services.

b) ensure that people with disabilities receive sufficient time to complete forms and processes;

   Note: People with disabilities experience additional barriers to completing forms and processes and might need extra time or extended deadlines.

c) ensure that their delivery methods do not create extra costs or unnecessary burdens for people with disabilities receiving the service;

d) avoid delays that are under the service provider’s control in providing services to people with disabilities;

e) ensure that people with disabilities receive services that are equitable to the services given to other people, including the time, place and method of service delivery;

f) ensure that people with disabilities are not denied the opportunity to access, use, or benefit from a service, provided they are otherwise eligible for that service; and

Note: A person with a disability might be represented by a support person. Denying service to the support person amounts to denying service to the person with a disability.

g) ensure that eligibility requirements do not have the effect of screening out or denying full participation by people with disabilities, unless such criteria are essential to the service being provided.

10.2.2 Timeframes

a) The service provider shall provide requested alternate methods of service delivery and accessible formats without undue delay relative to original formats, services and communications.

b) When feasible, the service provider should have alternate methods of service delivery and accessible formats prepared so people are able to access them with the least amount of delay.

Note: When determining timelines or possible delays for alternate methods of service delivery and accessible formats, consider:

1) the circumstances;

2) any deadlines the person is facing;

3) the urgency of the request (for example during an election or applying for employment insurance);

4) the impact of a delay; and

5) how quickly others are able to access the information or service using the original format or method of service delivery.

10.3 Accessible communication

10.3.1 Accessible format communication

The service provider shall:

a) notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports and how to access these services and supports (see Clause 10.1.2);

b) inform people and their support people of the different communication formats available, including digital and physical formats and privacy options;

c) communicate with people and their support people in the format that is accessible to them;

d) upon request, provide or arrange accessible formats and communication supports for people with disabilities that:

   i) are provided in consultation with the person making the request, so that the accessible format or communication support is appropriate for their needs;

   ii) are provided without undue delay complying with Clause 10.2.2;

   iii) meet the person's needs; and

   Note: Intersecting identities are part of meeting a person's needs. For example, a person may have multiple disabilities, or be a language learner, and not be fluent in the language that the service is being delivered in.

   iv) are available at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other people;

e) provide electronic information or communication complying with Clause 12; and

f) comply with CAN-ASC-EN 301 549:2024.

10.3.2 Profiles of people who receive service

a) Where profiles or records are maintained, the service provider shall request and document people's preferred communication formats.

b) This information shall be collected with the people's informed consent and used solely to support accessible service delivery.

c) The service provider shall ensure that these records are reviewed and updated periodically, and that people are informed of their right to revise or withdraw their preferences at any time.

d) If the service provider decides to no longer offer a communication method, they shall notify the person accessing the service and provide a way to receive additional information or discuss the decision.

10.4 Alternate methods of service delivery

10.4.1 Alternate method of service delivery process

a) The service provider shall develop, implement, and make public a written process to offer and provide alternate methods of service delivery to people with disabilities when the original methods result in a barrier.

The process shall include:

i) how the alternate service method of service delivery will be actively offered (see Clause 10.1.2);

ii) how to request the alternate method of service delivery; and

iii) how the service provider will make decisions about such requests, ensuring timeliness and collaboration as outlined in Clause 10.2.2 and Clause 10.4.2 c).

b) The service provider shall make provisions for addressing requests that are submitted outside the established process.

c) The service provider should make every effort to fulfil requests that are submitted outside the established process.

10.4.2 Alternate method of service delivery provision

The service provider shall ensure the alternate method of service delivery:

a) is provided upon request;

b) meets the person's needs;

c) is developed collaboratively by the service provider and the person requesting the alternate method of service delivery;

d) is agreed upon by the person requesting the alternate method of service delivery;

e) provides an equitable level of service to the level of service other people receive;

f) is available without additional costs to the person requesting the service; and

g) is provided without undue delay, complying with Clause 10.2.2.

10.4.3 Agreement on alternate method of service delivery

If the requested alternate method of service delivery cannot be provided, the service provider shall:

a) provide an explanation as to why the requested alternate method of service delivery cannot be provided;

b) work with the person with a disability to identify additional alternatives to ensure the receipt of the service without causing undue hardship; and

c) identify and implement an accessible method of service delivery.

11 Communication

11.1 General

When communicating with a person with a disability, the service provider shall:

a) use the person's preferred method of communication; and

b) if the service provider cannot accommodate the preferred method of communication, provide an accessible form of communication, complying with Clauses 10.3 and 12.

11.2 Essential information

11.2.1 Providing essential information

The service provider shall provide essential information to people.

Note: This information is required so people fully understand the service(s) being offered as well as how to access them.

11.2.2 Consultation for identifying essential information

The service provider shall consult with people with disabilities to determine what constitutes essential information.

Note: What constitutes essential information varies depending on the needs of the person and the function of the service provider. Consulting people with disabilities ensures that their needs are taken into account in determining what is essential information.

11.2.3 Communicating essential information

a) The service provider shall focus communication on necessary and essential information, with enough context to complete the task or activity referenced in the communication.

b) When communicating essential information, the service provider shall:

   i) clearly emphasize this information in all formats;

   ii) use plain language complying with Clause 11.3;

   iii) offer clear instructions in accessible formats complying with Clauses 10.3 and 12;

   iv) allow sufficient time for a response, complying with Clause 10.2.1 b); and

   v) use easy to understand visual and auditory aids to summarize complex information (for example, using accessible infographics in accessible formats to summarize the key benefits between different services).

11.3 Plain language

The service provider shall create communication that is clear, timely, accurate, and accessible in plain language, in compliance with CAN-ASC 3.1:2025.

11.4 Communication interpretation and Intervenor services

11.4.1 In-person services

a) The service provider shall ensure access to interpretation services, delivered by certified professionals where applicable, in compliance with Clause 10.3 c) and d).

b) The service provider should ensure access to in-person interpretation services.

Note: In-person interpretation services include but are not limited to signed languages interpretation, Deafblind Intervenor services, protractile interpretation, and oral interpretation.

11.4.2 Virtual services

a) Where in-person interpretation is not feasible, the service provider shall, in consultation with the person with a disability, ensure virtual interpretation services are used.

b) The service provider shall ensure that virtual interpretation services comply with Clauses 10.3 and 12.

Note: Examples of virtual interpretation services include, but are not limited to, text relay, sign relay, lip-reading relay, and speech to speech relay.

11.5 Disruption of services

11.5.1 Notification of disruptions

The service provider shall develop, implement, and make public, a process to be followed for planned and unplanned temporary disruptions to a service, which describes:

a) the steps to be taken when planned and unplanned disruptions occur;

b) the methods and locations used to notify and communicate disruptions to internal and external partners; and

c) the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved when planned and unplanned disruptions occur.

11.5.2 Notice of disruptions

The service provider shall ensure that the notice of disruption:

a) is provided in accessible digital and physical formats complying with Clauses 10 and 12;

b) is provided in advance with as much notice as possible, when planned, and as soon as possible, when unplanned;

c) includes the estimated duration of the disruption;

d) describes available alternatives to minimize the impact of the disruption;

e) provides contact information where a person could receive immediate assistance; and

f) is provided through the same channels that individuals use to access the service or obtain information about it.

Note: Examples of notification methods include, but are not limited to, individual or group emails, phone calls, text messages, large print signage at location of disruption, social media posts, website posts.

12 Digital service delivery

12.1 Platforms

The service provider shall ensure that all technological, virtual and digital platforms used to deliver service are accessible and meet the needs of people with disabilities complying with CAN-ASC-EN 301 549:2024.

12.2 Service platforms and delivery

The service provider shall ensure that services delivered on technological, virtual and digital platforms are delivered in an accessible manner, complying with Clause 10.2.

13 Service delivery in the built environment

13.1 Application

The requirements of Clause 13 shall apply to any one or more of the following:

a) The design, construction and occupancy of all new buildings.

b) The alteration, major renovation, reconstruction, relocation and occupancy of all existing buildings.

c) Both site-built and factory-constructed buildings.

Note: Occupancy is the use or intended use of a building or part thereof for the shelter or support of people, animals or property. Alteration is a change or extension to any matter or thing or to any occupancy regulated by this Standard. A building is any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy.

13.2 Information

a) The service provider shall make the following information publicly available:

   i) A map and description of the layout and wayfinding for the physical environment.

   ii) Written descriptions, photographs, and image descriptions of the physical environment, location, and accessibility features, including accessible entry and exit ways.

   iii) Description of emergency egress (exit), type of fire alarms, and elevators.

iv) Contact information of an employee for questions, accommodation requests or alternate methods of service delivery options.

b) For part a), the service provider shall:

i) consult people with disabilities or organizations that represent people with disabilities in the development of part a) items i), ii), and iii);

ii) share digital information in a format complying with Clause 12; and

iii) share information in an accessible format complying with Clause 10.3.

c) Upon request, the service provider shall provide the information in part a) in an accessible format complying with Clause 10.3.

13.3 Built environment

13.3.1 Design of built environment

The service provider shall ensure that the built environment elements that facilitate access to a service shall comply with the following clauses of CSA/ASC B651:23, specifically:

a) interior circulation in clause 5;

b) exterior circulation in clause 8;

c) signage in clause 4.6;

d) the built environment of information kiosks in clause 8.6.7;

e) vehicular access in clause 9; and

f) interior facilities, including sanitary facilities in clause 6.

Note: There are physical elements that impact accessibility beyond those addressed in CSA/ASC B651:23, including but not limited to:

1) furniture;
2) temporary storage;
3) temporary signage;
4) service dog relief areas (see Clause 13.5); and
5) maintenance.

To ensure an accessible built environment, the service provider might consider these elements in addition to the ones listed above.

13.3.2 Queuing lines and waiting areas

The service provider shall ensure that queuing lines and waiting areas:

a) are located near the main entrance to the space where services are provided, are clearly identified, and easy to find;
b) have adequate prioritized seating for people who might need it in or near the waiting area;
c) comply with CSA/ASC B651:23; and
d) have an announcement system that, if used, shall:
    i) include both a visual and audible notification system; and
    ii) be staffed with someone to offer assistance guiding the person being called to the next service location.

13.3.3 Self-service devices

Self-service interactive devices used in service delivery shall comply with CSA/ASC B651.2:25.

13.4 Emergency provisions

The service provider shall:

a) provide visible alarms, emergency signage, areas of refuge, evacuation plans, and accessible egress routes that comply with CSA/ASC B651:23; and

b) upon request, make evacuation plans available in an accessible format complying with Clause 10.3.

13.5 Guide dog or service dog relief areas

The service provider shall work with the property owner or manager to:

a) provide a guide dog or service dog relief area;

b) ensure that the guide dog or service dog relief area is near the entrance closest to where the service(s) is being offered; and

c) ensure that the guide and service dog relief area:

   i) has the following features that comply with the following clauses of CSA/ASC B651:23, specifically:

      1) an accessible route in clause 8.2;

      2) slope in clause 8.2.3;

      3) firm and stable surface in clause 4.4;

      4) overhead cover allowing for sufficient headroom in clause 4.5.1; and

      5) signage in clause 4.6;

   ii) is at least 2,600 mm x 2,600 mm; and

   iii) has a waste bin and waste disposal bag near the entrance of the relief area that is regularly maintained.

14 Support people

14.1 General

Where applicable, if a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the service provider shall:

a) allow the person with a disability to enter with their support person;

b) admit the support person without requiring proof that the person with a disability requires a support person;

c) allow the person with a disability to always be accompanied by their support person while accessing the service; and

d) allow the support person to remain with the person with a disability without requiring them to pay any fees or other charges.

15 Guide dogs and service dogs

15.1 Entry on premises

The service provider shall:

a) unless prohibited by law, ensure that a person with a disability is:

   i) permitted to enter the premises with the guide dog or service dog; and

   ii) allowed to keep the guide dog or service dog with them at all times;

b) permit a person with a disability to enter and remain on the premises with a guide dog or service dog unless the dog's behaviour is aggressive or unduly disruptive; and

c) when a dog's behaviour requires removal from the premises, only deny entry or request removal of the dog for the current visit, and shall not bar entry for future visits.

15.2 Equitable and integrated access

The service provider shall ensure people with disabilities who use guide dogs and service dogs:

a) are permitted in all the same areas as other people and are not isolated;

b) receive equitable services to other people; and

c) are provided service without being charged fees that do not apply to people without animals. If a service provider charges a fee for pets, they shall waive this charge for service dogs or guide dogs.

15.3 Inquiries and documentation

The service provider shall:

a) permit entry to the guide dog or service dog without requiring or requesting documentation to validate its identity;

b) instruct staff to not ask about a person's disability or lived experience; and

c) instruct staff to only ask if an animal is a guide dog or service dog, as per the definitions in Clause 9 in this Standard.

15.4 Alternatives

a) If guide dogs and service dogs are prohibited from entry by law, the service provider shall make this information publicly available.

b) If guide dogs and service dogs might be negatively affected by a health and safety concern, the service provider shall describe all aspects of the service that guide dogs or service dogs are not able to safely access.

c) When a guide dog or service dog cannot safely or legally accompany a person with a disability, the service provider shall communicate with the person who uses a guide dog or service dog in advance to identify and provide an appropriate and mutually agreed upon alternate method of service delivery (see Clause 10.4).

16 Training

Training is a vital aspect of accessible and equitable service delivery. People with disabilities are not responsible for educating or informing service providers about their disabilities or how to interact with them. Service providers should have a foundational knowledge of disability awareness and etiquette to provide respectful, informed and equitable service.

16.1 People who must receive training

The service provider shall provide training about accessible service delivery to the following people:

a) All employees of the service provider, including senior management.

b) All volunteers of the service provider.

c) Anyone who is involved with the delivery of a service.

d) Anyone who provides services on behalf of the service provider.

e) Anyone who works directly with the public or whose work impacts the public.

16.2 Contents of training

The service provider shall ensure that training for people identified in Clause 16.1:

a) includes a review of:

   i) the *Accessible Canada Act*;

   ii) the *Accessible Canada Regulations*;

   iii) the *Canadian Human Rights Act*;

   iv) the requirements of this Standard;

v) the service provider's strategies, policies, and procedures related to accessibility; and

vi) other applicable laws;

b) provides specific information on:

i) attitudinal barriers, ableism and anti-ableism;

ii) apparent and non-apparent disabilities (also referred to as visible and non-visible);

iii) the principles of inclusive design;

iv) other barriers and accommodations (see Clause 6.2);

v) what to do if a person with a disability encounters a barrier to service(s);

vi) how to consult with people with disabilities;

vii) the availability of the service provider's accessibility features and services;

viii) how to interact with people with disabilities who:

1) use an assistive device or adaptive technology;

2) use a mobility aid;

3) use communication supports;

4) are accompanied by (a) support person(s); and

5) are accompanied by a guide dog or service dog; and

ix) how to use equipment, assistive devices, or adaptive technology provided by the service provider that may help with the delivery of service(s) to a person with a disability;

Note 1: An assistive device is any medical device, mobility aid, communication aid, or other aid that is specifically designed to assist a person with a disability.

Note 2: Adaptive technology is any technology that is modified to assist a person with a disability.

Note 3: Inclusive design is a design that considers the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human difference.

Source: The Inclusive Design Research Centre

c) is appropriate to the duties of people who must be trained; and

d) is relevant to the specific scenarios, circumstances and use cases that are going to be encountered in the performance of the duties of the person who is being trained.

Note: For example, employees directly engaging with the public might need different training than employees in non-public facing roles, including decision-making roles.

16.3 Development and delivery method

16.3.1 Development

a) The service provider shall develop training in consultation with people with disabilities and shall appropriately compensate them for their time and expertise.

b) The service provider may include input from organizations with relevant subject matter expertise that represent people with disabilities in the development of training materials.

16.3.2 Delivery method

a) The service provider should include people with disabilities as key members of the team delivering the training.

   i) When people with disabilities are included in the team delivering the training, the service providers shall appropriately compensate them for their time and expertise.

b) The service provider may include input from organizations with relevant subject matter expertise that represent people with disabilities in the delivery of training.

Note: It is critical that the privacy and dignity of all people with disabilities are respected regardless of their role. When facilitating training, they are not obligated to share lived experience unless they are comfortable and voluntarily doing so.

16.3.3 Accessibility of training

The service provider shall ensure that training is accessible by:

a) using digital platform(s), whether synchronous or asynchronous, virtual or hybrid, that are compliant with CAN-ASC-EN 301 549:2024;

b) providing training content, documents, materials, equipment and resources that are accessible to the participants, based on their needs;

c) delivering and presenting content in ways that are accessible to participants;

Note: For example, presenters need to narrate and describe information that is shared visually.

d) adapting content to the needs of participants with disabilities as necessary;

e) delivering content in plain language, where appropriate;

f) using accessible and inclusive teaching and learning approaches in delivering training and assessing knowledge; and

g) holding in-person or hybrid training events at barrier-free training sites.

Note: Barrier-free training sites are compliant with CSA/ASC B651:23, and need to also consider desks, chairs, room layout, audio-visual technology, and other components of the space.

16.4 Timing

The service provider shall provide training to individual(s), complying with Clause 16.116.1:

a) before or immediately after the person joins the organization or begins working with the service provider;

b) that is ongoing and updated in connection with changes to the service provider's measures, policies, and practices regarding accessible service delivery; and

c) at a minimum of every two years.

16.5 Training information

a) The service provider shall prepare and maintain a training policy and plan that:

   i) summarizes the content of the training; and

   ii) specifies when the training is to be provided.

b) Upon request, the service provider shall provide a copy of the document in an accessible format complying with Clause 10.2.

16.6 Review of training programs

16.6.1 Timing of review

The service provider shall conduct a review:

a) of their training materials on accessible service delivery at minimum every two years; and

b) when:

i) new information on how to provide services to people with disabilities emerges;

ii) there are changes to processes that impact how services are delivered, or new processes are developed;

iii) new services are introduced; or

iv) there are changes to relevant standards and regulations.

16.6.2 Review of content

a) When reviewing training content, the service provider shall:

i) consult people with disabilities;

ii) appropriately compensate the people with disabilities consulted for their time and expertise;

iii) ensure that the training materials continue to offer practical information; and

iv) incorporate new information on how to provide accessible service delivery to people with disabilities.

b) When reviewing training content, the service provider may consult with organizations with relevant subject-matter expertise that represent people with disabilities.

16.7 Maintenance of training records

The service provider shall keep records of the training provided under Clause 16 that includes:

a) A list of people that have been trained.

b) The dates on which they were trained.

c) A copy of the training policy and plan, complying with Clause 16.6.

d) A copy of the training content delivered.

17 Feedback

The service provider shall establish a process for receiving, acknowledging, addressing, and responding to feedback related to accessible service delivery in a timely manner, in accordance with Annex A.

Note 1: Annex A was adapted from the requirements of Part 1 of the *Accessible Canada Regulations* (SOR/2021-241).

Note 2: The *Accessible Canada Regulations* require service providers to accept feedback in all mechanisms used to communicate with the public. The *Regulations* also require service providers to accept anonymous feedback. Clauses 10 and 11 of this Standard require the service provider to communicate in accessible ways, including in the receipt of feedback.

Note 3: The *Accessible Canada Act* and the *Accessible Canada Regulations* require the service provider to develop feedback processes and publish descriptions of those processes.

Note 4: Refer to the Guidance on the *Accessible Canada Regulations*: Descriptions of feedback processes (See Annex B).

18 Annex A – Feedback process (normative)

Note 1: This Annex is a mandatory part of this Standard.

Note 2: This annex includes text adapted from the *Accessible Canada Regulations* (SOR/2021-241) Part 1 for convenience only. The *Accessible Canada Regulations* (SOR/2021-241), as amended from time to time, is the authoritative source and shall always prevail with respect to persons subject to the Regulations.

18.1 Designated person to receive feedback

When establishing a feedback process, the service provider shall:

a) designate a person responsible for receiving feedback on behalf of the entity; and
b) provide the position title of that person.

18.2 Anonymous feedback

The service provider shall ensure that the feedback process allows a person to provide feedback anonymously.

18.3 Means of providing feedback

The service provider shall ensure that the feedback process allows a person to provide feedback by:

a) mail;

b) telephone;

c) email; and

d) any other means the service provider uses to communicate with the public.

18.4 Acknowledgment of feedback

The service provider shall ensure that acknowledgment of receipt is included in the feedback process, unless the feedback is received anonymously, in the same means by which it is received.

18.5 Format of the feedback process description

A person may request that a service provider make the description of its feedback available to them in:

a) print;

b) large print;

c) braille;

d) audio format; or

e) an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that assists persons with disabilities.

18.6 Deadlines for the feedback process description

The service provider shall make the description of its feedback process available to the person in the requested format as soon as feasible but, at the latest:

a) 45 days after the day on which the request is received, in the case of a request for the description in braille or audio format; or

b) in the case of a request for the description in any other format:

i) 15 days after the day on which the request is received, in the case of a service provider that has an average of 100 or more employees during the year preceding the day on which the request is received; or

ii) 20 days after the day on which the request is received, in the case of a service provider that has an average of 99 or fewer employees during the year preceding the day on which the request is received.

19 Annex B – Bibliography (informative)

Note: Research findings from Accessibility Standards Canada's Advancing Accessibility Standards Research Grants and Contributions Program informed the background research and development of this Standard. Related research reports are listed in the Bibliography below.

This Standard refers to the following publications and their specific editions.

19.1 Acts

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Government of Ontario. 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11. *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191#BK2

Government of Canada. R.S.C., 1985, c. H-6. *Canadian Human Rights Act* https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/h-6/

19.2 Standards

CAN-ASC-1.1:2024, Employment https://accessible.canada.ca/creating-accessibility-standards/can-asc-112024-rev-2025-employment

CAN-ASC-3.1:2025, Plain Language https://accessible.canada.ca/creating-accessibility-standards/can-asc-312025-plain-language

CAN-ASC-EN 301 549:2024, Accessibility requirements for ICT products and services (EN 301 549:2021, IDT) https://accessible.canada.ca/en-301-549-accessibility-requirements-ict-products-and-services-1

CSA/ASC B651:23, Accessible design for the built environment https://www.csagroup.org/store/product/csa-asc%20b651%3a23/

CSA/ASC B651.2:25, Accessible design for self-service interactive devices including automated banking machines
https://www.csagroup.org/store/product/CSA-ASC_B651.2%3A25/

19.3 Publications

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