



Advancing employment for persons with disabilities: Progress update on the Accessibility Strategy (2025)

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On this page

- [Introduction from the Secretary of the Treasury Board](#)
- [Message from the Deputy Minister Champion](#)
- [Supporting workplace success for employees with disabilities](#)
- [Conclusion: Advancing together toward a barrier-free public service](#)

Introduction from the Secretary of the Treasury Board

As we mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, I am honoured to share the sixth annual update on the implementation of [“Nothing Without Us”: An Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#).

The Government of Canada remains deeply committed to being an accessible employer and service provider. Attracting, retaining and supporting persons with disabilities throughout their career is not only essential to building a representative workforce, but is also a driver of economic growth and innovation. Persons with disabilities remain the only under-represented equity group across the Government of Canada, with 7.9% representation compared with a workforce availability of 12.0%. Closing the representation gap and creating a more inclusive workplace culture is critical to ensuring that the federal public service leads by example in accessibility.



Bill Matthews
Secretary of the Treasury
Board

This year's update, "Advancing Employment for Persons with Disabilities" highlights meaningful employment progress for persons with disabilities. It also showcases key initiatives, tools and resources that help employees with disabilities thrive in the workplace, from inclusive hiring practices to strategies that strengthen access to timely and effective workplace accommodations.

While we are proud of our efforts to date, more work remains before we can truly call ourselves an accessible and inclusive federal public service. Deputy heads must lead the way in implementing the *Accessible Canada Act* and driving accessibility in their organizations to make sure it is prioritized, embedded and sustained. At the same time, I encourage all federal public servants to foster a workplace culture where accessibility and inclusion are part of everything we do, and where every employee can fully contribute and thrive.

Message from the Deputy Minister Champion

This fall, I had the honour of being named the Deputy Minister Champion for Federal Employees with Disabilities in the Public Service. I step into this role with humility, energy and a deep sense of responsibility. As I begin this mandate, my priority is clear: to help build a federal public service where persons with disabilities are fully supported and empowered to succeed.

This year's update offers an opportunity to reflect on where we stand today and where we need to go. It highlights how targeted action in inclusive hiring is supported by practical tools and accessible processes. Looking ahead, our focus must be on maintaining our momentum and ensuring that accessibility is fully integrated into how we work.

As I begin this mandate, I am excited to contribute to this ongoing work and engage with colleagues, networks, and partners to carry this work forward. Together, we can shape a barrier-free public service that reflects the diversity of the Canadians we serve.



Raj Thuppal

Deputy Minister Champion
for Federal Employees with
Disabilities

Supporting workplace success for employees with disabilities

► In this section

Employment continues to be one of the most significant barriers for Canadians with disabilities since the *Accessible Canada Act* came into force in 2019, as underscored in the Chief Accessibility Officer's [2024 annual report](#). The initiatives featured in this progress report show the leadership of the federal public service in creating jobs, tools and resources to support the inclusion, productivity and advancement of persons with disabilities in the workplace. They show how the federal public service culture is evolving from being reactive and focusing on individual accommodations toward becoming a culture that embraces inclusion proactively at the individual, organizational and systemic levels. Accessibility is not an afterthought. It is a standard of excellence that makes us better in how we serve Canadians and how we support a representative, inclusive and sustainable workforce focused on delivering results.

Hiring 5,000 persons with disabilities

In 2019, the Government of Canada committed to hiring 5,000 net new persons with disabilities by 2025, which was a bold initiative toward inclusive employment. Since then, the government has surpassed this goal, hiring nearly 7,000 net new persons with disabilities. This success is the result of persistent actions taken in close collaboration between the Public Service Commission, the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, and the Office of Public Service Accessibility, and through deliberate effort from all departments and agencies across the Government of Canada.

The achievement of surpassing the goal of hiring 5,000 persons with disabilities had a meaningful economic and cultural impact. It has expanded employment opportunities for a historically underemployed population and has reinforced Canada's leadership in inclusive workplace practices, setting an example for other sectors to replicate.

To sustain this progress, continued action is needed to:

- remove workplace barriers and strengthen accessibility and accommodation
- support, empower and retain employees with disabilities
- ensure equitable opportunities for career advancement
- foster inclusive leadership that embeds accessibility into everyday practice

GC Workplace Accessibility Passport: Equipping employees to succeed

The [GC Workplace Accessibility Passport](#) (the Passport) helps federal public service employees get the tools and supports they need to perform at their best and succeed in the workplace. The Passport is a flagship project funded under the [Centralized Enabling Workplace Fund](#) and committed to in the [Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#). Created for and by persons with disabilities, it is supported by an active and growing network of users across the Government of Canada that continues to share best practices and user feedback. Since its inception, the Passport has evolved into a secure, bilingual, user-centric digital application on the TBS Applications Portal. This digital version enhances accessibility, simplifies administration, and strengthens data-driven decision-making across departments.

In 2025–26, 50 organizations started using the digital Passport. Its implementation:

- streamlines internal processes and reduces administrative burden
- lowers operational costs and enhances efficiency
- enables managers to focus on core priorities and employee support
- provides actionable insights to improve workplace accessibility and inclusion

When employees have the tools and support measures they need to succeed, organizations are better equipped to achieve results, advance the government’s transformational agenda, and create a barrier-free public service.

Better Accommodation Project

The [Better Accommodation Project](#) (BAP) was launched in September 2024 to transform how federal employees with disabilities are accommodated in the workplace. Led by the Deputy Minister Champion for Employees with Disabilities and supported by nine partner departments and the Impact and Innovation Unit at the Privy Council Office, the BAP aims to create timely, consistent, inclusive and responsive workplace accommodation services. The BAP is grounded in the social model of disability and combines research and evidence based on lived experience to identify and remove systemic barriers, ensuring that workplace accommodation is proactively embedded in workplace culture.

Released in September 2025, the [BAP toolkits](#) are designed for receivers and providers of workplace accommodation. Service enablers will learn about best practices in organizational process and design and how they can take action to improve service delivery. Managers and employees will learn tips and access tools to build their knowledge and understanding and engage in the process with more trust and confidence. Employees with disabilities will understand their roles and the process better and engage with more trust and confidence. BAP stands as a key enabler of inclusive employment, helping departments advance the development of an accessible workplace culture, while contributing to broader government priorities like economic productivity and effective resource use.

Unlocking accessibility through data-informed conversations and actions

Data collection and analysis play a critical role in advancing accessibility and disability inclusion across the public service. It allows us to measure progress, identify barriers, and focus our efforts where they are needed most.

Robust data tells us how far we are from our goals of being the most inclusive federal public service in the world and achieving a barrier-free Canada. Across departments, momentum is growing to strengthen accessibility practices. Organizations are increasingly embedding measurement into accessibility plans, progress reports and everyday decision-making. To sustain this progress, we must:

- build measurement capacity across departments
- identify knowledge gaps and share promising practices
- integrate accessibility data into how we design programs and make decisions

Tracking our progress creates feedback loops that drive meaningful action. While data may sometimes reveal persistent barriers, these findings are catalysts for targeted, evidence-based action. In this way, data becomes a powerful enabler of progress, moving us beyond compliance toward a culture where accessibility is built into how we work and serve Canadians.

Let's commit to listening deeply, measuring bravely and acting decisively, because that is the foundation of meaningful change.

Conclusion: Advancing together toward a barrier-free public service

The initiatives highlighted in this report show that meaningful change is possible when we all work together with focus, clarity and accountability. Progress has been made in hiring and supporting employees with disabilities. But our work is not complete. Continued effort is needed to address persistent barriers in the workplace. To sustain our momentum toward a barrier-free public service, we must commit to:

- **Investing in innovative solutions to accommodate and retain persons with disabilities:** Accommodations are not one-size fits all. Using the digital Passport and the BAP toolkits help build an environment and a workplace culture where persons with disabilities are equipped to thrive in the workplace.

Innovation in accessibility leads to higher productivity, greater satisfaction and better service delivery.

- **Fostering a culture of learning, adapting and acting:** Accessibility is not a static state. As our work environments and priorities evolve, so must our strategies and tools, and our understanding of what people need to do their best work. We must continue to be guided by the lived experiences of persons with disabilities. New technologies and workplace innovations must not create or perpetuate barriers or bias. We need to prioritize the shift from accessibility awareness to meaningful collaborative action with persons with disabilities.

The vision of becoming the most inclusive public service in the world and achieving a barrier-free Canada by 2040 is ambitious, but achievable. It will take collaboration, bold action and an ongoing shared commitment. Public service employees should work together, learn together and lead together—because accessibility is everyone’s responsibility, and everyone benefits from accessibility and inclusion.

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