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# Shared Services Canada 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan

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Shared Services Canada 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan

Cat. No P115-12E

ISSN 2816-962X

Publié aussi en français sous le titre:

Plan d'accessibilité de Services partagés Canada 2025 à 2028

Cat. No. P115-12F

ISSN 2816-9638

# Message from the President and the Executive Vice-President

We are excited to introduce the Shared Services Canada (SSC) 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan. This three-year Plan focuses on our commitment to creating a more accessible and inclusive workplace. It outlines specific goals to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in our workplace, policies, programs, and services. Developed with input from persons with disabilities, the Plan ensures that our actions are designed to be accessible and inclusive.

Culture change is at the core of this initiative, with leadership playing a significant role in driving this shift. As an employer, SSC is committed to fostering an inclusive, barrier-free environment where all employees can fully engage and contribute. As a service provider, we strive to provide secure and reliable digital, network and hosting services that allow public servants to work collaboratively and seamlessly across the Government of Canada.

This Plan builds upon the foundation of SSC's 2022 – 2025 Accessibility Plan and enables SSC to meet the requirements of the Accessible Canada Act and its regulations. It also integrates accessibility into SSC's corporate planning and reporting processes and tools, while promoting greater representation of persons with disabilities in our workforce.

However, we recognize that there is still much work to be done. In the past two years, over a quarter of SSC employees have faced an accessibility barrier. This highlights the ongoing need for dialogue and actions to address accessibility barriers. We are committed to creating more opportunities for open conversations, learning about barriers, and ensuring a respectful and inclusive workplace culture.

Thank you to our employees and partners for their continued efforts to improve accessibility and for their contributions to the development of this Plan. Together, we all benefit when everyone is included.

### **Scott Jones**

President

### **Raj Thuppal**

Executive Vice-President

## **Message from the Persons with Disability Co-champions**

We are pleased to support the Shared Services Canada 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan, which focuses on creating a more accessible and inclusive workplace. This Plan reflects SSC's ongoing commitment to accessibility and outlines the steps SSC is taking to ensure everyone feels included, respected, and empowered at work.

As the Champions for SSC's Persons with Disabilities Network, we serve as advocates who help SSC achieve the goals in this Plan. Together, we share the responsibility of making it a reality by working to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in our workplaces, policies, programs, products, and services.

Through SSC's 2022 – 2025 Accessibility Plan, the department has already started several initiatives to remove barriers, providing a strong foundation. Moving forward, we are committed to making accessibility a priority in everything we do, ensuring real, lasting change. We will continue engaging with employees with disabilities, their allies, colleagues at all levels, and partners to identify additional barriers and find practical solutions to create a disability-inclusive and barrier-free workplace, services, and products. We will also continue to provide our members and allies with a safe space to connect, share experiences, discuss common issues, and exchange ideas.

As we work together to implement this three-year Plan, we will continue to promote the principle of “nothing about us without us” to ensure diverse perspectives are reflected in SSC's work.

### **Julie Hébert**

Champion, Persons with Disabilities

### **Yana Hof**

Champion, Persons with Disabilities

## **General**

### **Accessibility feedback**

If you have questions or comments about SSC's Accessibility Plan, including any barriers you may have experienced when dealing with SSC, please contact the Director of the Accessibility Strategy and Governance unit.

## Contact us

Provide your feedback using any of the methods below. You may use this contact information to request a copy of the accessibility plan and the feedback process description in an alternate format. Feedback will be acknowledged in the same manner in which it was received, unless it was received anonymously.

### By email:

[sscaccessibility-accessibilitespc@ssc-spc.gc.ca](mailto:sscaccessibility-accessibilitespc@ssc-spc.gc.ca)

### Online:

[Provide feedback on accessibility at Shared Services Canada](#)

### By telephone:

(Toll-free) [1-833-970-3746](tel:1-833-970-3746)

### By mail:

Director, Accessibility Strategy and Governance Unit  
Shared Services Canada  
10 Wellington Street, 2nd Floor  
Gatineau, Quebec, K1A 0H4

## Alternate formats

Large print, print, braille, MP3 (audio), e-text and DAISY formats are available by request. Please email us at [sscaccessibility-accessibilitespc@ssc-spc.gc.ca](mailto:sscaccessibility-accessibilitespc@ssc-spc.gc.ca).

**Note:** All interactions are confidential. SSC will not share your identity with anyone without your consent.

# Overview of the accessibility feedback process at SSC

## Designated person to receive feedback

The Director of Accessibility Strategy and Governance is responsible for receiving feedback on the SSC Accessibility Plan or any issue or barrier related to accessibility that you experience when dealing with SSC.

**Important note:** Accessibility feedback received by SSC will be acknowledged in the same format it was received, unless it was received anonymously. To request a copy of the feedback process description in an alternate format, use the contact information above.

## Feedback you can submit

Feedback can include questions or comments about SSC's Accessibility Plan, as well as any barriers you may have experienced when dealing with SSC.

## How to submit your feedback

There are various ways you can submit your feedback, which are provided above. If you want to submit anonymous feedback, please use our [online accessibility feedback form](#) and leave the email and telephone sections blank.

## Confidentiality

Your feedback will not be associated with your name. We will share it only with those employees directly involved in improving accessibility at SSC.

## How we will use your feedback

SSC is committed to addressing all feedback it receives. The process described below details how we treat this feedback to improve accessibility at SSC. We will include your feedback and how we have used it in our progress reports.

## **How SSC manages the accessibility feedback it receives**

We will acknowledge all accessibility feedback we receive, except feedback that is sent anonymously.

We may address some feedback right away, while other feedback will inform future accessibility plans. Depending on the type of feedback we receive, procedures noted below may not be followed exactly. For example, we may need to:

- Collaborate with persons with disabilities and other departments to identify a plan to address complex barriers or barriers that are outside the scope of SSC's mandate.
- Forward the request to SSC's Duty to Accommodation Centre of Expertise so they can deal with it directly. Employee accommodation requests are handled on a case-by-case basis.

## **SSC: An accessibility leader in the Government of Canada (GC)**

SSC is uniquely positioned as an accessibility leader, given our mandate to provide Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services to the GC. SSC is also home to the Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) program, which enables public servants and organizations across the GC to build accessible and inclusive workplaces.

# Executive Summary

This document outlines SSC's 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan, focusing on creating a more inclusive and barrier-free public service. It is SSC's second Accessibility Plan, building on Shared Services Canada's Accessibility Plan 2022 to 2025.

Specific goals, objectives, and key planned actions are detailed for each area. The Plan also includes feedback mechanisms and highlights consultations with persons with disabilities to ensure their voices are heard. This Plan demonstrates SSC's dedication to fostering a culture of accessibility and inclusivity, leading to a more accessible and equitable workplace and public service.

The scope of the Plan reflects the multiple roles we play as an organization: as a provider of secure and reliable digital, network and hosting services that allow public servants to collaborate and seamlessly across the GC and as an employer.

In addition to the seven priorities from the *Accessible Canada Act*, SSC has added one other priority: Culture. The commitments are organized in the following order:

- Employment
- Built environment
- Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- Communication, other than ICT
- Procurement of goods, services and facilities
- Design and delivery of programs and services
- Transportation
- Culture

Each priority includes the following:

- **Goals** – What can we hope to accomplish by 2040?
- **Objectives** – What are we committed to making progress on over the next three years?
- **Key planned actions** – What actions will we take to meet our objectives?

For each of the Key planned actions (KPAs) SSC will develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure and report on progress. SSC will develop and publish these KPIs during the 2025-26 fiscal year.

**Note:** Some of the KPAs in this Plan are aligned with expected results and actions in SSC's Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for 2025-2028.

## Consultations

In developing this accessibility Plan, SSC held consultations with our employees including persons with disabilities, to gather information about barriers to accessibility at SSC and hear about possible solutions from persons with lived experiences.

We shared the commitments in this Plan with members of SSC's Persons with Disabilities Network and other key stakeholders for review. Input received from those consultations was incorporated into the Plan.

We also considered other relevant sources of feedback from employees and GC partners in developing this Plan. Refer to [Appendix A: Consultations and Feedback](#) for more details.

# SSC's Accessibility Commitments

## Employment

Employment refers to processes and practices that SSC follows across every phase of an employee's employment journey. It includes recruitment through to hiring, onboarding, accommodations, career and job development, performance management, and job exit.

As part of SSC's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and employment equity, the Department has put in place the following supports for all employment equity groups:

- Employee networks, including a Persons with Disabilities Network and a Diversity Council;
- Executive level champions; and,
- Governance committees.

## Key barriers – Employment

- Some persons with disabilities find employment processes frustrating at all stages of their careers, disclosing their disability problematic, and hiring processes long and overly complex.
- From recruitment to onboarding, some employees feel that attitudes and technical and communication barriers discourage candidates from applying — making people feel powerless, leading to disengagement or burnout, or causing people to consider leaving SSC or the government altogether.
- Some employees with disabilities felt overlooked for promotions, expressed frustration with application and onboarding processes, and noted unmet accommodation needs.

- Some employees experienced challenges accessing the ICT required for their work, even when using adaptive technologies.

## Goal to reach by 2040 – Employment

**Goal 1:** Improve the recruitment, hiring, career progression and retention of persons with disabilities at SSC.

## Objectives for 2025-2028 – Employment

**Objective 1:** Ensure persons with disabilities are equally considered when it comes to making hiring decisions at SSC.

**Objective 2:** SSC employees work in inclusive, barrier-free workplaces where their accommodation needs are addressed.

## Key planned actions – Employment

- Increase representation of persons with disabilities in SSC's workforce, including:
  - Establish and communicate annual recruitment goals using workforce representation data.
  - Participate in recruitment fairs and leverage partnerships with organizations supporting persons with disabilities.
  - Strengthen HR capacity through training, promoting equity in referrals, and increasing hiring manager awareness of staffing flexibilities.
- Operate a Centre of Expertise to support employee accommodation needs that will:
  - Develop a plan to increase use of the GC Workplace Accessibility Passport.
  - Put in place a "yes by default" approach for accommodations and adaptive computer technology.

- Develop a performance data management strategy for capturing accommodation information.
- Inform SSC supervisors about the duty to accommodate and available resources.
- Deliver tailored training on accessibility, disability, and inclusion to managers.

## Built Environment

Built environment refers to all physical human-made structures and objects that make up SSC spaces, from entrances, elevators, and signage to meeting rooms, lighting, and more.

SSC has started converting its workplaces to the GC Workplace Standard and aims to complete the transformation by 2026-27. SSC routinely involves the AACT program in accommodations projects and engages with accessibility experts and persons with lived experiences throughout project lifecycles.

## Key barriers – Built Environment

- Routes or pathways are not always accessible from the main building doors to SSC workspaces.
- A lack of automatic door openers.
- Poor signage and wayfinding, and difficulty moving between and across buildings.
- The design of many physical spaces does not consider the full range of disabilities (e.g. conference rooms, washrooms, workspaces).

## Goal to reach by 2040 – Built Environment

**Goal 1:** Buildings and workspaces that SSC employees occupy are accessible.

## Objectives for 2025-2028 – Built Environment

**Objective 1:** Provide SSC employees with workspaces that are accessible.

**Objective 2:** Provide accessibility information about SSC workspaces and buildings to SSC employees and partners.

## Key planned actions – Built Environment

- Work with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to make modifications to workplaces based on audit findings and update SSC's Building Welcome Guides.
- Provide information to SSC employees and managers on how to address building-related accessibility challenges.
- Consult with SSC employees to identify and remove accessibility barriers within SSC suites/spaces.

## Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

ICT accessibility ensures that people with and without disabilities can access the same information, perform the same tasks, and receive the same services using information technology. It is the digital equivalent of accessibility in the physical environment. While ICT accessibility benefits everyone, it is necessary for many persons with disabilities.

## Key barriers – ICT

- Some digital systems at SSC are not usable by persons with disabilities.
- Accessibility features are often not enabled on commonly available software and hardware.
- Some key GC applications and tools are inaccessible (e.g., Phoenix, PeopleSoft and GCdocs).

## Goal to reach by 2040 – ICT

**Goal 1:** SSC is consistently building-in accessibility when acquiring, developing and deploying the technology, information, and related services SSC employees use.

## Objective for 2025-2028 – ICT

**Objective 1:** SSC adopts the CAN/ASC - EN 301 549:2024 standard on Accessibility requirements for ICT products and services.

## Key planned actions – ICT

- Conduct accessibility testing of SSC technology products against the CAN/ASC - EN 301 549:2024 standard and publish accessibility statements for tested products.
- Determine the accessibility status of SSC's current ICT products and services by continuing the Accessible ICT Baseline Research project.
- Develop a roadmap for SSC's internal ICT to comply with the CAN/ASC - EN 301 549:2024 standard.
- Begin implementing the roadmap, adjusting to new challenges and/or opportunities as needed.

## Communication, other than ICT

Communication other than ICT refers to how people share and access information, regardless of form or medium. It can include language (messaging), use of interpreters, meeting formats, visual communications, and documents. SSC is committed to continuously improving its communications services and applying an accessibility and disability inclusion lens to all communications.

## Key barriers – Communication, other than ICT

- Day-to-day communications between individuals and groups may not be accessible.
- Documents sometimes cannot be accessed or understood.
- Meetings may not be fully accessible.

## **Goals to reach by 2040 – Communication, other than ICT**

**Goal 1:** GC employees can access SSC digital information, products, and services, and members of the public can access corporate communications information and products.

**Goal 2:** SSC and its employees consistently communicate in a way that is accessible, not just in corporate communications but also in everyday communications.

## **Objectives for 2025-2028 – Communication, other than ICT**

**Objective 1:** SSC employees, partners, and the public have equal access to information through communication supports, alternate formats, accessible websites, and digital content.

**Objective 2:** Provide SSC employees with the ability to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to create and deliver information in a way that is accessible and inclusive for all.

## **Key planned actions – Communication, other than ICT**

- Monitor content on SSC's communications platforms and practices to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Increase awareness of accessibility and inclusion through change management and communications activities, including publishing accessibility-related information regularly, communications related to key events (IDPD, NAAW), sharing training information, and communicating SSC's progress at speaking engagements.

- Develop and implement a plan to improve the accessibility of meetings and documents for SSC's governance committees and working groups.
- Develop and implement a plan to achieve WCAG standard level AA for any website developed by SSC.
- Promote GC training and events to increase awareness and understanding of accessibility and disability inclusion.

## Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Accessibility in procurement means meeting the broadest set of user needs possible right from the start of the process. Using an accessible good, service or facility from the beginning minimizes the need for accommodation and saves time, money, and energy.

### Key barriers – Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

- Commercially available ICT solutions may not be fully accessible. Since 2018, the GC has been piloting the internationally recognized Accessibility EN 301 549 Harmonized European Standard for ICT products and services.

## Goal to reach by 2040 – Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

**Goal 1:** ICT procured by SSC conforms with the CAN/ASC - EN 301 549:2024 standard.

## Objectives for 2025-2028 – Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

**Objective 1:** SSC engagement activities provide insights into the readiness of the ICT industry to provide accessible goods, services, and facilities.

**Objective 2:** SSC's framework and tools for procurement of accessible ICT are aligned with the CAN/ASC - EN 301 549:2024 standard.

## Key planned actions – Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

- Provide advice and tools to GC contract authorities and/or technical authorities to enable the inclusion of accessibility requirements in ICT procurement.
- Track and report on the number of procurements at SSC that include ICT accessibility requirements.

## Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Accessibility in the design and delivery of SSC programs and services means ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are intentionally included in the design, development, and implementation of the IT services SSC provides.

SSC plays a key role in making the GC's vision for a more accessible Canada a reality because the Department procures and provides ICT infrastructure that supports the delivery of programs and services to Canadians.

## Key barriers – Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

- The quality standards for customer service are not equal for users with disabilities.
- Limited service delivery channels for persons with disabilities reduces access to IT services.
- Current oversight on the design, retrofit and procurement of ICT infrastructure does not prioritize accessibility.

- ICT security and privacy practices can unintentionally cause barriers to persons with disabilities.

## Goals to reach by 2040 – Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

**Goal 1:** GC partner departments are satisfied with the accessibility of SSC's services.

**Goal 2:** SSC has built-in accessibility when acquiring, developing, and deploying services.

## Objectives for 2025-2028 – Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

**Objective 1:** Ensure that accessibility and disability inclusion requirements are formally included in SSC's governance framework.

**Objective 2:** Ensure SSC employees have the knowledge and skills necessary to build in accessibility when acquiring, designing, and delivering SSC products and services.

**Objective 3:** Support GC employees with disabilities, injuries, and ergonomic requirements in the workplace by providing accessibility, accommodations, and adaptive computer technology services.

## Key planned actions – Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

- Review existing governance to identify opportunities to incorporate accessibility information from feedback and consultations in decision-making continually.
- Establish an SSC accessibility conformance and user testing approach.

- Review, in consultation with persons with disabilities, key SSC enterprise processes and practices including project management, service authorization and management, and architecture.
- Monitor the demand for SSC's relevant short-term accommodations, adaptive technology, services, and tools for public service employees with disabilities or injuries.
- Collaborate with other GC organizations, including the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and Accessibility Standards Canada, on all matters related to accessibility.
- Provide federal public servants with adaptive computer technology, tools, training, services, and resources.

## Transportation

In the context of the *Accessible Canada Act*, transportation refers to the federally regulated transportation network. Although this act does not apply to SSC, during consultations, SSC heard that travel between workplaces sometimes presents accessibility challenges.

### Key barrier – Transportation

- Moving from one building to another for meetings can be difficult and is not always accessible for SSC employees.

### Goal to reach by 2040 – Transportation

**Goal 1:** SSC employees can travel between work locations with ease.

### Objective for 2025-2028 – Transportation

**Objective 1:** Tools and processes that enable SSC employees to move between work locations are accessible.

## Key planned action – Transportation

- Continue to participate in the pilot of an accessible mobile application for transport services and continue to consult with persons with disabilities on the accessibility of this application.

## Culture

Culture refers to making accessibility a priority through collaboration, inclusivity, and respect. Obstacles to a disability-inclusive workplace can include attitudes, misunderstanding and/or stigma related to disabilities.

At SSC, we want to create and foster an organizational culture that is equipped, aware and that understands accessibility and disability inclusion. We recognize the need to amplify efforts to become a more inclusive and aware workforce.

## Key barriers – Culture

- Accessibility continues to be an afterthought in some areas, processes, and practices at SSC.
- Stigma and bias in the workplace related to persons with disabilities persist, making some persons with disabilities choose not to self-identify.

## Goal to reach by 2040 – Culture

**Goal 1:** SSC's policies, planning, communications and leaders are focused on enabling a workforce that is aware and confident about including employees with disabilities in the workplace.

## Objective for 2025-2028 – Culture

**Objective 1:** Improve the culture of accessibility at SSC so its workforce understands and welcomes the benefits of integration and disability inclusion.

## Key planned actions – Culture

- Develop and implement an accessibility learning strategy that includes training for SSC and GC employees, managers, and employees who design and deliver programs and services.
- Lead SSC compliance with the Accessible Canada Act and Accessible Canada Regulations.

## Conclusion

SSC developed this 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan to remove barriers that affect persons with disabilities and to meet the requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act*.

SSC has made considerable progress since our first Accessibility Plan was published in 2022, but we acknowledge that there is more work to be done. This includes developing implementation and delivery plans for the commitments in this Plan, improving systems for managing accessibility feedback, and continuing to improve accessibility planning and reporting within SSC.

Through continuous monitoring and regular updates, SSC will ensure the 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of our employees and partners. By embracing innovation, fostering a culture of inclusion, and leveraging partnerships, SSC aims to be a leader in accessibility within the GC and contribute to a future where everyone can participate fully and equally in the workplace and society.

Thank you to our employees and partners for your support in advancing accessibility and disability inclusion and your contributions to building this Plan.

# Appendix A – Consultations and Feedback

## Consultations on SSC's 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan

SSC consulted with persons with disabilities and their allies in 2024 to inform this Plan. During these consultations, we asked persons with disabilities about accessibility barriers and possible actions that could remove barriers. We provided several options for employees to participate, including virtual sessions, private meetings, or email.

Participant discussion and feedback focused primarily on the priority areas of culture, employment, and built environment. The role of leadership in driving culture change was a key point in ensuring accessibility is prioritized and that persons with disabilities do not feel marginalized or unsupported. Many participants felt that SSC should foster a culture of inclusion and accessibility by default, with emphasis on accountability, support, and action from management.

Challenges with the built environment were mostly linked to Direction on prescribed presence in the workplace, including changes in office design, inflexibility, and lack of consultation with persons with disabilities.

Participants highlighted inadequacy and lack of consistency in workspace setups, as well as noise control and environmental factors which were seen to hinder productivity and cause discomfort.

Participants also raised challenges in accessing fair employment opportunities, including barriers to recruitment such as complex application processes. Persons with disabilities mentioned feeling unsupported on an

ongoing basis, citing barriers encountered at onboarding, with on-site accommodations, and with inaccessible HR and IT processes and systems.

Date modified: 2026-02-25

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