



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Transport Canada 2022-2025



Ottawa, Ontario
December 23, 2022
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Transport
Canada

Transports
Canada

Canada 

Table of contents

General	3
Feedback.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Message from the Deputy Minister	5
Executive summary.....	6
Accessibility statement.....	7
Employment.....	7
Hiring	7
Accommodations.....	8
The built environment.....	9
Information and communication technology	10
Communication, other than information and communication technology	10
Procuring goods, services, and facilities	11
Designing and delivering programs and services.....	11
Transportation.....	12
Transportation regulations and policy	12
Transport Canada as a transportation service provider	12
Training.....	13
Transport Canada Terminal Buildings.....	14
Culture at Transport Canada	15
Consultations.....	15
Appendix A: Summary of actions and responsible Office of Primary Interest.....	17



General

Transport Canada's Corporate Services worked with a national working group for accessibility to develop this Accessibility Plan. Our working group had a representative from each region across the country and area of responsibility that operates within Transport Canada.

Transport Canada's designated official for the development of the Accessibility Plan is Ryan Pilgrim, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services.

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If you need an alternate format of this accessibility plan please email: tc.accessibility-accessibilite.tc@tc.gc.ca.

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Feedback

Your feedback is important to us.

If you're experiencing a barrier to accessibility and want to help improve and advance our accessible services, please contact us using one of the methods below.

Through our online feedback tool

By email: tc.accessibility-accessibilite.tc@tc.gc.ca

By mail:

Accessibility feedback
Transport Canada
Tower C, Place de Ville
330 Sparks St
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N5

By phone:

Toll-free: 1-866-995-9737
Telephone: 613-990-2309
TTY: 1-888-675-6863



Acknowledgements

We want to thank everyone who participated in our consultations. Without learning about those lived experiences, we wouldn't be able to reach our goal of being barrier free by 2040.



Message from the Deputy Minister

Under the *Accessible Canada Act*, every federally regulated entity is required to publish an accessibility plan by December 31, 2022. This is our plan to reduce, remove, or eliminate barriers to accessibility at Transport Canada.

Whether you're a public servant, a visitor to one of our facilities, or member of the public accessing our programs and services, there shouldn't be any barriers that keep you from participating fully. Accessibility must be considered in all our policies and our actions.

In September 2022, we ran a survey asking employees to help us identify and address accessibility barriers that could impact the department. The survey's results highlighted priority areas and existing tools and resources. Our national working group for accessibility and our Corporate Services Branch developed this Accessibility Plan to address these issues.

This plan will guide us in our path forward. With this plan, we will continue to build momentum and expand our understanding of what we need to do to make sure we meet the government-wide goal of being barrier-free by January 1, 2040. This plan identifies concrete actions that we will take to address the priority areas outlined in the *Accessible Canada Act*.

To truly succeed in what we do as a department, we have to grow, make progress, and adapt, to provide an accessible setting for everyone. Over time, we've learned from feedback from within our organization and external partners. We understand the current state of accessibility, and we're committed to reducing and eliminating barriers faced by people with disabilities.

As we work towards this goal, we will continue to work with senior leaders, employees, experts, and members of the public to make sure that accessibility is never an afterthought in anything we do. We will also work with other government organizations and external partners to make sure we're using best practices and learning from others.

We take our responsibilities to Canadians very seriously, particularly in terms of upholding our public service values of respect and inclusion. I'm proud of the work Transport Canada has done to improve accessibility, and I'm confident that this excellent work will continue.

Michael Keenan (he, him, il)

Deputy Minister of Transport



Executive summary

The purpose of the *Accessible Canada Act* is to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040. This involves identifying, removing and preventing barriers in federal jurisdiction in several of priority areas.

A “barrier” is anything that keeps a person with a disability from participating fully and equally in society. A “disability” is any physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or functional limitation.

Federally regulated entities are required to produce a plan to address any barriers or limitations they find in these priority areas:

- employment
- built environment
- information and communication technology
- communication, other than information and communication technology
- procuring goods, services and facilities
- designing and delivering programs and services
- transportation

This plan outlines concrete actions that will help us take our first steps toward becoming accessible by default. Transport Canada is committed to working with all of you, our senior leaders, our employees, and members of the public to create a place that applies an accessibility lens to every context, both internally and externally.

The COVID-19 pandemic sped our journey towards a barrier-free workplace and service-delivery model. To adapt to the pandemic, we launched many new tools that put accessibility both into the spotlight and under the microscope.

Historically, it’s been hard for employees with disabilities to get support for telework. When the pandemic hit, we all began working from home and were quickly given the resources we needed.

To continue this momentum, we will address barriers in our hiring practices so we can contribute to the government’s goal of hiring 5,000 people with disabilities by 2025.

We’re also committed to improving our approach to workplace accommodations. As part of this we will develop a framework that makes sure managers understand they are responsible for supporting their employees and implementing suitable workplace adjustments.



We're committed to gathering feedback from, and working with, people with disabilities as we:

- develop new programs and services, and
- evaluate the existing tools and services

We will also develop and/or promote training on accessibility topics.

Lastly, we're committed to Canada's Disability Inclusion Action Plan. We're contributing to this plan through research in several areas to make sure that the federal transportation network is accessible to all.

Accessibility statement

Transport Canada is committed to addressing barriers and limits that impact people with disabilities by implementing this accessibility plan. We've been guided by the principles behind the Office of Public Service Accessibility "[Nothing Without Us](#)" strategy and the *Accessible Canada Act*.

We will consult and make sure any new initiative is developed through an accessibility lens. This will help us make sure that we consider all relevant views in the first phases of a project or procurement process.

This plan is our first step towards making sure that we reduce or remove the barriers that people with disabilities face so that everyone can fully participate in our programs and services.

We value diversity and inclusion, and understand it's important that our policies, practices, programs, and services are accessible.

Though we have work to do, we're committed to meeting the Government of Canada's goal of being barrier free by January 1, 2040.

Employment

Transport Canada is committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace because we know our employees are key to the work that we do.

Hiring

We're committed to recruiting and developing people with disabilities. We will develop a strategy to meet or exceed the workforce availability of 8.2%.

This strategy will contribute to the government's goal of hiring 5,000 people with disabilities by 2025 and help make sure that our workforce represents Canada's population.



We will meet this goal by using existing tools, and teaching hiring managers about them. This includes:

- promoting our internal tool kit on hiring people with disabilities
- holding targeted recruitment processes
- promoting existing hiring pools of people with disabilities
- evaluating current hiring practices and making changes to reduce barriers that impact people with disabilities, and
- evaluating and improving our employee onboarding process to make sure all new employees know about the tools and resources that can help them

Accommodations

We know that to meet our goals, our employees need access to the right tools and resources.

We already know that the process to access adaptive tools or assistive devices through the duty to accommodate is a barrier. We're committed to reviewing and improving how we deliver this service, including making the process faster and clearer.

We will reach this goal by reviewing our current approach on duty to accommodate, and teach employees about this duty. We will also switch to an employee-centric and case management approach.

To do so, we will consider:

- piloting the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport
- creating a Center of Expertise for managing the accommodation process
- creating a centralized fund for accommodations that need alternate equipment (like furniture, software, hardware and other specialized equipment)
- creating clear guidelines and resources for managers that explain their roles and responsibilities and where they can get expert advice on supporting employees and clients with disabilities
- updating Transport Canada's internal web content to include information on accessibility and support for people with disabilities

End goal

We're an employer of choice. Our hiring process is as accessible as possible.

Once someone is hired they can easily find:



- meaningful ways to contribute to their teams
- the tools and resources that they need, and
- opportunities that will help them grow, develop, and stay at Transport Canada

The built environment

There are Transport Canada offices in around 60 government-owned and leased buildings across Canada. Although we've tried to create a welcoming, accessible, and inclusive work environment, the 2018 Canadian Standards Association's Code Requirements for Accessibility has given us a chance to update our existing worksites to make sure they comply with best practices.

We will use a phased approach over 5 years to do an environmental scan and work with the [Rick Hansen Foundation](#) on assessing some facilities to improve accessibility.

Based on existing and planned capital projects, we will renovate prioritized offices to be more accessible. It's important to note that these projects rely on our collaboration with key stakeholders, including Public Services and Procurement Canada, Shared Services Canada and building owners.

We expect to first focus on high impact renovations that have low costs, and complete larger-scale upgrades over the long term.

When designing and modernizing office spaces, we will consult people with disabilities to make sure coverage, functionality, and usability of accessibility elements. We've already rolled-out some accessibility features that exceed the code requirements.

We will promote these accessible office spaces, as well as the teams that can help employees with their accessibility needs. Facilities Officers will receive an Accessibility Certification from the Rick Hanson Foundation, which will help us build capacity within the department.

We also own and operate a number of airports and marine ports across the country. These facilities (terminals, wharfs, hangers etc.) are mostly managed by industry, government and regulatory clients like airport authorities and ferry operators. When possible, we will work with our partners to improve these spaces.

End goal

The properties, facilities, and worksites that we lease or own are inclusive and accessible.



Information and communication technology

As society relies more and more on sharing and communicating information digitally, we'll work to make sure that accessibility is considered from the start of every project. We want to make sure that our information and communications technology products, services and digital content can be accessed and used by all.

We know it's important that everyone, including people with disabilities, can access what they need through our websites, communications, software and hardware.

To make sure there's barrier-free access to our information and communication technology, we're committed to:

- developing an accessibility testing policy for the information and communication technologies we use. We also plan to review and update the policy as needed
- developing accessibility guidance checklists and documents for employees that are building or procuring information technology
- developing accessibility training sessions for employees that are building or procuring information technology
- assessing existing software, hardware, and other tools to confirm they're accessible and work well with adaptive technologies
- consulting people with disabilities to learn about the barriers they face that impact their ability to access information and communication technologies
- consulting people with disabilities when we procure or build new information technology solutions to make sure that accessibility considerations are included in the business requirements
- creating a place where product teams can share their lessons learned and share information

Communication, other than information and communication technology

When asked, we commit to providing these alternate formats as soon as possible and within time frames listed in the *Accessible Canada Regulations*:

- print
- large print
- braille
- audio format
- an electronic format that's compatible with adaptive technology meant to help people with disabilities



Procuring goods, services, and facilities

Procurement is a part of meeting our accessibility goals. Recently our Procurement Group made changes to so that accessibility considerations are built into the request process.

We will try to make sure our partners and clients consider accessibility requirements at the start of a procurement process. This will help make sure our goods and services will be accessible, and help the procurement process go quickly.

To make sure that we practice accessible procurement, we will:

- create a training framework for everyone involved in the procurement process (including project and responsibility center managers) to streamline the consideration process and teach others about accessibility standards
- promote Public Services and Procurement Canada's training on better buying for government procurement partners
- create an accountability framework for procurement partners to make sure they're understand the accessibility considerations for different goods and services

End goal

Our employees and clients can access the tools and resources that they need to interact with us in the fullest way possible.

Designing and delivering programs and services

We're committed to reviewing and developing programs and services through an accessibility lens.

To do this, we will:

- consult people with disabilities when we develop or review programs or services
- hold training sessions to teach others about existing accessibility standards
- develop and launch standard templates to make sure all official information is as accessible as possible

End goal

Our programs and services are designed and delivered in a way that everyone can access, especially people with disabilities. We make sure that everyone who interacts with us is satisfied with the accessibility of our programs and services.



Transportation

Transportation regulations and policy

As the policy lead on accessible transportation, we've worked closely with the Canadian Transportation Agency to develop the *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations* to make sure they align with the *Accessible Canada Act's* guiding framework and principles.

The *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations* set out planning and reporting requirements for transportation services providers, including Transport Canada.

We're working on several research projects to:

- better understand gaps in transportation systems
- study the accessibility of cab and carpooling services and air travel
- study barriers like access to affordable transportation and how they can impact equity groups in Canada

We're also looking for innovative ways to safely contain and transport mobility aids on small aircraft. Once these research programs are complete, we will share our lessons learned and provide recommendations on best practices.

We've also been working with the National Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Transportation Agency on a report on the impact COVID-19 had on people with disabilities using the national transportation network.

Transport Canada as a transportation service provider

This section of the plan addresses how Transport Canada, as an airport terminal operator, will identify and remove barriers that could impact the accessibility of an air terminal building.

As a transportation service provider, Transport Canada is subject to the [*Personnel Training for the Assistance of People with Disabilities Regulations*](#). These regulations apply to most terminal operators in Canada. Canadian law also requires a number of our airports to follow the reporting requirements of the PTR and the *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations*.

For information on a specific air carrier or service providers accessibility plan, including ground transportation providers (like car rental agencies and taxis), please contact them directly.



Training

Training employees is a key part of making travel accessible. We want to make sure that anyone that interacts with the public, provides physical help, handles mobility aids, and helps with special equipment or aids are trained on their responsibilities under the PTR.

While we're not required to train employees on areas outside of their responsibility, we make sure that any companies that operate at our airports comply with the regulations. We do this by asking them to confirm that their employees have completed the training.

All our occupancy agreements (leases and licences) also include a clause that requires companies that operate at our airports to comply with the regulatory requirements of the *Canada Transportation Act*. This includes making sure that all employees are trained on their responsibilities under the PTR.

New airport staff are trained on accessibility within their first 60 days of work, and we offer refresher training every 2 years. We also keep training records to make sure employees are trained as required.

Most personnel employed at one of our airports are trained online via program from the Canadian Transportation Agency. Their 45-minute training covers topics like:

- best practices for communicating with travellers
- helping travelers with disabilities, including the deaf, deafened or hard of hearing
- helping a traveler who is blind or partially sighted
- what services to offer people with disabilities, and
- helping with mobility

Some transportation companies may have other training that they provide directly to their employees.

Transport Canada air terminals

Our air terminals are aging and we're looking to make major changes to protect the health and safety of travellers. We want to make sure our facilities are built to today's building codes and standards, and that they include accessible features when possible.

As our air terminals near the end of their lifecycle, we will identify projects that can remove or reduce accessibility barriers within these facilities. It's important to note that this work will be challenging due to our airports' size and location, especially when it comes to accessing certain services.



All procurement will be guided by the [Directive on the Management of Procurement](#). This directive will make sure that the goods and services we procure are accessible to all Canadians.

We already know about a number of existing barriers at our air terminals

Table 1: Known barriers at Transport Canada air terminals

Barrier	How to reduce or remove it
No or poor quality signage for key features like accessible parking spaces, travel pathways, entrance doors, service desks, evacuation plan, washrooms etc.	Add tactile signage and large, high contrast text when possible.
No or poorly identified passenger drop-off and pick-up zones including shelter and seating areas.	Provide a dedicated curb ramp at all sites with a level change.
Hard to navigate to, from and within air terminal.	Improve texture contrast, colour contrast of signage. Add new fixtures or furniture to improve flow and safety.
No or poor quality accessible washrooms.	Add accessible toilets and sinks, grab bars, automated doors and dispensers.
Communication with the client isn't always accessible.	Make sure communication includes alternate formats. Add accessible public phones or assistive listening devices, etc.

We will also work to reduce or remove barriers by:

- making sure accessibility is considered in any terminal improvement project, especially when we develop the project's requirements
- sharing and using accessible procurement principles, rules, and practices, when possible
- working with Shared Services Canada to make sure our facilities have reliable internet service and Wi-Fi
- making sure that removing snow and ice from walking paths is prioritized



End goal

As a transportation service provider, we provide a barrier-free environment.

Transport Canada's culture

Transport Canada has had a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan since 2001. Through this plan and a series of employee networks we are:

- building an inclusive and diverse workforce that respects everyone
- encouraging employees to self-identify as members of employment equity groups to make sure that we have accurate data
- encouraging employees to participate in both internal and interdepartmental equity networks, including our new People with Disabilities Network
- using a zero tolerance approach for disrespectful behaviour
- using a rigorous process to investigate discrimination that's in line with the Public Service Code of Conduct and Values and Ethics

We will continue to change our organization's culture by:

- including people with disabilities and teaching employees about the barriers they face
- use best practices, research, and guidelines from the Treasury Board Secretariat
- making sure that all communication, discussion and engagement with employees is accessible by default, including governance, Transport Canada Talks, and townhalls
- making sure everyone can access our events
- addressing barriers or limitations that affect people with disabilities and keep them from participating fully our department
- encouraging staff to take diversity and inclusion training from the Canada School of Public Service

End goal

Our employees understand what accessibility means and why it matters. They have the tools to make us a more accessible and inclusive employer and service provider.

Consultations

We used a number of methods to get feedback as we developed this plan, including:

- meeting with an executive-level working group that advocated for issues being faced by people with disabilities



- running an employee survey
- speaking with other departments to learn their best practices
- participating in communities of practice to learn about projects and programs being from other departments
- creating an internal working group to identify barriers and develop a plan to reduce or remove those barriers

Throughout our consultations, employees noted many barriers that have kept them from participating fully within the department. This feedback helped us develop the action items listed in this plan. Here's some of what we heard:

Accommodation delays have a major impact on a person with a disability's ability to participate fully in their workplace.

"There is no established procedure for requesting and documenting accommodation, and employees and managers are forced to create the process every time an accommodation is needed. The lack of tools and process lead to confusion and unnecessary delays in approving accommodation requests."

Lack of understanding and attitudinal barriers (behaviour, views, or assumptions that discriminate against people with disabilities) can impact someone's willingness to ask for help or work at Transport Canada.

"There is a lack of awareness and empathy that is required to support the needs of people with disabilities and this impacts their ability to secure developmental opportunities."

Even small changes can have huge impact

"Simple changes can have big impact, especially when they are "in your face" and conveniently available, or so well designed that people don't even realize the intentional design."



Appendix A: Summary of actions and responsible Office of Primary Interest

Action	Who is responsible for this task?	Date complete	Status
Launch targeted recruitment processes and promote existing pools of people with disabilities	Human Resources	TBD	TBD
Evaluate our current hiring practices and make changes to reduce any barriers faced by people with disabilities	Human Resources	TBD	TBD
Evaluate and improve our employee onboarding process to make sure all new employees know about the tools and resources that can support them	Human Resources	TBD	TBD
Evaluate the need for a centralized accommodations fund for employees that need require alternate equipment (like furniture, software, hardware or other specialized equipment)	Human Resources	TBD	TBD



Set clear guidelines for managers on their roles and responsibilities for supporting employees and clients with disabilities, including where they can get expert advice	Human Resources	TBD	TBD
Update our web content on accessibility and people with disabilities	Human Resources	TBD	TBD
Do an environmental scan and work with the Rick Hansen Foundation to assess the technical accessibility of some of our facilities. We will also identify gaps and best practices to improve accessibility in the workplace	Facilities	TBD	TBD
Work with property management companies and Public Services and Procurement to make sure that all current and new worksites meet our standard of accessibility	Facilities	TBD	TBD



Develop an accessibility testing policy and review it regularly	Digital Transformation and Solutions	TBD	TBD
Develop an accessibility guidance, checklist and documents for employees that are building or procuring information technology	Digital Transformation and Solutions	TBD	TBD
Develop an accessibility training session for employees that are building or procuring information technology	Digital Transformation and Solutions	TBD	TBD
Assess existing software and hardware to confirm they're accessible and interact well with adaptive technologies	Digital Transformation and Solutions	TBD	TBD
Collect feedback from people with disabilities both inside and outside of the department to learn about the barriers or roadblocks they face	All	TBD	TBD



Consult people with disabilities when we procure or build new information technology solutions to make sure that we include accessibility considerations in our business requirements.	Digital Transformation and Solutions	TBD	TBD
Create a repository of accessibility results so product teams can share lessons learned	Digital Transformation and Solutions	TBD	TBD
Create a training framework that trains everyone involved in the procurement process on accessibility standards. This will help project managers and responsibility center manager's identify and consider accessibility at the start of a procurement process	Training and Learning	TBD	TBD
Promote training from the Canada School of Public Service	Procurement	TBD	TBD
Communicate and train everyone involved in the	Procurement, Training and Learning	TBD	TBD



procurement process to make sure they understand the accessibility considerations for various goods and services			
Develop new programs and services through an “accessibility lens”	Programs	TBD	TBD
Communicate and train employees on accessibility standards for existing tools	Programs	TBD	TBD
Create standard templates to make sure all official information is as accessible as possible	Programs, Web services, Governance	TBD	TBD
Work to build an inclusive and diverse workforce that’s respectful of all	All employees	TBD	TBD
Encourage employees to self-identify as members of equity groups so we have accurate representation data on our workforce	Human Resources and all managers	TBD	TBD
Encourage employees to participate in	All employees	TBD	TBD



internal and external employment equity networks, including our new People with Disabilities Network			
Have zero tolerance for disrespectful behaviour. Fully investigate accusations of discrimination	All employees	TBD	TBD
Communicate with/teach employees about the barriers people with disabilities face	All employees	TBD	TBD
Use best practices, research, and guidelines from the Treasury Board Secretariat	All employees	TBD	TBD
Make sure Transport Canada events are as accessible as possible	All employees	TBD	TBD
Make sure that all communication, discussion and engagement with employees is accessible by default. This includes governance, Transport Canada	All employees	TBD	TBD

Talks, and townhalls			
Address barriers or limitations that affect people with disabilities and keep them from participating fully with the department	All employees	TBD	TBD
Create a way for people with disabilities to participate in developing any new tools, resources, programs or services	All employees	TBD	TBD
Encourage and promote all accessibility-related training from the Canada School of Public Service	All managers, Training and Learning	TBD	TBD

