



Office of the  
Conflict of Interest and  
Ethics Commissioner

Commissariat aux  
conflits d'intérêts et  
à l'éthique

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## Accessibility Plan

# 2025- 2028

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## Message from the Commissioner

I am proud to introduce the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner's second accessibility plan. Recognizing that accessibility for all is a critical element of inclusion, the Office is taking action to eliminate barriers in its operations and service delivery in accordance with the *Accessible Canada Act*. This updated Accessibility Plan builds on the 2024 Progress Report and incorporates best practices from the 2023–2025 Accessibility plan. It outlines commitments to remove barriers across all priority areas under the Accessible Canada Act and introduces new elements such as culture, SMART objectives, and enhanced consultation processes.

This law aims for the full and equal participation of all persons, especially persons with disabilities, in Canada. It recognizes that people are not disabled by their conditions, but instead by environments that are neither accessible, welcoming nor enabling.

The Office's three-year plan maps out how we will improve accessibility in the seven key areas identified in the *Accessibility Canada Act*: employment; the built environment; information and communication technologies; communication; the procurement of goods, services and facilities; the design and delivery of programs and services; and transportation. It reflects the Office's commitment to create an accessible work environment and a diverse and inclusive workforce, as established in our [Code of Values](#).

As part of the Office's work towards identifying, preventing and eliminating accessibility barriers for our employees and stakeholders, we have held consultations to develop this plan. We welcome feedback at any time about accessibility at the Office to help us continue to identify, prevent and eliminate barriers and ensure use of best practices.

The Office is committed to continuing its practice of publishing annual progress reports on accessibility and will publish a full Accessibility Report every third year, as required by the *Accessible Canada Act*.

# 1. General

## 1.1 Overview

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA), which came into force in July 2019, aims to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility and make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040.

In accordance with this law, the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner (Office) published its first accessibility plan in December 2022, and must update the plan every three years, showing how it identifies, removes, and prevents barriers. Each version must remain online for seven years after publication, and persons with disabilities must be consulted in its preparation. The plan must also describe the consultation process and be available in alternate formats upon request.

This is the Office's second accessibility plan, building on the foundation established in the first plan and informed by lessons learned and feedback received. It reflects our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and to embedding accessibility into all aspects of our operations.

The plan addresses the seven priority areas described in section 5 of the ACA:

- 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

In developing this plan, the Office embraced the guiding principle of *"Nothing without us"*, ensuring that persons with disabilities are actively engaged in identifying, preventing, and removing barriers.

The plan also adheres to the principles set out in section 6 of the ACA:

- Everyone must be treated with dignity.
- Everyone must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the life they are able and wish to have.
- Everyone must be able to participate fully and equally in society.
- Everyone must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire.

- Laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the ways that different kinds of barriers and discrimination intersect.
- Persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures.
- Accessibility standards and regulations must aim to achieve the highest level of accessibility.

## **1.2 Statement of Commitment**

The Office remains committed to meeting all its obligations under the *Accessible Canada Act* and its regulations (the *Accessible Canada Regulations*). By establishing a working group on accessibility and by continuing to consult persons with disabilities, the Office is committed to the proactive identification, removal and prevention of barriers to accessibility at the workplace and in all aspects of its communications and activities. Accessibility neither begins nor ends with this plan; it is an ongoing process. We strive to continuously improve accessibility in everything we do.

We are committed to creating a barrier-free environment for employees, stakeholders, and the public.

## **1.3 Contact Information and Feedback Process**

The Office welcomes feedback, including feedback submitted anonymously, about accessibility at the Office and about this plan. We are committed to reviewing the feedback we receive in good faith and to taking steps to address, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility that are identified through this feedback.

Feedback about either accessibility at the Office or this plan may be submitted in the following ways:

- By contacting the Office's Manager, Human Resources Client Services, Corporate Management, using the information below:  
  
 Manager, Human Resources Client Services  
 Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner  
 Parliament of Canada  
 Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6  
[AccessibleCIE@cie.parl.gc.ca](mailto:AccessibleCIE@cie.parl.gc.ca)  
 613-995-0721
- By completing the online accessibility feedback survey. Alternate formats of the survey can be requested by contacting [accessibleCIE@cie.parl.gc.ca](mailto:accessibleCIE@cie.parl.gc.ca) or 613-995-0721.

The Office must keep the most recent version of the description of its feedback process for seven years after it is published or until a new description is published.

The Office will acknowledge the feedback it received in the same way that it was sent to it, unless it was sent by an anonymous source. The Office will review all feedback received and take steps to address barriers to accessibility that are identified. A copy of any feedback received must be kept for seven years. We have been monitoring the Accessibility email inbox and there have been no accessibility matters that relate to accessibility at the Office.

Alternative formats of this plan and/or a description of the feedback process, can be requested by contacting [AccessibleCIE@cie.parl.gc.ca](mailto:AccessibleCIE@cie.parl.gc.ca) or 613-995-0721.

In accordance with the regulations, the Office will provide the following alternative formats within 15 days of the initial request:

- Print
- Large print (increased font size)

In accordance with the regulations, the Office will provide the following alternative formats within 45 days of the initial request:

- Braille (a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers)
- Audio (a recording of someone reading the text aloud)

#### **1.4 Definitions**

The following definitions apply throughout this plan:

**Barrier:** means anything — including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice — that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.

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

## **1.5 About the Commissioner and the Office**

The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner administers the *Conflict of Interest Act*, a law that applies to public office holders and the *Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons*, a code of conduct that applies to Members of Parliament that forms part of the rules of the House of Commons. These two regimes seek to prevent conflicts between private interests and the public duties of appointed and elected officials. The Commissioner also provides confidential advice to the Prime Minister about conflict of interest and ethics issues.

The position of Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner was created following the adoption of the *Federal Accountability Act* in 2006. The Commissioner is an Officer of the House of Commons whose mandate is set out in the *Parliament of Canada Act*.

The Commissioner is completely independent of the government of the day and the Office is part of the parliamentary infrastructure.

The Commissioner is supported by an Office of approximately 51 employees who occupy positions related to compliance, investigations, legal services, communications, and corporate management.

## **1.6 Compliance with future standards**

[Accessibility Standards Canada](#) is responsible for the development of accessibility standards for removing barriers to access faced by people with disabilities. These standards fall within the priority areas listed in the *Accessible Canada Act*.

This organization publishes a database of standards and technical guides to support a barrier-free Canada.

At the time of publication of this plan, 12 guides and standards have been published by Accessibility Standards Canada and made publicly available on their website. Others are in the process of being reviewed.

At this time, the published standards and guides relate to areas of Procurement, Employment, Built Environment, Information and Communication Technologies, Communication, Transportation, Design and Delivery of Programs and Services, the Office is the process of reviewing these standards and others as they may apply to its plan and plan progress.

## **1.7 Accessibility goals and the Accessibility Working Group**

The aim of the Office is to complete the accessibility goals for each priority area described in Part 2 of this accessibility plan by the end of the year 2025.

To achieve the accessibility goals and to implement the plan, the Office created an accessibility working group chaired by the Manager, Human Resources Client Services, Corporate Management, and comprised of employees from the various divisions of the Office.



This working group will work closely with the Commissioner, the Senior Management Committee and the relevant directors of each division of the Office. In this way, timely approvals for the changes that will be necessary to give effect to the accessibility plan can be implemented within the deadline.

The working group will also:

- monitor plan progress;
- work with the Office's Manager, Human Resources Client Services, Corporate Management, to receive, acknowledge and review feedback on accessibility;
- prepare the progress reports and update the accessibility plan; and
- consult persons with disabilities.

## **2. Areas Described Under Section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act (ACA)***

### **2.1 Employment**

#### **2.1.1 Overview**

This priority area is about the importance of ensuring access to employment opportunities and an accessible workplace.

The Office is a separate employer whose employees are not part of the federal public administration.

The Office has its own terms and conditions of employment, relating to hours of work, employee benefits and general working conditions affecting employees. Employees are not covered under any collective agreement. The Office has a Joint Labour Relations Committee, consisting of management and employee representatives to ensure that any new or revised policy, directive and guideline related to human resources management is developed in consultation with all employees of the Office.

The Office is committed to employment equity and having a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Office's staffing processes and appointments are based on merit and are free from political influence.

All employees of the Office are expected to follow the values set out in its Code of Values and Standards of Conduct which reflect its commitment to diversity and inclusion.

The Office has adopted employment-related policies, in areas such as telework, occupational health and safety, procedures for emergency response, employee recognition, employee discipline, disability management and duty to accommodate, interchange Canada assignments, job shadowing, performance management, staffing procedures, training, termination and demotion, as well as on equity diversity and inclusion.

The Office reviews and updates its policies and guidelines in line with those of other parliamentary entities and the wider public service.

#### **2.1.2 Feedback**

When carrying out its consultations, the Office was mindful that barriers that may arise in the context of employment could include, but were not limited to, those encountered during staffing processes, onboarding, promotion and/or career progression, or during workplace accommodation.

No barriers were identified in this area during consultation for this plan. Although during the last Employee satisfaction survey conducted in 2025, employees have expressed a lower level of satisfaction regarding the return to work premises compared to teleworking.

### 2.1.3 Accessibility Goals

The Office will continue to support these ongoing accessibility goals through to the end of 2028.

- 1) Review staffing tools, approaches, and policies to ensure that any barriers are identified and removed to make employment with the Office accessible and inclusive.
- 2) Review the Office's Guideline on Disability Management and Duty to Accommodate.
- 3) Continuously support the employee network groups, including the promotion of disability groups on the parliamentary Hill.
- 4) Provide access to training sessions and information sessions for employees at all levels on accessibility, barriers, unconscious bias and accommodation requests and processes so they can build expertise.

## 2.2 The Built Environment

### 2.2.1 Overview

This priority area is about the accessibility of the built environment which has a significant impact on whether people with disabilities can move freely, access and function within a space in a manner equitable with those who do not have disabilities.

The primary location in which the Office conducts most of its activities is in downtown Ottawa at 66 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario on the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor. The Office has a Telework Policy. Employees must sometimes access other buildings and office spaces throughout the National Capital Region (NCR).

At its primary location of work, the Office's lobby on the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor is accessed by using the building's elevators. There are also stairs that can be used from the building's ground floor to access the elevator lobby of the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor. Outside of the lobby, access to the office space requires use of a security card.

There are washrooms, including an accessible washroom, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor.

There are automatic doors located in some of the common areas such as washrooms and main entrances.

The Office has also established and published Procedures for Emergency Response.

Furthermore, when the Office relocated to the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor, it implemented accessible evacuation procedures and provided staff training to ensure the safety of persons with disabilities during emergencies.

Since the last accessibility plan, the Office relocated to a newly redesigned floor on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor at 66 Slater Street in 2025. When carrying out the constructions, the Office was mindful of barriers that may arise in the built environment, such as stairs, steps, curbs, heavy or narrow doors, lack of automatic door openers, inaccessible washrooms, inadequate lighting, poor acoustics, and limited rest areas.

The new space meets accessibility requirements and incorporates universal design principles. All elements of the built environment; including entrances, hallways, signage, washrooms, and emergency exits: meet or exceed current accessibility standards.

Features of the new space include:

- **Accessible washroom** with wide entrance.
- **Automatic doors** throughout common areas and office spaces.
- **Signage with braille and tactile elements** for wayfinding.
- **Improved sensory controls** for lighting and acoustics to support diverse needs.
- **Wider hallways** to accommodate mobility devices and ensure barrier-free movement.

This redesign demonstrates the Office's commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible workplace for all employees and visitors.

### 2.2.2 Feedback

An employee working on Parliament Hill who has an expertise in accessibility and identifies as having a physical disability recently visited the Office's new premises and provided valuable feedback on ways to reduce accessibility barriers. For example, relocating the signage for all three kitchen bins to the front would improve visibility, and adding Braille would benefit individuals with limited vision. Additionally, clearly defining the reception cubicle with contrasting color demarcation would assist people with vision impairments. These are useful suggestions that the Office will take into consideration moving forward.

### 2.2.3 Accessibility Goals

The Office will continue to work on the following accessibility goals:

- 1) Review and revisit accessibility as it relates to its built environment, including by making use of the accessibility feedback process, to ensure that new barriers have not been created and that existing accessibility features have been maintained.
- 2) The OCIEC recognizes that fostering an accessibility-focused culture is essential for long-term success. This section outlines initiatives to embed accessibility into organizational values and behaviors in the built environment by adopting a fragrance-free environment.

## **2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

### **2.3.1 Overview**

This priority area is about offering accessible digital content and technologies.

Information and communication technologies are used to deliver and access information, perform activities, and provide services. They can include, but are not limited to, hardware, software, video or voice communication tools, and other digital content.

In support of public education about the regimes that it administers, the Office makes a range of digital information available on its website (HTML and PDF) and is active on social media (X: [@EthicsCanada](#)).

The Office also has a non-public facing website used by its employees, an intranet site based on the SharePoint platform.

The Office is presently developing a new electronic system named “Nethik” to give appointed and elected persons who must comply with the regimes administered by the Office a fully secure, fast and easy way to submit required information to the Office. This system will also enhance the public registry of information that is made available by the Office to the public about certain private interests, gifts or travel.

The Office, including its employees, also use email, Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP), and software, such as MS Teams, to communicate and share information.

The Office has contractual agreements and works with the House of Commons related to the provision of information technology.

### **2.3.2 Feedback**

When carrying out its consultation, the Office was mindful that barriers that may arise in the context of information and communication technologies could include, but were not limited to, electronic documents without accessibility features or alternative text, incompatibilities with screen readers or other assistive devices, and fonts or colour contrasts on web-based applications or in emails that create difficulties accessing the content.

### **2.3.3 Accessibility Goals**

The Office will aim to complete these accessibility goals by the end of 2028:

- 1) Launch a new website that meets recognized accessibility standards, uses plain language, and is designed so all users can quickly and easily find the information they need. (medium term)

## **2.4 Communication, Other Than ICT**

### **2.4.1 Overview**

This priority area focuses on ensuring that everyone can communicate, share, and access information without barriers. Accessible communication means using clear, direct, and inclusive language and offering information in formats that meet diverse needs.

The Office communicates with elected and appointed public officials, the media, and the public through various channels, including phone, email, mail, fax, published reports and information notices on its website, social media (X and LinkedIn), as well as virtual and in-person presentations. The Office has established processes to ensure that information is accurate, timely, and useful.

It is building on previous efforts to strengthen accessibility in communications by removing barriers to these interactions and by aligning with new standards.

### **2.4.2 Feedback**

When carrying out its consultation, the Office was mindful that barriers that may arise in the context of communication (other than ICT) could include, but were not limited to, font or print that is too small or hard to read, no alternative access to the content of graphs or charts, lack of use of plain language, instructions that are confusing or complicated, presentations that are not fully accessible, seating arrangements that exclude people from participating fully in the communication process.

There was no feedback received in respect of the Office's Communication, Other Than ICT.

### **2.4.3 Accessibility Goals**

The Office will aim to complete these accessibility goals by the end of 2028.

- 1) Align the Office's existing plain language practices with Canada's first National Standard on Plain Language (CAN-ASC-3.1:2025), published by Accessibility Standards Canada. (medium term)
- 2) Improve the accessibility and readability of digital documents by updating the Office's default font to Aptos 12-point, which offers greater clarity on high-resolution screens and better character distinction. (short term)
- 3) Implement a screen reader tool to test and optimize the accessibility of the Office's website and documents. (long term)
- 4) Ensure the Office has clear guidance and resources to support accessibility features for presentations, such as closed captioning and sign language interpretation, when requested, and includes options for participants to request these services. (medium term)

## **2.5 Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities**

### **2.5.1 Overview**

This priority area is about making accessibility an important component of the procurement process and about ensuring that the Office purchases accessible goods, services and facilities.

Procurement refers to the acquisition of goods and services by any means, including purchase, rental, lease or conditional sale.

For the Office, procurement is done in accordance with the Office's Directive on the Procurement of Goods and Services, Policy on the Delegation of Financial Signing Authorities, and the Directive on Acquisition Cards.

The current procurement directive mentions an objective of enhancing access and includes a requirement for following ethical practices.

As set out in its financial reports, the Office enters transactions with other government and parliamentary entities in the normal course of business and on normal trade terms. For example, the Office has agreements with the House of Commons related to the provision of information technology and security services, and the Public Services and Procurement Canada related to the provision of compensation services.

### **2.5.2 Feedback**

When carrying out its consultation, the Office was mindful that barriers that may arise in the context of procurement of goods, services, and facilities could include, but were not limited to whether a good or service can be used by persons in different positions (seated, standing), with different levels of strength or range of body movement, with hearing or vision loss; whether support materials, such as manuals, are accessible in other formats; whether products can be customized or work with other accessible technologies; whether the organization providing the good or service provide accessible customer support; whether there are accessibility requirement clauses set out in contracts or Office policies concerning contracting.

There was no feedback received in respect of the Office's procurement.

### **2.5.3 Accessibility Goals**

The Office will aim to complete these accessibility goals by the end of 2028.

- 1) Continuously review the current procurement directive and related policies to incorporate accessibility considerations.
- 2) Continuously review the inventory of current goods and services and enquire about the accessibility practices and services of current suppliers.

## **2.6 Design and Delivery of Programs and Services**

### **2.6.1 Overview**

This priority area is about ensuring that everyone can receive and access the services and programs delivered by the Office. The key programs and services delivered by the Office involve:

- reporting to the Prime Minister and to Parliament;
- helping regulatees achieve and maintain compliance with the conflict of interest regimes;
- giving regulatees confidential guidance tailored to their individual situations;
- helping regulatees understand their obligations under the regimes through education and outreach;
- applying investigations and other enforcement provisions as appropriate;
- exchanging information with domestic and international counterparts;
- providing programs and services to employees.

### **2.6.2 Feedback**

When carrying out its consultations the Office was mindful that barriers that may arise in the context of design and delivery of programs and services could include, but were not limited to a lack of diverse channels for delivering services (e.g., over the phone, in-person, email, reports).

The Office received no feedback in this area.

### **2.6.3 Accessibility Goals**

The Office will aim to complete this accessibility goal by the end of 2028.

- 1) Provide employees with appropriate tools and training to make accessibility a key consideration in all future programs and services.

## **2.7 Transportation**

### **2.7.1 Overview**

This priority area aims to create a barrier-free federal transportation network.

While the Office does not provide transportation services, travel on behalf of the Office may from time-to-time form part of an employee's official duties. In this context, the Office has Guidelines on Travel that consider accessibility, as well as a Directive on Travel and Conference.



Expenditures, Guidelines for the Approval of Travel for the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, the National Joint Council Travel Directive, the Code of Values and Standards of Conduct for employees of the Office and other internal policies or directives related to financial management.

The primary place of work for the Office, 66 Slater Street, is located in downtown Ottawa. It is accessible by public transit and the building has underground public parking operated and managed by a third party and includes access to the building's elevators. Parking is also available at the National Arts Centre across the street from the building.

The Office has guidelines on parking and the use of parking passes by employees.

As a result of its location, offloading and onloading from vehicles as well as vehicle passenger drop-off or pick-up can be challenging outside of the building.

#### 2.7.2 Feedback

When carrying out its consultations, the Office was mindful that barriers that may arise in the context of transportation could include, but were not limited to those that result from long work-related travel distances, adverse policies affecting travel, lack of accessible seating, alternative service options, lack of or confusing signs and directions.

The Office received no feedback in this area.

#### 2.7.3 Accessibility Goals

- 1) Review policies and guidelines related to employee travel to identify and remove any accessibility barriers to ensure that all employees travel safely regardless of disability.
- 2) Update guidelines on parking and the use of parking passes by employees to include accessibility standards, including as to how parking spaces are attributed.

### 3. Consultations

Since the initial plan was published, employees at all levels of the Office were consulted for the purposes of informing this accessibility plan.

Through these consultations, each person was offered the opportunity to provide anonymized accessibility feedback through a survey in the areas described under section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act*. They were also provided with an alternative method for contacting the Office with questions or comments about accessibility.

#### 3.1 Employees

As part of its commitment to continuous improvement, the Office conducts an Employee Satisfaction Survey every three years, and the most recent survey was completed this year.

The survey provided employees with an opportunity to share feedback on various aspects of their work environment, level of satisfaction and possibility of providing suggestions. No comments or concerns related to accessibility preferences, barriers, or accommodation needs were identified during this process.

This result indicates that employees are generally satisfied with their work environment, and no accessibility-related issues were raised. The Office will continue to monitor employee feedback and maintain open channels for accessibility-related input to ensure that emerging needs are addressed promptly.

#### 3.2 Stakeholders

The Office consulted the House of Commons and its experts on accessibility to ensure full compliance with accessibility standards on the development of its website.

There were also accessibility experts from the House of Commons who were consulted during the construction of the built environment, i.e. the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor and move.

#### 3.3 Public

In developing this plan and after its move to the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor, the Office consulted a person who identifies as having a physical disability. The individual came to the built environment and was kind enough to provide great advice, feedback and resources concerning barriers and accessibility about the physical environment. The feedback offered was generally positive with some focus area for improvement. Most were related to eyesight limitations or moving small office furniture and equipment. The Objective for the Accessibility Plan will consider the recommendations made during this consultation.

### **3.4 Parliamentary Precinct Working Group**

Over the past years, the Office regularly participated in bi-weekly meetings on accessibility with representatives of other parliamentary precinct entities.

The purpose of these meetings is to share experiences, share feedback on consultations with persons with disabilities who have had dealings with parliamentary entities and advocacy groups, and to share information to help align an approach to accessibility by parliamentary entities.

The information shared at this working group was greatly appreciated and was instrumental in the preparation of this plan.