

Accessible B.C. Act: 2023–2024 Progress Report



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

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Message from Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

We all want people with disabilities to live good lives and fully participate in their communities. Everyone benefits when our communities are inclusive and when all people have access to opportunities.

People with disabilities told us that they face a wide range of barriers in their everyday lives. That's why we introduced the Accessible British Columbia Act and are working hard to implement it.

I am pleased to present this report sharing our progress over the 2023-24 fiscal year, including key measures taken across government to address barriers to accessibility in B.C.

Many groups and organizations have worked to comply with the Accessible B.C. Regulation to improve accessibility within their organizations and for the communities they serve. We are grateful to them. A more accessible and inclusive B.C. is only possible when government, people and organizations throughout the province work together, and we know there is still much work to do.

This past year, our Provincial Accessibility Committee has been working hard to propose B.C.'s first-ever accessibility standards – employment accessibility and accessible service delivery standard. I'm grateful for the committee's work and look forward to receiving the standard recommendations next year after we collect input from the public.

With this report, we celebrate and learn from our successes and identify areas where we can do better. As we enter the final year of implementing government's first accessibility plan under the Act, we will continue working with partners to ensure our next plan builds upon our successes and continues to make a more accessible province for all people.



Message from Susie Chant, Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility

As Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility, I'm committed to making British Columbia more accessible to people of all abilities and it has been rewarding to oversee accessibility efforts being celebrated and prioritized across government.

We've made significant progress in implementing the Accessible British Columbia Act. Throughout the province, organizations are dedicating resources to understanding, identifying, removing and preventing barriers in all areas of life.

We also acknowledge the many people with disabilities in the province who continue to educate and engage with us as we carry out this mandate. In the spirit of "nothing about us without us", we will continue working with the disability community to ensure our work is grounded in their experience. We have so much gratitude for their guidance and strength as we continue to identify and remove barriers that restrict peoples' full participation in society.

Accessible B.C. Act: 2023–2024 Progress Report

The Accessible British Columbia Act (the Act) establishes a framework for government to work in partnership with people with disabilities and the broader community to identify, remove and prevent barriers to the full and equal participation of people living with disabilities. Government is in the third year of its implementation.

This third progress report provides an update on the implementation of the Act in fiscal year 2023-24. The report is organized into parts as presented in the Act and focuses on actions under Part 2: Recognition and Accountability; Part 3: Accessible Organizations and Part 4: Accessibility Standards.



Part 2: Recognition and Accountability

AccessAbility Week

Each year in the last week of May, AccessAbility Week promotes inclusion and accessibility to support the full participation of every person in their communities. It is also an opportunity to reflect on and highlight the contributions of people with disabilities in their communities, as well as the people and organizations that support them.

In 2023, the province celebrated AccessAbility Week by providing more than \$25 million to organizations that offer services and supports for people with disabilities. British Columbians benefited from expanded projects and programs that reduced barriers and promoted inclusion in communities, as well as augmentative alternative communication systems, and physical, mental health and wellness supports for people with mobility impairments.

During AccessAbility Week, the government provided, through Disability Alliance BC (DABC), \$500,000 to 12 non-profits to support accessibility projects in their communities. Each organization received between \$13,500 to \$40,000 for projects in a range of areas, from expanded inclusive education opportunities in arts and culture and the natural world, to accessible transportation for people who experience mobility barriers.

Awareness

In addition to celebrating AccessAbility Week, government recognized several other observances on accessibility and disability-related issues, and issued proclamations for: Autism Acceptance Month in April, Brain Injury Awareness and Deaf Blindness Awareness Month in June, Disability Employment Month in September, Registered Disability Savings Plan Awareness Month in October, and Indigenous Disability Awareness Month in November.

In recognition of Disability Employment Month in September, government announced \$4 million in funding to the National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) to support people with disabilities as they recover and return to work, and \$1 million to CanAssist to develop assistive technologies that meet specific needs for people with disabilities to succeed in the workforce.

Part 3: Accessible Organizations

Part 3 of the Act sets out accessibility requirements for government and regulated organizations. The three requirements include forming an accessibility committee, creating an accessibility plan, and developing a tool to receive public feedback regarding accessibility barriers.

Accessible B.C. Regulation

In April 2022, government adopted the Accessible B.C. Regulation, prescribing 788 public sector organizations to meet the Part 3 requirements.

- 755 organizations, including local governments, post-secondary institutions, school districts and independent schools, public libraries and some Crown corporations and agencies, were required to comply with Part 3 of the Accessible B.C. Act by September 1, 2023.
- 33 organizations, including health authorities, tribunals, and some Crown corporations and agencies, are required to comply with Part 3 of the Accessible B.C. Act by September 1, 2024.

The regulation requires organizations to develop plans, feedback mechanisms and committees that work for their communities, and to evolve their approach to the plan, committee and feedback tool over time with feedback from people with disabilities. Organizations are encouraged to do this work in a manner that is flexible and scaled to their circumstances.

Government provided \$3 million over three years to Disability Alliance BC (DABC) to support the organizations. A variety of resources, including toolkits and guides, were made available through the BC Accessibility Hub website.

WITH SUPPORT FROM THE ACCESSIBILITY DIRECTORATE AND PARTNERS at DABC, SPARC BC, the Rick Hansen Foundation and the Canucks Autism Network, Minister Sheila Malcolmson hosted a Walk-and-Roll Accessibility Tour at the Union of BC Municipalities Conference in September 2023. This tour explored how to identify, remove, and prevent a wide range of accessibility barriers. Participants also learned about resources and support available for local governments to advance accessibility initiatives.

Accessibility in B.C. Government

Provincial Accessibility Committee

The Provincial Accessibility Committee (PAC) supports the implementation of the Accessible B.C. Act by developing and recommending accessibility standards and providing advice to government on matters related to accessibility and inclusion. PAC was established in December 2021 and is comprised of 11 members appointed by the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

Since January 2023, PAC has been working with technical committees to develop initial draft recommendations for accessible service delivery and employment accessibility standards. These standards were brought to public consultation from May 31 to July 31, 2024.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEES play an integral role in the standards development process by assisting PAC to develop recommendations for the Minister. Each standard has a dedicated technical committee comprised of individuals with a wide range of experiences that aims to reflect the diversity of British Columbia.

AccessibleBC: B.C.'s Accessibility Plan for 2022-23 to 2024-25

The provincial government is required to develop an accessibility plan and revise it at least once every three years. The first AccessibleBC Plan (the Plan) was developed with input from ministries across government and released on May 31, 2022. The plan contains 37 commitments and actions across five priority areas. The Accessibility Directorate is working with the ministries to capture their progress in implementing the Plan's commitments and other accessibility initiatives.

Progress Summary on 2022-23 to 2024-25 Accessibility Plan Implementation

The AccessibleBC Plan: 2022-23 to 2024-25 is halfway through its implementation period. Ministries across government began work on 33 of the 37 commitments under the five Accessibility Plan priority areas. Six of the actions contained in the Plan are now complete. Below is a summary of the progress by priority areas in the Plan.

Appendix A includes additional detailed reporting about progress across a range of government ministries and agencies.

Priority 1: Creating a Culture of Accessibility

Ministries reported completing the commitment to support development of accessibility leadership in the public service. Work on the remaining commitments to promote a culture of accessibility in the public service, organize events to raise awareness on accessibility and apply a Gender Based Analysis plus (GBA+) lens to make sure that government programs are working for people is in progress and ongoing.

Key achievements:

- Supported the Employee Accessibility Advisory Council and Accessibility Community of Practice which include members across the public service. The groups provide feedback and information sharing focused on improving accessibility.
- Over 1,600 employees have participated in AccessAbility Week events since 2021.
- Initiated development of accessibility objectives within the updated corporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy refresh, which will be published in 2025.
- Embedded accessibility principles within ministry EDI strategies.

- Developed training courses to build awareness and capacity around GBA+, accessible people management and inclusive leadership.
- Provided resources and support to Crown corporations and agencies prescribed by the Accessible B.C. Regulation to meet their accessibility requirements.

Priority 2: Information and Communications

Ministries committed to undertake nine actions under this priority area. Actions to make public information about BC Parks more accessible, to create a fully digital intake process for housing dispute resolution services between tenants and landlords, and to modernize the public notices of local governments are complete, though they will require regular review and updates. Work is ongoing to advance the remaining six commitments.

Key achievements:

- Developed and launched new government websites and information to improve user experience and accessibility. For example, EmergencyInfoBC ensures critical and life-saving emergency information is clear and easy to find and understand during provincial emergencies.

- Expanded format options for making inquiries and receiving support to accommodate a range of communication needs. For example, continued to provide plain language and multi-language information on gov.bc.ca for important health topics and initiatives like COVID-19 and influenza vaccination, HPV, respiratory season, the health career access program and the new 'See a Pharmacist' program.
- Launched the BC Token to provide access to online government services using a personal computer to access the BC Service Card login service for people without a smartphone, tablet or mobile device.
- Continued to invest up to \$830 million in joint funding between the Province and Canada towards projects that help to expand broadband infrastructure in B.C., with the goal to connect all homes to high-speed internet services by 2027. In 2023, government committed an additional \$75 million to increase highway cellular coverage by 550 km.
- Initiated changes to the My Self Serve portal that allow clients to more easily manage their information and ease reporting requirements for persons with persistent barriers and those in special care facilities.
- Require that emergency management plans specifically consider ways of mitigating the adverse effects of emergencies on people with disabilities through the new Emergency and Disaster Management Act.

Priority 3: Buildings, Infrastructure and Public Spaces

Ministries reported progress in all areas of work under this priority and completed the integration of accessibility eligibility criterion for capital project grant programs. Ongoing work on the rest of the commitments includes infrastructure audits and investments in public-facing facilities and spaces, embedding accessibility considerations in planning new projects, revising government procurement policies to be more accessible, and ensuring the safety and accessibility of transportation devices and services.

Key achievements:

- In addition to the \$17 million in fiscal year 2022-23, invested \$4.6 million in accessibility improvements to emergency systems, washrooms, signage and wayfinding.
- Completed initiatives to increase the accessibility of courthouses, frontcountry campgrounds and day use areas, and correction offices and correctional facilities.
- The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction and ServiceBC worked together to provide accessible front-line services to taxpayers in person, via phone and online.
- Adopted the 2024 B.C. Building Code.

- Implemented changes to the Motor Vehicle Act to encourage more modes of transportation with a focus on protecting vulnerable road users.
- Continuation of e-mobility pilot project until 2028 to assess the safety of shared mobility devices.
- Undertook an integrated planning initiative to better align transportation and land use planning for accessibility and sustainability.
- Awarded \$24.8 million to Indigenous and local governments to cost-share infrastructure projects to allow people access to safe travel paths year-round.



Priority 4: Employment in the BC Public Service

Three of the five commitments under this priority area are complete: implement a three-year Diversity and Inclusion strategy, provide resources and supports to participants of the Work-Able Internship Program, and reach out to disability-service organizations to promote jobs within the B.C. Public Service. Some elements of this work are ongoing initiatives. Work on the other two commitments to update accommodations policies and to better support hiring managers and job applicants with accommodations is ongoing.

Key achievements:

- Developed new learning opportunities on accessibility and inclusive hiring.
- Engaged across government to improve the provision of ergonomic furniture and assistive technologies for people with disabilities in the public service.
- Supported the Work-Able internship, which has placed over 148 interns in over 19 ministries, including providing monthly learning opportunities about job searching and career development.
- Developed resources for supervisors and mentors to build their capacity around disability and accommodations.

Priority 5: Delivery of Goods and Services

The commitment to modernize programs delivered by StudentAid BC to support learners with disabilities is complete. The remaining nine commitments under this priority are ongoing. Work in this area includes continuing and innovating support services for children and youth; improving access to education, job training and employment programs; supporting equity programs in B.C.'s creative industries; and investing in accessibility projects and employment supports for B.C.'s tourism industry.

Key achievements:

- Revised StudentAid Accessibility Program policies increased the Learning Disability Assessment Bursary and updated reimbursement and disbursement policies to better support students with a range of barriers.
- Delivered WorkBC Assistive Technology Services to approximately 1,710 WorkBC clients in 2022-23.
- Skills Training for Employment program targeting persons with disabilities was initiated in 2022-23, and these lessons were integrated into the updated program for Individuals Facing Multiple Barriers to Employment in 2023-24.

- Initiated a pilot program testing a new service approach with multidisciplinary support teams for children and youth with support needs and their families in Kelowna, Prince Rupert, Terrace and Smithers.
- Provided \$1.4 million annually for the After School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) in 22 school districts, serving 10,000 under-represented youth and 1,300 youth with designated disabilities in 2022-23.
- Announced \$750,000 in funding for B.C. filmmakers from equity-seeking groups, including people with disabilities.
- Collaborated with go2HR to provide free advisory services to tourism and hospitality businesses to improve accessibility and inclusivity in the sector.
- Partnered with Indigenous Tourism B.C. to support Indigenous-led, culturally focused training and educational opportunities for Indigenous tourism workers.
- Invested in 77 accessibility-related tourism projects and updated existing accessible tourism amenities in 2022-23.

Accessibility Feedback Tool

The Accessibility Feedback Tool (AFT) was launched in October 2022 and refined in July and October 2023 to add identity questions to help understand systemic and intersectional barriers particular groups experience in accessing government programs and services.

The tool provides an avenue for British Columbians to provide feedback about the barriers people with disabilities face in accessing government programs and services. Between October 2022 and March 2024, government has received 241 submissions. The Accessibility Directorate prepares quarterly AFT reports documenting the feedback received from the public submissions and shares it with impacted ministries.

Government uses the AFT data to identify and analyze barriers, share data, and work with partners to improve accessibility in B.C. As applicable, the feedback received through the tool is shared with relevant ministries.

In response to feedback received through the tool, ministries across government have adopted several policy and operational changes. For example, in response to inaccessible infrastructure and facilities, ministries have prioritized strategic investments in those areas for 2024-25, such as providing accessible toilet facilities.

Other ministries have drafted technical guidelines to ensure predictable and comfortable service delivery in public-facing offices, such as ensuring sufficient light and limiting noise and other distractions that can impede communication. In response to barriers around assistive technology supports, ministries have planned improvements to acquire new technology and provide more accessible service. Government has also worked to remove communication barriers by providing more methods for service delivery and implementing plain language resources and policies.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK on barriers received through the government's Accessibility Feedback Tool (AFT) is categorized in the following areas:

- Built Environment
- Delivery of Services
- Education
- Employment
- Health
- Housing
- Information & Communication
- Transportation

More information on these barriers is available on the Accessibility Feedback Tool webpage.

Part 4:

Accessibility Standards

Accessibility Standards Development

The Provincial Accessibility Committee (PAC) is developing two accessibility standards in the areas of Accessible Service Delivery and Employment Accessibility.

- The aim of the Accessible Service Delivery Standard is to ensure that events, activities, advice and the process of buying goods are provided in accessible ways that support the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- The aim of the Employment Accessibility Standard is to ensure that barriers throughout the employment lifecycle (hiring, training, retention, etc.) are identified, removed, and prevented.

These two standard areas were prioritized based on several principles, including that they are of general application and would address barriers for a broad cross-section of the disability community. There is also a precedent set by other provinces for the development of these standards. For example, Ontario and Manitoba both have standards in these two areas and Accessibility Standards Canada and Nova Scotia currently have standards in development in these areas.

This existing body of work allows us to build on experience, success and learnings to ensure that B.C. develops standards based on best practices.

The **PROVINCIAL ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE** is required by legislation to consult on the draft accessibility standards they develop before presenting final recommendations to the Minister responsible for the Act.

Indigenous Engagement

Throughout the development of the first two accessibility standards, the Accessibility Directorate has conducted ongoing consultation and engagement with Indigenous Peoples and partners. Specific commitments to consult and consider the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the development of accessibility standards are included in Sections 16 and 19 of the Accessible British Columbia Act and in action 4.9 of B.C.'s Declaration Act Action Plan 2022-2027.

As part of this commitment, government follows a distinctions-based approach and has contacted Indigenous rights holders and organizations on a roughly quarterly basis to provide updates on the development of standards. Government intends to continue engaging and consulting with Indigenous Peoples and partners as work continues.

B.C. Leadership to Advance National Collaboration on Accessibility

Government continues to work with other jurisdictions across Canada to co-ordinate efforts on to advance accessibility.

The Accessibility Directorate continues to work with Accessibility Standards Canada to co-ordinate and collaborate on accessibility mandates and objectives. Over the last year, they have held monthly meetings to share knowledge and best practices to reduce and eliminate duplication of resources and efforts, as well as to share updates and progress on accessibility initiatives.

The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction co-chairs the Pan-Canadian Forum on Accessibility Standards, which brings together officials from provinces and territories across Canada to develop a shared understanding of accessibility standards in the country and to co-ordinate efforts across jurisdictions.



The Accessibility Directorate also co-chairs the Federal-Provincial/Territorial (F-P/T) Open Forum on Accessibility, which serves as an information resource to share updates on accessibility in various jurisdictions and knowledge about accessibility around the world. Additionally, they were invited to join Canada’s delegation to the 16th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which took place from June 13 to June 15, 2023, at the United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York.

THE UN CONVENES AN ANNUAL EVENT

to discuss the implementation of the UNCRPD and provide learning opportunities for countries, civil society organizations, and disability rights experts on a variety of topics. B.C. was one of two provinces to attend as part of the Canadian delegation and will use learnings from the event to build accessibility within the province.

Appendix 1: Accessibility Plan Reporting 2022-23, 2023-24

This Appendix provides a detailed progress update on the implementation of AccessibleBC: B.C.'s Accessibility Plan 2022-23 – 2024-25 (the Plan). The update encompasses actions undertaken by 12 ministries and one agency across government to advance 37 commitments under each of the five AccessibleBC priority areas.

Priority 1: Creating a Culture of Accessibility

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>1.1 Apply a Gender Based Analysis plus lens (GBA+) to assess how diverse groups may experience government policies, programs, and initiatives.</p>	<p>FIN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensured policy branches have a GBA+ analysis procedure. ➤ Required that GBA+ must be considered in all Cabinet and Treasury Board submissions. ➤ Developed specialized training courses to support implementation.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>1.2 Deliver and encourage staff to participate in awareness-raising events, including AccessAbility Week (May/June), Disability Employment Awareness Month (September), Registered Disability Savings Plan Awareness Month (October), Indigenous Disability Awareness Month (November) and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3).</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported the delivery of accessible presentations and events on disability for over 1,600 public service employees. ➤ Published relevant articles to increase awareness.
<p>Ongoing</p>		
<p>1.3 Develop a Being Accessible Strategy to create awareness, foster a culture of accessibility, and enhance capacity for the Public Service Agency and agency representatives to deliver more accessible services.</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Initiated work on a refresh of the Where We All Belong, corporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which will contain accessibility initiatives aimed at fostering accessibility and enhancing capacity.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>1.4 Support accessibility leadership in the public service through the Employee Accessibility Advisory Council and the Accessibility Community of Practice. Members of these groups include public servants interested in staying current on best practices for accessibility and inclusivity.</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported the Employee Accessibility Advisory Council, which has 40 representatives from 14 ministries. ➤ Supported the co-ordination and delivery of several events each year to support leadership and learning around accessibility.
<p>Complete</p>		

Priority 2: Information and Communications

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>2.1(a) Increase the number of virtual service offerings for justice services.</p>	<p>AG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourages inclusive and accessible user engagement in research to develop and improve service delivery.
<p>Ongoing</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advanced and implemented several virtual service options.

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>2.1(b) Creation of a fully digital intake process for housing dispute resolution services between tenants and landlords.</p>	<p>HOUS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The virtual Dispute Management System was launched in March 2023. ➤ Residential Tenancy Branch launched interpretation services in more than 200 languages in 2023 to assist in making the dispute resolution process more accessible. ➤ With support from the Ministry of Citizens' Services, Residential Tenancy Branch revised its website content in 2023 to be more plain language and accessible to all parties.
<p style="text-align: center;">Complete</p>		<p>CITZ</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>2.3 Redesign government online public services and web pages to make them more streamlined and accessible. Make sure government websites meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, level AA.</p>	<p>CITZ</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developed a new website with improved accessibility, user experience and mobile optimization. ➤ Supported the development of a new emergency information website with improved accessibility, user experience and mobile optimization. ➤ Currently developing a web accessibility roadmap to support the development of accessible website features and content for all ministries.
<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Launched the BC Token system to allow users to access online services without the use of a mobile device that supports the BC Services Card application. ➤ Launched a new feature to support individuals who are not currently eligible for a BC Services Card to access critical services. ➤ Expanded the list of approved secondary IDs to include two Indigenous identity cards.
<p>2.4 Remove barriers to identity verification process of the BC Services Card, which provides access to government services for B.C. residents.</p>	<p>CITZ</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>2.5 Improve accessibility of public information about BC Parks, including reformatting and updating content to plain language.</p>	<p>ENV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved website accessibility by developing new website guidelines for BC Parks and updating existing content on bcparks.ca to comply with new standards.
<p>Ongoing</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased ways for the public to access information.
<p>2.6 Work with First Nations and local governments to improve the design of emergency plans to consider the needs of people with disabilities.</p>	<p>EMCR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Updated the program guide for Emergency Support Services to include a section on supporting vulnerable evacuees.
<p>Ongoing</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developed a survey to evaluate the emergency service needs of individuals who identified as having a disability.
<p>2.7 Modernize requirements for local governments' public notices so they reach the greatest number of people in their communities.</p>	<p>MUNI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendments to the local government public notice requirements brought into force in 2022.
<p>Complete</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Many local governments have adopted a public notice bylaw to reach more people.

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>2.8 Support the enhancement of public library collections by increasing the numbers and formats available and look for opportunities to improve access to libraries.</p>	<p>MUNI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strategic investments in 2020 and 2022 have resulted in a 10% increase in accessible titles through public libraries and increased borrowing of alternative format materials. ➤ 52 public library websites and the BC Summer Reading Club site were audited and refreshed to make them more accessible.
<p>Ongoing</p>		
<p>2.9 Improve the accessibility of the online My Self Serve portal used by people receiving income and disability assistance.</p>	<p>SDPR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Updated the system to allow recipients to add new information or correct a previous declaration and changed the monthly report requirement for recipients who qualify for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) and/or recipients who are in a special care facility. ➤ Upgraded kiosks located in client areas of ministry offices to improve accessibility. ➤ Streamlined the registration process for B.C. employment-obligated clients to access WorkBC Online Employment Services.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Priority 3: Buildings Infrastructure and Public Space

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>3.1 Continue to retrofit and enhance the accessibility of courthouses.</p>	<p>AG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved infrastructure accessibility at Cranbrook registry counter and in the Vernon Law Courts. ➤ Have accessibility enhancement projects ongoing at several other courthouses throughout the province.
<p>Ongoing</p>		
<p>3.2 Identify, prioritize, plan and implement investments to enhance the accessibility of government spaces.</p>	<p>CITZ</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Over \$200 million in strategic investments were made in government facilities in 2022-23. ➤ Invested \$17 million in accessibility improvements, specifically for emergency systems, washrooms, signage and wayfinding in 2022-23. In 2023-24, approximately \$4.6 million was invested in accessibility improvements in the same priority areas.
<p>Ongoing</p>		
<p>3.3 Work on accessibility upgrades in all front country parks and partner with community groups to purchase adaptive equipment.</p>	<p>ENV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continued investments to improve accessibility in frontcountry campgrounds and day use areas, including infrastructure, washrooms, and trails. ➤ Updating facility standards to ensure full accessibility at sites going forward.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>3.4 Continue working to incorporate accessibility criteria into procurement policies and practices.</p>	<p>FIN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drafted procurement policy to support equitable and accessible access. ➤ Drafted corporate solicitation templates with accessibility improvements, currently going through legal review. ➤ Worked with contractors to ensure front-line service to taxpayers is accessible in person, via phone and online. Additionally, implemented the use of assistive technology to support people who encounter communication barriers.
<p>Ongoing</p>		
<p>3.5 Provide support to people with disabilities to adapt their homes to improve accessibility through the BC Rebate for Accessible Home Adaptations.</p>	<p>HOUS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implemented the rebate program with an annual \$5 million budget, administered through BC Housing, to support accessibility adaptations in residential homes.
<p>Ongoing</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In 2021-22, there were 481 approved files. In 2022-23, there were 339 approved files.

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>3.6 Promote accessibility in buildings by having accessibility as an eligibility criterion to receive funding for capital projects under the grant programs for local governments and not-for-profit organizations.</p>	<p>MUNI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Accessibility is now an eligibility criterion for all publicly facing assets under capital grant programs. ➤ 93 approved projects with the Accessibility Facing Indicator (AFI) have met the Accessibility Met Indicator (AMI).
<p>Complete</p>		
<p>3.7 Work with local governments and the disability community to ensure the safe operation of shared mobility devices like electric scooters.</p>	<p>MOTI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduced changes to the Motor Vehicle Act to encourage more modes of transportation with a focus on protecting vulnerable road users. ➤ Continuation of e-mobility pilot project until 2028 to assess safety of e-mobility.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>3.8 Continue to provide funding for Indigenous and local governments to build more integrated and active transportation systems based on principles of universal design.</p>	<p>MOTI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Undertaking an integrated planning initiative to better align transportation and land use planning for accessibility and sustainability. ➤ Supporting an ongoing strategy to double the percentage of trips taken with active transport, with a focus on accessibility in designing active transportation services. ➤ Awarded \$24.8 million to Indigenous and local governments to cost share infrastructure projects to allow people access to safe travel paths throughout the year.
<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>		<p>PSSG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Integrated accessibility considerations in planning and designing community corrections offices, establishing new correctional centres, and renovating and upgrading existing correctional centres.
<p>3.9 Incorporate contemporary design and accessibility improvements when renovating or replacing outdated B.C. Corrections facilities. For example, the Nanaimo Correctional Centre Replacement Project is expected to be completed in 2024.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>		

Priority 4: Employment in the BC Public Service

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>4.1 Implement “Where We All Belong”, our three-year diversity and inclusion strategy to ensure the public service is reflective of the province and inclusive of Indigenous Peoples, minority communities, immigrants, persons with disabilities, and the LGBTQ2S+ community.</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developed new corporate learning opportunities on accessibility and inclusive hiring. ➤ Enhanced benefit plan to better support a diverse array of employee experience. ➤ Embedded accountability for creating inclusive workplaces through mandate letters and performance feedback.
<p>Complete</p>		
<p>4.2 Create a centralized system to better support hiring managers and job applicants of the B.C. Public Service with respect to accessibility and accommodation.</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developing recruitment management tools with an accessibility lens. ➤ Exploring a tool to support accommodations for supervisors and employees.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to Date
<p>4.3 Provide learning, coaching, and mentorship to employees who face barriers to help them achieve gainful employment through the Work-Able Internship Program. Work-Able is a 12-month paid internship with the B.C. Public Service for recent (within the last three years) post-secondary graduates who self-identify as having a disability.</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported the Work-Able internship, which has placed over 148 interns in over 19 ministries. ➤ Developed resources for supervisors and mentors to build their capacity around disability and accommodations. ➤ Delivered learning opportunities to interns about job searching and career development.
<p>Complete</p>		
<p>4.4 Outreach to disability service organizations to promote jobs within the B.C. Public Service.</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prioritized outreach to equity-deserving groups, with 13 scheduled events between 2023-24. ➤ Completed research on other accessibility organizations that offer employment services.
<p>Complete</p>		
<p>4.5 Review and, where needed, update current policy and procedures respecting the duty to accommodate and other accompanying human rights obligations and ensure training and support is available for staff and hiring managers.</p>	<p>PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engaged with ministries across government to improve the provision of ergonomic furniture for people with disabilities in the public service. ➤ Engaged with ministries to improve the provision of assistive technologies for people with disabilities in the public service.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Priority 5: Delivery of Goods and Services

Action	Ministry	Progress to date
<p>5.1 Modernize the suite of programs administered by StudentAid BC to address barriers for learners with disabilities to access post-secondary education.</p>	<p>PSFS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revised StudentAid BC Accessibility Program policy to address inequity. ➤ Increased the amount of the Learning Disability Assessment Bursary. ➤ Continued and expanded the Program for Institutional Loan of Assistive Technology.
Ongoing		
<p>5.2 Introduce family connections centres to allow families to have accessible and inclusive services for children and youth with support needs without a referral or diagnosis.</p>	<p>MCFD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Initiated a pilot program testing a new service approach for children and youth with support needs and their families in Kelowna, Prince Rupert, Terrace and Smithers. ➤ The centres provide a range of services delivered by multidisciplinary teams and can be accessed without the involvement of MCFD.
Ongoing		
<p>5.3 Redesign the Specialized Homes and Support Services initiative to improve access to key prevention and early intervention support for children and youth, including respite, low-barrier stabilization, emergency care, and long-term specialized care.</p>	<p>MCFD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developing a new approach to delivering services and care to children and youth. ➤ Currently conducting a public engagement to inform new systems and approaches for supporting children and youth with support needs.
Ongoing		

Action	Ministry	Progress to date
<p>5.4 Continue to deliver Workforce Development Agreement programs to provide accessibility supports, adaptive technology, and other means for overcoming barriers to participation of people with disabilities in either training or employment.</p>	<p>SDPR PSFS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Skills Training for Employment and Skilled Trades BC Apprenticeship Program initiated programs in 2022-23 targeted towards people with disabilities. ➤ The lessons learned from these programs will be integrated into the programs for members of equity-deserving groups. ➤ People with disabilities are eligible for a range of tailored interventions to help them find and keep a job, including the provision of employment-related disability supports, such as adaptive equipment and computer software.
<p>Ongoing</p>		
<p>5.5 Invest in tourism training grants to provide greater access to post-secondary and trades training opportunities for students. Applications from under-represented groups will be prioritized: Indigenous, immigrant or refugee students, students in rural or remote locations, and students with accessibility needs.</p>	<p>TACS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partnered with Indigenous Tourism B.C. to support Indigenous-led, culturally focused training and educational opportunities for Indigenous tourism workers.
<p>Ongoing</p>		

Action	Ministry	Progress to date
<p>5.6 Continue to support people with disabilities working across all sectors of B.C.'s creative economy, for example through weighted criteria and prioritization in funding allocations for Amplify BC's programs.</p>	<p>TACS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported Creative BC in developing the Creative Equity Roadmap, which provides resources to support the inclusion of people with disabilities within the film industry.
Ongoing		
<p>5.7 Increase access to funding for emerging and equity-deserving B.C. filmmakers, including people with disabilities through the Equity and Emerging Development Program.</p>	<p>TACS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Announced \$750,000 in funding for B.C. filmmakers from equity-deserving groups, including people with disabilities (through the Equity and Emerging Development Program).
Ongoing		
<p>5.8 Continue the After School Sport and Arts Initiative which provides free sport, physical activity, and creative arts opportunities for students who face barriers to participation through dedicated accessibility funding.</p>	<p>TACS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provided \$1.4 million annually for the After School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) in 22 school districts. ➤ In 2022-23, 10,000 under-represented youth participated in ASSAI, including 1,300 youth with designated disabilities.
Ongoing		

Action	Ministry	Progress to date
<p>5.9 Promote B.C. as an inclusive and welcoming destination for everyone through the Strategic Framework for Tourism in B.C. The framework supports the tourism industry in creating or adapting tourism products, services and experiences that are inclusive and accessible to everyone.</p>	<p>TACS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Invested in upgrading existing and developing new accessibility-related tourism projects in 2022-23. ➤ Provided accessibility information about travel-related amenities, attractions and experiences. ➤ Provided tools and resources to help tourism businesses become more accessible and inclusive.
<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>		<p>5.10 Work closely with Destination BC and industry partners including go2HR to address labour shortages in the tourism industry by promoting the hiring of persons with disabilities, new immigrants, youth, and vulnerable populations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>		

Accessibility Feedback Tool

Feedback received through the Accessibility Feedback Tool is shared with the relevant ministry involved. Ministries have discretion on how they respond to feedback. In some instances, ministries have proactively reported changes they made in response to the feedback received.

Ministry	Public Feedback	Action
ENV	Concerns regarding a lack of accessible washroom facilities in a certain area.	➤ In response to the feedback, the ministry prioritized upgrading toilet facilities to meet an accessible standard, outlined in the 2024-2025 Accessible Infrastructure Project.
CITZ	Concerns regarding the built environment and service delivery at a public-facing service office.	➤ In response, the ministry has initiated a facilities improvement strategy and new technical standards for in-person facilities.
CITZ	Concerns around lack of accessibility when public service staff required assistive technology and related supports.	➤ The ministry conducted an investigation. Due in part to accessibility barriers, these services were delivered by a new provider as of spring 2024, with new policies for providing assistive technology.
CITZ	Meeting rooms do not have accessible meeting technology.	➤ Request initiated and awaiting updates necessary for implementation.
EMCR	Information and services regarding emergency management are not accessible.	➤ Changes recently made to emergency information and service supports address the barriers raised.
PSA	Concerns around a lack of accessible ways to access supports.	➤ The service provider has expanded the ways people can access the services.

Ministry	Public Feedback	Action
PSA	Concerns around a lack of information regarding particular disabilities.	➤ In response to the concern, the ministry is actively developing new materials to improve awareness and education around this topic.
PSA	Concerns regarding unclear or exclusionary language in communicating with prospective applicants.	➤ This was previously identified as an area of change and updated training and resources are being developed to address these barriers.
PSSG	Concerns regarding a lack of awareness and inaccessible information regarding the Guide and Service Dog Act.	➤ The resources identified in the feedback have been recently updated to meet accessibility standards. The ministry also identified ongoing efforts to educate and inform service providers and the public about the Guide and Service Dog Act.





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