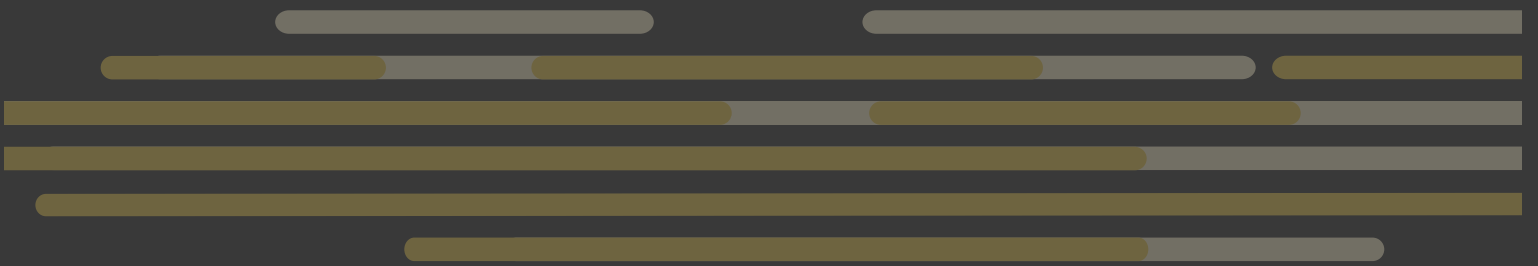


# AccessibleBC: B.C.'s Accessibility Plan

2022/23–2024/25





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# Message from the Premier



Our government is taking action to create a more accessible and inclusive British Columbia. More physical, virtual, and attitudinal barriers need to be removed. Our province is better when everyone, regardless of ability, is able to participate fully.

AccessibleBC builds on our government's longstanding commitment to a diverse province that works for everyone. It complements existing government priorities, such as the commitment to inclusive economic growth in StrongerBC, the government's economic plan.

AccessibleBC is a significant advance in our ongoing work to implement our province’s new accessibility act. We know there is still more to do. The proposed actions in this plan give us a starting point. We will adapt these priorities as we hear from people. In the spirit of **“Nothing About Us Without Us,”** we will continue to work with people with disabilities and the broader community to ensure the lived experience of people is at the heart of our work.



John Horgan  
Premier of British Columbia



# Message from the Minister

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The Accessible B.C. Act was the first bill I introduced in the Legislature following my appointment as Minister. I was so pleased to see this important bill come into force June 17, 2021. The new law provides the legal framework by which government, in partnership with people with disabilities and the broader community, will continue to work to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in B.C.

We know the goals of this new Act can only be achieved if government and community continue to work together to realize a more accessible and inclusive future. That's why I am pleased to introduce AccessibleBC, government's accessibility plan for 2022-2025. Along with our work to establish government's new Provincial Accessibility Committee, and our ongoing work to improve channels for people to provide feedback to

government about accessibility, this plan outlines how government ministries will seek to continue to embed a commitment to accessibility into their work. AccessibleBC is a step forward, but we know there is still much to do. While this plan sets out high-level priorities for advancing accessibility, it will be critical that we continue to listen to the voices of people with disabilities to shape and guide our work.

While it's important that government lead the way, we also want to ensure that our shared work to make B.C. a more inclusive and accessible province extends beyond the work of core government. That's why effective September 1, 2022, hundreds of other public sector organizations will be required to establish accessibility committees, accessibility plans and an accessibility feedback tool. From local governments to educational institutions, from police forces to Health Authorities and beyond, this means that many of our most important public institutions will be coordinated with core government in its work to address barriers over the coming years.

In closing, I thank the members of our new Provincial Accessibility Committee for the valuable advice and input they have provided and will continue to provide, the dedicated public servants who have helped to coordinate the development of AccessibleBC, and the people around the province whose advice and input is helping to guide and shape our vision for a truly accessible and inclusive future.



Nicholas Simons  
Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction





# Message from Provincial Accessibility Committee Co-Chairs

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We are thrilled to introduce AccessibleBC, government's accessibility plan for 2022-2025. As the inaugural co-chairs of B.C.'s Provincial Accessibility Committee, it is an honour to support B.C.'s efforts to become a more accessible and inclusive province.

We want to acknowledge and extend our gratitude to our fellow Provincial Accessibility Committee members. Every member brings diverse perspectives that are founded in their own lived experience of barriers as well as their experience supporting others in the disability community. The lived experience of people with disabilities across our province is immensely varied and, in addition to the advice of the Provincial Accessibility Committee, we know that it is critical that government continues to seek input from people with disabilities around the province as work to implement the Accessible B.C. Act progresses.

Members of the Provincial Accessibility Committee, ourselves included, are used to living in a world that was not built with us in mind. Whether it's a building that has stairs rather than a ramp, a bus stop a blind person cannot distinguish from a municipal sign, an official broadcast that is not translated to American Sign Language, a policy that is not explained in plain language, or any of the many other barriers people with disabilities encounter every day. The work being done to implement the Accessible BC Act keeps us moving in the right direction, but there is still so much more to do. We look forward with a sense of optimism but we also know that the vision of a more accessible and inclusive future will only be realized through our shared effort and determination.



Spring Hawes



Dan Coulter



# Annual Implementation Report 2021/22



Section 6 of the Accessible B.C. Act (the Act) requires the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to publish an annual report that describes the actions taken each fiscal year by the minister and the Provincial Accessibility Committee to implement the *Act* and its regulations.

The following information summarizes the steps to implement the Act and other actions by the Accessibility Directorate in 2021/22.

## Accessibility Directorate

In Fall 2021, government established the Accessibility Directorate, the team responsible to work across government and with people with disabilities and the broader community to implement the Act.

## **Provincial Accessibility Committee**

On December 3, 2021, the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction appointed 11 individuals as the first members of the Provincial Accessibility Committee. Membership seeks to reflect the diversity of British Columbians and includes people with disabilities, individuals from organizations that support people with disabilities, people of colour, and Indigenous representatives.

The committee will meet at least four times a year. In 2021/22, the committee met in January and March of 2022. Jointly chaired by Dan Coulter, Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility, and Spring Hawes, the committee's work will include advising government on the implementation of the Act, helping government prioritize accessibility standards and overseeing the process of developing standards in areas such as employment, education, transportation, and customer service.

## **Government's Feedback Mechanism**

As part of the work to implement the Act, government is developing a feedback mechanism for individuals to bring attention to barriers encountered in accessing government services. This new feedback mechanism

will help government in its work to identify and address barriers to the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in the province.

The Accessibility Directorate will work with the Provincial Accessibility Committee and other government partners to facilitate robust user testing before the feedback mechanism is launched.

Government aims to introduce the new feedback mechanism in Fall 2022. Once operational, the feedback received will help government in making its services more accessible and inform future accessibility plans. In the interim people can provide comments at ***accessibility@gov.bc.ca***.

## **Government's Accessibility Plan**

In 2021/22, the Accessibility Directorate worked with the Provincial Accessibility Committee and with ministries across government to develop the first government accessibility plan 2022/23-2024/25.

## **Accessible B.C. Regulation**

The Accessibility Directorate consulted and engaged with over 800 public sector organizations and Indigenous partners from August to October 2021 to assess the

preparedness of public sector organizations to comply with Part 3 of the Act.

Beginning September 1, 2022, more than 750 public sector organizations have at least one year to establish an accessibility committee, an accessibility plan and a public feedback mechanism.

Government has provided \$3 million to support organizations in meeting legal requirements to achieve compliance. Funding will be administered by Disability Alliance BC.

## **Recognition of AccessAbility Week**

AccessAbility Week promotes inclusion and accessibility, while also celebrating the people in the disability community who are working to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility.

In 2021, the province proclaimed May 30 to June 5, 2021, as AccessAbility week, which coincided with National AccessAbility Week and National Indigenous AccessAbility Week.

As part of AccessAbility Week, government announced funding of \$500,000 in grants to be distributed by Disability Alliance BC for community-based accessibility projects.

In December 2021, 15 applicants received grants ranging from \$10,500 to \$40,000, depending on the size and scope of the project to promote accessibility. Funded projects ranged from art instruction and movement therapy to emergency response plans and bicycle programs for the deaf and hard of hearing.

In 2022, government adopted a regulation under the Accessible B.C. Act to prescribe the week for AccessAbility week starting on the last Sunday in May and commencing in 2022. This aligns with National AccessAbility Week under the Accessible Canada Act and with National Indigenous AccessAbility Week.

## **Preliminary work to prepare for the development of accessibility standards**

In March 2022, members of the Provincial Accessibility Committee discussed how to prioritize the development of accessibility standards. Their input will inform the Minister's decision on the sequencing of standards.

## Work with Advisory Committees

In 2021/22, the Accessibility Directorate supported the work of the following advisory committees:

- **Presidents Group:** A network of business leaders who are champions for more inclusive workplaces. They provide tools to employers to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- **Registered Disability Savings Plan Action Group:** The group works to increase long-term financial security for people with disabilities through uptake of the Registered Disability Savings Plan.
- **COVID-19 Disability Working Group:** A group of people with disabilities and disability advocates. The group provided expert advice and potential solutions during the pandemic. It is now disbanded.





# Introduction to B.C.'s Accessibility Plan

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The Government of British Columbia is committed to being an inclusive province for all who live here. There are over 926,000 people living with some sort of disability in B.C. In June 2021, the Accessible B.C. Act became law and established a legal framework to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to the full and equal participation of people with disabilities. The new legislation is a significant step in the journey to becoming a truly accessible province.

Under the Accessible B.C. Act, the government is required to develop an accessibility plan and to update it at least once every three years. This plan was developed through cross-government collaboration and consultation with the Provincial Accessibility Committee. The committee will continue to provide advice to government as work to implement the plan progresses.

Accessibility principles that were considered during the development of this plan include: inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design. These fundamental principles will also guide the Provincial Accessibility Committee as work to develop proposed accessibility standards begins.



## Spotlight: What are examples of barriers to accessibility?

**Attitudinal:** when people think and act based upon false assumptions, such as:

- Making decisions about people with disabilities without including them
- Not believing that a person with a disability can contribute to the workforce

**Physical:** when obstacles in an environment make access difficult, such as:

- Hosting inaccessible events or meeting spaces
- A washroom with an accessible stall but no automatic door opener

**Information or communication:** when people with disabilities are excluded because they use other ways to communicate, such as:

- Using small print or not providing large-print versions of material
- Videos, events, or meetings that do not have closed captions

**Systemic:** when an organization's policies, practices or procedures result in exclusion, such as:

- Not providing an American Sign Language interpreter or closed captioning
- Requiring a driver's licence for a job that could be reorganized to use another form of transportation

**Technology:** when technology can't be accessed by people with disabilities, such as:

- Websites, documents, or databases that are not accessible for screen readers
- Website graphs and charts that are posted without text to explain them

**Sensory:** when sensory information such as lights, sounds, smells, etc. prevent participation in the environment, such as:

- Co-workers wearing perfume in the workplace
- Use of fluorescent lighting in the workplace

# Actions to Date

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The Government of British Columbia has a long-standing commitment to accessibility, diversity, and inclusion. Accessibility is an ongoing journey and over the last few years, we have taken a number of actions to make government services more accessible, including the following:

- Provided funding to 20 public post-secondary institutions and to service delivery partners in 2021 to support the success of learners with disabilities. [Lead: Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training]
- Launched Connecting British Columbia program to help pay for the infrastructure required to deliver high-speed internet connectivity to rural and remote areas. [Lead: Ministry of Citizens' Services]
- Launched the Accessibility and Inclusion Toolkit to serve as a key resource that provides step-by step instructions to government staff on how to create accessible digital content like websites, reports, and presentations. [Lead: Ministry of Citizens' Services]

- Developed the Social Stewardship Policy and the Buildings for People Program working with the Rick Hansen Foundation to remove barriers in provincial government buildings and increase inclusivity. [Lead: Ministry of Citizens' Services]
- Provided paid internship with the BC Public Service for recent post-secondary graduates who self-identify as having a disability (Work-Able Internship Program). [Lead: Public Service Agency]
- Increased funding by \$10-million per year for medical benefits under the At Home Program, which provides medical equipment for children and youth with complex care needs. [Lead: Ministry of Children and Family Development]
- Expanded access to Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs to enable inclusive child care for approximately 2,000 additional children. [Lead: Ministries of Children and Family Development and Education and Child Care]
- Launched the Inclusive Child Care Toolkit, a user-friendly resource intended to support high-quality, inclusive practices in child care settings throughout British Columbia. [Lead: Ministry of Education and Child Care]

- Launched the Foundations of Inclusive Child Care Training, an online 20-hour course available free of charge to child care providers to support increased capacity for inclusive child care. [Lead: Ministry of Education and Child Care]
- Improved the accessibility of Employment Standards Branch offices in Langley, Victoria, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Prince George and Richmond. Improvements included automated door openers and lowered height of front counter desks. [Lead: Ministry of Labour]
- Enhanced public access rights and protections for people using a guide or service dog through legislative amendments. [Lead: Public Safety and Solicitor General]
- Improved the accessibility of supports and services offered to people on disability assistance from a Deaf and Hard of Hearing perspective. [Lead: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction]
- Increased investments in accessible tourism resulting in over 100 new or upgraded accessible tourism amenities since 2020 across the province. [Lead: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport]

## Spotlight on COVID-19

Since March 2020, government has introduced measures in response to COVID-19 that are helping British Columbians with disabilities remain informed, supported and connected with others when they are seeking services. Here are some examples:

- Provided temporary income supplements for recipients of income and disability assistance. [Lead: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction]
- Supported the expanded use of virtual meeting technology (e.g., Zoom) to improve the province's ability to deliver virtual services during COVID-19 and beyond. [all ministries]
- Established a Mental Health School Start-up Working Group in partnership with the BC Centre for Disease Control to identify the impacts of the pandemic on K-12 education and developed a supporting resource for schools. [Lead: Ministry of Education and Child Care]



## **Spotlight on StrongerBC: A Plan for Today, a Vision for Tomorrow**

Released in early 2022, the StrongerBC Economic Plan is B.C.'s long-term plan to build an economy that works for all. The plan sets out to help fill one million jobs over the next 10 years by investing in skills training, building resilient communities and positioning B.C. as a world leader in a low-carbon economy.

The plan builds off the province's strong economic recovery and moves B.C. forward by setting out to tackle two of the province's biggest challenges – inequality and climate change.

By setting out to tackle inequality, the Province is supporting people and families across a range of initiatives to make life better and more secure. This plan will ensure household incomes will go further and those traditionally under-represented will have the supports needed for more opportunities in the workplace and our communities.

One of the missions under the plan is Supporting People and Families. That means:

- Investing in people and families to make life more accessible and affordable
- Delivering accessible services - like health care and child care
- Expanding accessible opportunities for education and training

A second mission, Building Resilient Communities, means:

- Helping communities thrive with modern, accessible infrastructure resilient to changes in the climate and the economy
- Building affordable, accessible housing, new schools and hospitals
- Making sure every community in B.C. has access to high-speed internet

## **Spotlight on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan**

In March 2022, the Government released B.C.'s five-year action plan to implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. This plan outlines the long-term vision to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation led the development of this plan in partnership with Indigenous peoples. The goals, outcomes and actions in this plan are the result of the extensive consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples.

All of government shares responsibility for the 89 actions in this plan. Among the actions is to support the identification, prevention, and removal of barriers for Indigenous persons with disabilities as part of the implementation of the Accessible British Columbia Act. This includes ensuring that the development of accessibility standards considers the rights recognized and affirmed by the U.N. Declaration.

## Spotlight on other government plans

Many other government initiatives complement the work underway to address accessibility barriers. Other relevant cross-government initiatives include:

- **TogetherBC:** B.C.'s first-ever poverty reduction strategy introduced in 2019 with targets to reduce both overall poverty and child poverty.
- **Where We All Belong: Diversity and Inclusion Strategy:** Where We All Belong seeks to ensure the B.C. Public Service is reflective of our province and inclusive of Indigenous peoples, minority communities, immigrants, persons with disabilities and the LGBTQ2S+ community.
- **Clean BC's Active Transportation Strategy:** The Active Transportation Strategy seeks to promote active transportation networks that are safe, accessible, and convenient for all.
- **A Pathway to Hope (Mental Health and Addictions Strategy):** A Pathway to Hope establishes a roadmap for making mental health and addictions care better for people in B.C.

# Moving Forward: Our Priorities for 2022/25

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This section lists government priorities for increasing accessibility from 2022/23 to 2024/25. In the spirit of ‘nothing about us without us’ government is committed to working in collaboration with people with disabilities and the Provincial Accessibility Committee to ensure that these priorities are aligned with the lived experience of people with disabilities.



## Priority 1: Creating a Culture of Accessibility and Inclusion

We will continue to work with partners across the province to increase awareness about accessibility and the Accessible B.C. Act, and to build capacity within government to foster a culture of inclusion to challenge the attitudinal barriers people with disabilities face.

Priorities include:

- Apply a Gender Based Analysis plus (GBA+) lens to assess how diverse groups may experience government policies, programs, and initiatives. [Lead: Ministry of Finance]

## Spotlight on the Gender Equity Office

- Gender equity is about removing barriers that stop people from reaching their full potential. Too often, women and gender diverse people experience unfairness. This is especially true when they also struggle with injustices and systemic oppression, including poverty, racism, ableism and/or homophobia and transphobia.
- When all British Columbians – regardless of their gender, race, class, sexual orientation or ability – can reach their full potential, our communities and economy are stronger, better places for everyone.
- The Gender Equity Office:
  - Ensures government’s commitment to gender equality is reflected in government’s budgets, policies, and programs.
  - Acts as the government’s liaison for organizations concerned with gender equality and the advancement of women.

- 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). [Lead: Public Service Agency]
- 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. [Lead: Public Service Agency]
- 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. [Lead: Public Service Agency and Ministry of Citizens' Services]



## Priority 2: Information and Communications

Designing webpages that cannot be read by screen readers or not having information available in American Sign Language (ASL) are examples of barriers to accessibility. We will take steps to ensure persons with disabilities can receive and understand information and communications delivered by the Government of British Columbia. Priorities include:

- Increase the number of virtual service offerings for justice (e.g., access to the Virtual Indigenous Justice Centre for Indigenous communities) and housing-related services (e.g., creation of a fully digital intake process for housing dispute resolution services between tenants and landlords). [Lead: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing]
- Funding partnership with the Government of Canada to connect all remaining rural households in the province to high-speed Internet by 2027. [Lead: Ministry of Citizens' Services]

- Redesign government online public services and webpages to make them more streamlined and accessible. Make sure government websites meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, level AA. [Lead: Ministry of Citizens' Services]
- Remove barriers to identity verification process of the BC services card, which provides access to government services for B.C. residents. [Lead: Ministry of Citizens' Services]
- Improve accessibility of public information about BC Parks, including reformatting and updating content to plain language. [Lead: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy]
- Modernize requirements for local governments' public notices so they reach the greatest number of people in their communities. [Lead: Ministry of Municipal Affairs]
- Support the enhancement of public library collections by increasing the numbers and formats available and look for opportunities to improve access to libraries. [Lead: Ministry of Municipal Affairs]
- Work with First Nations and local governments to improve the design of emergency plans to consider

the needs of people with disabilities. [Lead: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General: Emergency Management BC]

- Improve the accessibility of the online My Self Serve portal used by people receiving income and disability assistance. [Lead: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction]

## Priority 3: Buildings, Infrastructure and Public Spaces

Lack of curb cuts, automatic door openers, elevators or dim lighting can make buildings hard to navigate for people with disabilities. We will continue working to make government buildings, offices, and public spaces more accessible. Priorities include:



## Spotlight on public engagement about accessibility in the BC Building Code

- The Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing is leading work on the next version of the BC Building Code, working with the Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility to ensure that it includes changes that will make new buildings more accessible for all people.
- In Fall 2021, government conducted an 11-week public engagement to seek feedback on accessibility barriers and opportunities to inform development of proposed BC Building Code accessibility requirements.
- Government will continue to work with industry representatives, partners, and the public to develop harmonized and enhanced accessibility requirements for national and provincial buildings codes.
- We will seek feedback on proposed accessibility code changes and will also coordinate education outreach to industry professionals to support implementation of new code requirements.

- Continue to retrofit and enhance the accessibility of courthouses. [Lead: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing]
- Provide support to people with disabilities to adapt their homes to improve accessibility through the BC Rebate for Accessible Home Adaptations. [Lead: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing]
- Identify, prioritize, plan and implement investments to enhance the accessibility of government spaces. Improved access to washrooms and inclusivity will be a focus of this work. [Lead: Ministry of Citizens' Services]
- Work on accessibility upgrades in all front country parks and partner with community groups to purchase adaptive equipment (e.g., Trail Riders, Mobi-Mats, handcycles or adaptive kayaks). [Lead: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy]
- Continue working to incorporate accessibility criteria into procurement policies and practices. [Lead: Ministry of Finance]

- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Municipal Affairs]
- Incorporate contemporary design and accessibility improvements when renovating or replacing outdated BC Corrections' facilities. For example, the Nanaimo Correctional Centre Replacement Project is expected to be completed in 2024. [Lead: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General]
- Work with local governments and the disability community to ensure the safe operation of shared mobility devices like electric scooters. [Lead: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure]
- Continue to provide funding for Indigenous and local governments to build more integrated and active transportation systems based on principles of universal design. [Lead: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure]

## Priority 4: Employment in the B.C. Public Service

The people working in the B.C. Public Service should reflect the diversity of British Columbians. We will continue our commitment to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to employment with the Government of British Columbia. This applies to both people with disabilities seeking a career within the government and existing employees with disabilities.

- Implement “Where We All Belong”, our 3-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.  
[Lead: Public Service Agency]
- Create a centralized system to better support hiring managers and job applicants of the B.C. Public Service with respect to accessibility and accommodation.  
[Lead: Public Service Agency]

- 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. [Lead: Public Service Agency]
- Outreach to disability-service organizations to promote jobs within the B.C. Public Service. [Lead: Public Service Agency]
- Review and, where needed, update current policy and procedures respecting the duty to accommodate and other accompanying human rights obligations. Ensure training and support is available for staff and hiring managers. [Lead: Public Service Agency]

## **Priority 5: Delivery of Goods and Services**

Over 926,000 people in British Columbia have some sort of disability. The B.C. government will continue to advance policies, procedures, and tools to ensure people with disabilities have equitable access to goods and services delivered by the Government of B.C.



- Modernize the suite of programs administered by StudentAid BC to address barriers for learners with disabilities to access post-secondary education. These programs provide eligible students with financial assistance, assistive services and equipment, and targeted institution support programs. [Lead: Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training]
- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Children and Family Development]
- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Children and Family Development]
- 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. This includes WorkBC Employment Services, Community and Employer Partnerships, the Annual Earnings Exemption, the Skills Training for Employment

Persons with Disabilities program, and the Industry Training Authority's pre-apprenticeship program. [Lead: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction and Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training].

- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport]
- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport]
- Increase access to funding for emerging and equity-seeking B.C. filmmakers, including people with disabilities through the Equity and Emerging Development Program. [Lead: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport]

- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport]
- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport]
- 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. [Lead: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport]

# Conclusion

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Bringing the Accessible B.C. Act into law in 2021 shows our government's commitment to accessibility. However, in many ways, this legislation represents the start of a much larger process and marks the next step in building an inclusive province that works for all of us.

The importance of government leading the way was something we heard loud and clear during our public consultations in 2019. AccessibleBC shows how government is working towards the goal of a truly inclusive and accessible B.C. over the next three years. As new priorities emerge we will adapt.

We're committed to support the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in their communities. Our government looks forward to engaging with you in the months and years ahead as we continue our work to build a barrier-free B.C.

# Appendix 1: Summary of Priorities

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## Priority 1: Creating a Culture of Accessibility and Inclusion

- Apply a Gender Based Analysis plus (GBA+) lens across government
- Deliver and encourage staff to participate in awareness-raising events on accessibility
- Develop a Being Accessible Strategy to foster a culture of accessibility and enhance capacity for the Public Service Agency
- Support accessibility leadership in the public service

## Priority 2: Information and Communications

- Increase the number of virtual service offerings for justice and housing-related services
- Connect all remaining rural households in the province to high-speed Internet by 2027
- Redesign government online public services and webpages to make them more streamlined and accessible
- Remove barriers to identity verification process of the BC services card
- Improve accessibility of public information about BC Parks
- Modernize requirements for local governments' public notices
- Improve access to libraries and support enhancing library collections
- Ensure that emergency plans include the needs of people with disabilities
- Improve the accessibility of the online My Self Serve portal

## Priority 3: Buildings, Infrastructure and Public Spaces

- Continue to retrofit and enhance the accessibility of courthouses
- Provide support to people with disabilities to adapt their homes to improve accessibility
- Enhance the accessibility of government spaces whenever possible
- Work on accessibility upgrades in BC Parks' front country parks
- Incorporate accessibility criteria into procurement policies and practices
- Have accessibility as an eligibility criterion for local governments and not-for-profit organizations to receive funding
- Incorporate contemporary design and accessibility improvements for B.C. Corrections' facilities
- Ensure the safe operation of shared mobility devices, like e-scooters
- Build more integrated and active transportation systems based on principles of universal design

## **Priority 4: Employment in the B.C. Public Service**

- Implement “Where We All Belong”, our 3-year Diversity and Inclusion strategy
- Create a centralized system to better support hiring managers and job applicants of the B.C. Public Service with respect to accessibility and accommodation
- Provide learning, coaching, and mentorship to employees with disabilities through the Work-Able Internship Program
- Outreach to disability-service organizations to promote jobs within the B.C. Public Service
- Review and update current policy and procedures respecting the duty to accommodate

## **Priority 5: Delivery of Goods and Services**

- Modernize the suite of programs administered by StudentAid BC to address barriers for learners with disabilities to access post-secondary education



- Introduce family connections centres in early 2023 to allow families to have accessible and inclusive services for children and youth with support needs
- Redesign the Specialized Homes and Support Services initiative to improve access to key prevention and early intervention support for the safety and well-being of children and youth
- Provide accessibility supports, adaptive technology, and other means for overcoming barriers to participation of people with disabilities in either training or employment
- Support people with disabilities working across all sectors of B.C.'s creative economy
- Increase access to funding for emerging and equity-seeking B.C. filmmakers
- Provide free sport, physical activity, and creative arts opportunities for students who face barriers
- Promote B.C. as an inclusive and welcoming destination for everyone through the Strategic Framework for Tourism in B.C.
- Promote the hiring of persons with disabilities to address labour shortages in the tourism industry
- Provide better access to tourism training grants for students

# Appendix 2: Implementation Timeline

	Year 1	Year 5	Year 10
<b>Culture Change</b>	Awareness, collaboration and capacity building initiatives with stakeholders and the public		
<b>Requirements for the B.C. Government</b>	Build tool to provide feedback to government		
	Develop Government's accessibility plan	Second Government accessibility plan released	Third Government accessibility plan released
	Develop regulations prescribing organizations		
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	Establish the Provincial Accessibility Committee		
		Government Annual Report released every year	First Independent Review
			Government Annual Report released every year
<b>Standards Development</b>		Compliance and Enforcement	
	Develop First Standard	Implementation - (Phased approach)	
	Develop Second Standard	Develop Third Standard	Develop Fourth Standard
		Implementation - (Phased approach)	
		Develop Fifth Standard	Develop Sixth Standard
		Implement - (Phased approach)	Implement - (Phased approach)
		Develop Seventh Standard	Develop Eighth Standard
		Implementation - (Phased approach)	



