



ATSSC Accessibility Plan for 2026 to 2029

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ATSSC·SCDATA

Service Excellence / L'excellence en service

Canada

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This document is available on the Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada website at:
<http://www.canada.ca/en/administrative-tribunals-support-service.html>

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

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Message from the Chief Administrator

On behalf of the Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada (ATSSC), we are proud to present the ATSSC Accessibility Plan for 2026 to 2029. This plan builds on the strong foundation established through our previous work and reaffirms our unwavering commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable workplace where everyone can participate fully. It also highlights our contribution to advancing a barrier-free Canada.

The *Accessible Canada Act* requires organizations to publish accessibility plans that identify barriers in certain areas and that explain how they will remove and prevent those barriers. The ATSSC Accessibility Plan for 2026 to 2029 sets out clear and actionable measures we are taking to identify, remove and prevent barriers through the establishment of an Accessibility Key—a simple and consistent way to ensure disabilities and potential barriers are considered by default throughout our operations.

These measures—which resulted from input from different working groups, surveys and findings from the employment system review—will enhance accessibility and ensure that our programs, practices and services meet the highest standards of inclusivity.

Our approach emphasizes the integration of accessibility into our culture, tools, systems and day-to-day operations. The plan aligns with the 3 strategic pillars established in our 2025 to 2030 Strategic Plan: tribunal leadership engagement, operational and service excellence and empowering our people.

Through informed and conscientious actions, the ATSSC will continue to balance our internal commitments to staff and operations with our external responsibility to Canadians seeking access to justice through the organizations we serve. Together, we are building a future where accessibility is embedded in everything we do.

Orlando Da Silva, LSM
Chief Administrator

General

About the Accessible Canada Act

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) recognizes the existing human rights framework that supports equality for people with disabilities in Canada. This includes:

- the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
- the *Canadian Human Rights Act*
- Canada's commitments as a State Party to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

The ACA builds on this framework through a proactive and systemic approach to identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility.

Purpose of the ACA

The ACA's goal is to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040. It aims to do so by identifying, removing and preventing barriers in organizations that fall under federal jurisdiction in the following priority areas:

- employment
- the built environment (buildings and public spaces)
- information and communication technologies
- communication, other than information and communication technologies
- the procurement of goods, services and facilities
- the design and delivery of programs and services
- transportation (airlines, as well as rail, road and marine transportation providers that cross provincial or international borders)

The ACA requires organizations to prepare and publish accessibility plans, set up feedback processes and report openly on progress.

Principles of the ACA

The ACA is based on these principles:

- treat everyone with dignity
- give everyone the same chance to build the life they want
- make sure everyone can participate fully and equally in society
- offer real choices and let people make their own decisions, with support if they want it
- consider how different barriers and types of discrimination can overlap when planning laws, policies, programs, services and structures
- include people with disabilities when creating laws, policies, programs, services and structures
- set accessibility standards and regulations to reach the highest level of accessibility

Feedback

Members of the public are encouraged to provide feedback on this Accessibility Plan or to contact the Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada (ATSSC) to request alternate formats of this Accessibility Plan, progress reports or instructions for providing feedback.

Designated person to receive feedback

The Director General, Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer is responsible for receiving feedback from the public on the ATSSC Accessibility Plan or any issue related to accessibility. The ATSSC also has a dedicated email address for accessibility questions and comments: communications@tribunal.gc.ca.

Alternate formats and how to submit feedback

The ATSSC's Accessibility Plan is available in the following formats upon request:

- **print**
- **large print**
- **braille**
- **audio**
- **electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technologies intended to assist people with disabilities**

To request an alternate format or to provide feedback on this Accessibility Plan, you can use our online [accessibility feedback form](#) or contact us by email, phone or by ground mail, using the contact information below. We'll acknowledge that we received your feedback if you include your name and contact information, in the same format you used to contact us (phone, email or mail).

- **Email:** communications@tribunal.gc.ca
- **Phone:** 613-295-5765
- **TTY:**
 - 1-866-873-8381 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)
 - 1-613-948-8181 (from outside Canada and the United States – long distance charges may apply)
- **Mailing address**
Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada
Attention: Director General, Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer
240 Sparks Street, 4th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E1

About the Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada

The ATSSC is responsible for providing support services and facilities to 12 federal administrative tribunals and the National Joint Council by way of a single, integrated organization.

Visit our [website](#) for more information about the services we provide and the tribunals and other organizations we support.

Results of the ATSSC Accessibility Plan for 2022 to 2025

These are highlights of the results of our [Accessibility Plan for 2022 to 2025](#). For full details, please read our [2023 Progress Report](#) and [2024 Progress Report](#).

Employment highlights

- We used inclusive hiring strategies to increase the number of employees with disabilities at the ATSSC
- We trained hiring managers on inclusive hiring and began using a checklist (developed in 2023) to identify systemic barriers each time we staffed positions
- We conducted an Employment Systems Review to find barriers or biases in our people-management policies and procedures that could prevent employees with disabilities from fully participating and advancing their careers
- We encouraged staff to use the [Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport](#) to discuss accommodations with their managers
- We continued to build accessibility expertise through additional training

The built environment highlights

- We ensured all refit and modernization projects under our control respected Public Services and Procurement Canada built-environment accessibility standards

Information and communication technologies (ICT) highlights

- We completed Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology and other system assessments for several tribunals, following the [Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)
- We updated online forms used by the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board to ensure they were fully accessible and respected Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards (WCAG), as required by the Government of Canada [Standard on Web Accessibility](#)
- We added the UserWay Accessibility widget to several tribunal websites
- We created a roadmap to make sure tribunal websites and e-filing platforms meet WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards

Communication, other than ICT highlights

- We reviewed documents, forms, templates, messages (internal and external), hyperlinks, images and web content to check if they were accessible and met Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's [Guidelines on Making Communications Products and Activities Accessible](#)
- We published an ATSSC Style Guide outlining plain language principles on our intranet
- All members of the Corporate Communications team have taken plain language training within 6 months of beginning to work at the ATSSC and they ensure all-staff messages and new intranet content use plain and inclusive language

- The Secretariat to the Social Security Tribunal of Canada developed a [style guide](#) that explains plain language and inclusive writing to their staff and the tribunal members they support

Procurement of goods, services and facilities highlights

- We made sure all procurement decisions considered accessibility

Design and delivery of programs and services highlights

- We made sure ATSSC staff had the knowledge and support they needed to consider accessibility when developing and delivering tribunal operations and services to the administrative tribunals we serve and Canadians accessing justice
- We helped individual tribunals take part in the Access to Justice Index for Federal Administrative Bodies (A2J) to measure tribunal accessibility features
- We worked with the tribunals we serve to revise forms and instructions, so it was easier for the public to request accommodations

Transportation highlights

- We shared information with tribunal members and staff to raise awareness about accessibility when making travel arrangements

Our 2026 to 2029 accessibility plan

Action areas

The *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA) aims to identify, remove and prevent barriers in 7 areas described under section 5.

We recognize that we must address accessibility barriers both internally—for our staff—and externally, for potential employees, stakeholders and members of the Canadian public who rely on the services we provide to access to justice.

Along with the actions in each of the 7 areas described below, we will develop an ATSSC Accessibility Key by fiscal year 2028 to 2029.

The Accessibility Key will give ATSSC employees a clear and consistent reference to help fully unlock accessibility in all our projects, policies, investments and actions.

We will create a plan to embed the Accessibility Key into our work culture, systems and tools. For example, we may include it in our internal project and program management framework.

Our goal is to make sure disabilities, and potential barriers are always considered in our operations. We will give staff prompts based on terms related to limitations and barriers as defined in the ACA. These prompts will help staff actively consider accessibility and ways to remove barriers in all of the areas described in Section 5 of the ACA.

The Accessibility Key will ask staff to:

1. **look for potential barriers that could prevent people with disabilities from fully and equally participating in their project, policy, investment or action**
2. **list the potential barriers they found and consider how these barriers could prevent people from fully and equally participating**
3. **find ways to address or remove the potential barriers and make sure this is reflected in the project, policy, investment, or action**

Employment

Employment refers to all processes, practices and services that we use to support employees in their professional journeys at the ATSSC. This support begins with recruitment and continues with hiring, onboarding, providing accommodations, career and talent development, performance management and job exit.

Barriers

People with disabilities can face barriers to accessible employment at every stage of employment. This can happen during recruitment (from job posters to final job offers), hiring, onboarding, getting accommodations, career and talent development, performance reviews and departure. They may feel that sharing their limitations could prevent them from moving forward in their careers. There is also stigma around talking about disabilities during the employment process—from recruitment to job exit.

Commitment

A safe workplace: create a supportive and inclusive workplace where everyone feels comfortable

- **Ensure that all ATSSC staff and tribunal members have access to the tools, devices and support measures they need to succeed**
- **Work on removing barriers from all employment systems to increase the number of people with disabilities in the ATSSC workforce at all levels, as described in our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan**
- **Raise organizational awareness of the culture and reality of equity-seeking groups**
- **Promote the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport and encourage candidates and employees to use it so we can make sure they have the tools and support they need to succeed**
- **Adopt a “yes by default” approach when evaluating accommodation requests from employees**

How we'll measure success

- **Percentage of ATSSC employees who used the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport**
- **Number of people with disabilities who were hired, promoted or received assignments**
- **Number of accessibility awareness sessions we held and feedback received on these sessions**
- **Public Service Employee Survey results on addressing accommodation needs**

The built environment

The built environment refers to all structures and objects that make up our workspaces. This includes entrances, elevators, meeting rooms, hearing and mediation rooms, offices and lighting.

Barriers

Employee workspaces and facilities used to host tribunal hearings and mediations in the National Capital Region and across Canada may not be fully accessible.

Commitment

Ensure retrofits under our control are accessible

- **Review all new accommodation and space optimization projects to make sure workspaces are accessible**
- **Continue to provide a space reservation system to support employees working in unassigned workspaces, allowing them to find and reserve accessible workstations and work areas**
- **Ensure new Accommodations and Facilities and Workplace Management Unit staff complete accessibility awareness training within the first 6 months of their employment at the ATSSC**

- **Consider accessibility by default when using non-ATSSC hearing rooms or other facilities across Canada**
- **Collaborate with building custodians to create a plan, respond to recommendations from consultations and remove barriers from the built environment**

How we'll measure success

- **Percentage of retrofits that met accessibility requirements**
- **Completion of training**

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

Information and communication technologies refers to the ways people share and access information. It can include emails, meetings, visual communications and documents. It also refers to how content is written and presented on websites like Canada.ca and tribunal websites. We support 12 tribunal websites, the ATSSC website on Canada.ca and an internal intranet site.

Barriers

Technology changes quickly. New tools, like artificial intelligence (AI), can create new barriers every time a new generation of technology appears.

Internal Commitment

Ensure new technologies we adopt for internal operations, including AI systems, take accessibility into account

- **Evaluate our public-facing information and communication technologies and update them to meet accessibility standards**
- **Collaborate with the tribunals we support to make sure internal and external forms, templates and guides used by employees, tribunal members and those accessing justice are accessible**
- **Work with the government procurement teams to ensure any newly purchased hardware and software are accessible and meet EN 301 549 standards**

How we'll measure success

- **Percentage of new technologies that meet accessibility requirements**
- **Percentage of ATSSC-supported websites that have been evaluated and updated using tools like the [Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology program](#)**

Communication, other than ICT

Communication, other than ICT includes all the ways we communicate such as letters, emails, forms, templates, procedures, instructions, verbal communications and images.

Barriers

Staff and stakeholders who engage with the tribunals we support may not be aware of accessibility standards, accommodation options and available resources to support accessibility.

Commitment

Ensure that all internal and external communications products are accessible by default

- **Run an accessibility awareness campaign with workshops, training or other communication tools to help staff understand accessibility issues, accommodation options, available tools and their rights and responsibilities**
- **Create a feedback process based on the user experience to learn how they experience accessibility issues**

How we'll measure success

- **Number of internal communications and impact/feedback from staff**
- **Launch of a user journey feedback option for clients with accessibility requirements**

The procurement of goods, services and facilities

Accessibility in procurement means meeting the broadest set of user needs possible from the start of a procurement process. ATSSC procurement staff are responsible for ensuring that accessibility requirements and considerations are included in procurement and decision-making processes.

Barriers

Some systems and standards used in the procurement process may not fully meet accessibility standards.

Commitment

Follow accessible procurement practices when purchasing goods, services and facilities

- **Include accessibility considerations in all our procurement processes and decisions and use the Attestation to Accessibility Consideration form to guide procurement decisions**

How we'll measure success

- **Percentage of procurement processes that use the Attestation to Accessibility Consideration form to check accessibility requirements and considerations**

The design and delivery of programs and services

We design and deliver programs and services to meet our mandate of providing support services to federal administrative tribunals. We provide services in several areas. Canadians seeking access to justice most often use our registry services.

Barriers

Information and workflows may not include accessibility considerations.

Commitment

Assess the accessibility of workflows in:

- **Registry Services**
- **Legal Services**
- **Mediation Services**
- **Continue assessing accessibility standards for key registry services we deliver to the administrative tribunals we support**
- **Update procedures to include accessibility accommodation requests and the needs of tribunal members and the public**
- **Provide accessibility measures and accommodations at all events, including mediations and hearings (held in-person, via videoconference or teleconference)**
- **Assess the impact of offering key documents in languages other than English and French**
- **Research and explore accessibility learning resources to develop a training plan for all registry officers (or any staff who develop or deliver services)**

How we'll measure success

- **Percentage of assessed programs and services that met accessibility requirements**

Transportation

Transportation includes travel between different provinces or outside of Canada, whether by air, rail, bus, ferry, or any other appropriate transportation mode. As part of the services we provide to the 12 federal administrative tribunals, we manage transportation for staff and tribunal members who need to travel for work. This service helps the tribunals exercise their powers and perform their duties and functions following the laws and rules that govern them.

Barriers

- **Travel arrangements may not be made with accessibility as a key consideration**

Commitment

- **Make sure staff and tribunal members know about accessibility needs when planning travel**

How we'll measure success

- **Percentage of travel arrangements that include accessibility considerations**
- **Feedback received from travellers**

Consultations

Tribunal consultations

Employee consultations

Tribunal External Working Groups consultations

Ongoing reporting

The *Accessible Canada Act* and the *Accessible Canada Regulations* set a 3-year planning and reporting cycle for departmental accessibility plans:

- **First year: Publish an accessibility plan—we published our 2022 to 2025 plan**
- **Second year: Publish a progress report on the accessibility plan, including feedback received and on how that feedback was considered—we published our 2023 progress report**
- **Third year: Publish a second progress report—we published our 2024 progress report**
- **Fourth year: Publish an updated version of the accessibility plan—this is the ATSSC's 2026 to 2029 Accessibility plan**

This cycle repeats itself, which means that we will publish progress reports in years 5 and 6, and an updated accessibility plan in year 7.