

2024 Accessibility Progress Report for the Canada Revenue Agency

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Message from the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is pleased to share its 2024 Accessibility Progress Report. This report details our work this past year on the 42 action items in the CRA's 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan. It also highlights the progress achieved so far and our ongoing commitment to fostering an environment where all CRA clients and employees can participate fully, access the support they need, and interact with our programs and services seamlessly.

At the CRA, our vision of being trusted, fair, and helpful by putting people first lays the groundwork for everything we do. Every step we take to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities is guided by our vision and core values of integrity, professionalism, respect, and collaboration.

Accessibility is a fundamental part of listening to Canadians, improving how we work, putting people first and delivering world-class services. It requires long-term sustained effort, collaboration, and innovation, both now and in the future. This means steadily making improvements – whether big or small – to the experiences that persons with disabilities have with us. Our approach is driven by the principle of progress over perfection. By embedding accessibility into our programs, service delivery, and workplace culture, and incrementally removing barriers as they are identified, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for our clients and employees.

To turn our vision into a reality, we are striving to improve how we serve Canadians by creating environments, services, and experiences where everyone feels they belong, are valued, and are heard. Further, we are learning important lessons about the ways people view, understand, and interact with our processes, programs, and services.

The “Nothing Without Us” principle continues to guide our approach. It cements our commitment to collaborate with persons with disabilities to identify areas for improvement, eliminate accessibility gaps in our physical and digital environments, and make meaningful strides to strengthen our accessibility culture. From promoting equal access to services and opportunities, to capturing and addressing feedback from those with lived experience, we remain dedicated to strengthening our culture of accessibility throughout our agency.

Although we have exciting accomplishments to share, we acknowledge that we are currently in a period of fiscal constraint, which has affected some of the deliverables in our accessibility plan. However, our commitment to addressing accessibility barriers remains strong.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we are preparing to transition to a new chapter – a new Accessibility Plan that will build on the successes we have achieved so far. This

new plan will guide our efforts as we continue to remove barriers and improve accessibility through this period of fiscal constraint. Regardless of the challenges ahead, we will continue to build on the momentum we have created and move forward toward Canada's ambitious goal of being barrier-free by 2040.

1. General

The Canada Revenue Agency receives feedback, including feedback on accessibility, through various channels. Accessibility feedback is client-initiated information about a client's experiences with the accessibility of our services.

Once we receive the feedback, we acknowledge and address it (unless it was submitted anonymously or sent by fax). Then it goes through internal processes to ensure we monitor, report on, and incorporate it into our accessibility improvement efforts.

Our designate for feedback on accessibility is the **Assistant Commissioner of the Service, Innovation and Integration Branch**. To learn more about our feedback process, including how to submit service feedback related to accessibility, visit the [Submit Service Feedback](#) page.

Accessibility feedback can be submitted in the following ways:

Mail

Write a letter or fill out [Form RC193, Service Feedback](#), and mail it to:

Assistant Commissioner
Service, Innovation and Integration Branch
c/o CRA Service Feedback
National Intake Centre
4695 Shawinigan-Sud Boulevard
Shawinigan QC G9P 5H9
CANADA

If you prefer to submit your feedback anonymously, you do not have to include identifying information in your letter or fill out sections 1 or 2 of Form RC193. However, please remember that we are unable to acknowledge or reply to anonymous feedback.

Facsimile (Fax)

Write a letter or fill out [Form RC193, Service Feedback](#), and fax it to the Assistant Commissioner of the Service, Innovation and Integration Branch, c/o CRA Service Feedback, at:

- **1-866-388-7371** from Canada or the United States
- **1-819-536-0701** from outside Canada and the United States

To ensure we uphold your security and privacy, we cannot acknowledge that we received your feedback or respond to it by fax.

Email

Email the Assistant Commissioner of the Service, Innovation and Integration Branch, c/o CRA Service Feedback, at asf-ras@cra-arc.gc.ca.

Important: Do not send any confidential, protected, or taxpayer information (for example, your social insurance number or tax return information) by email. The security of taxpayer information is our top priority. Although email is widely used, it does not meet the security requirements needed to ensure that this confidential information is fully protected.

Online form

Submit feedback electronically using the [RC193 Online Form](#). Individuals, businesses, or representatives can use this form to submit a complaint, a suggestion, or a compliment. This form lets you complete and submit your feedback all in one place.

Online account

Submit a complaint, a compliment, or a suggestion online by using the Submit documents option in:

- [My Account](#);
- [My Business Account](#); or,
- [Represent a Client](#).

You cannot submit anonymous feedback using your online account.

Telephone

Call us at one of the following numbers:

- **1-800-959-8281** for all of Canada except Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut;
- **1-866-426-1527** for Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut; or,
- **1-613-940-8495** for callers from outside Canada/U.S. (you can call collect).

Once you connect with a contact centre agent, tell them right away you are calling to provide feedback on an accessibility barrier or on the Accessibility Plan. Also let them know whether you want to remain anonymous. They will collect your feedback and share it with the correct area.

Teletypewriter (TTY)

Call **1-800-665-0354** if you use TTY. If you use an operator-assisted relay service, please call our regular telephone numbers instead of the TTY number (refer to the [Telephone](#) section above for these numbers).

If you need help navigating our online applications, call: **1-888-768-0951**.

Canada VRS (Video Relay Service)

Call **1-800-561-6393** if you use Canada VRS. If you use any operator-assisted relay service other than Canada VRS and TTY, please call our regular telephone numbers instead (refer to the [Telephone](#) section above for these numbers).

2. Executive summary

The CRA's 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan:

- sets out the Agency's approach to identifying, removing, and preventing accessibility barriers over the next three years;
- includes the CRA's approach to accountability and governance in delivering upon the [Accessible Canada Act](#); and,
- highlights the importance of fostering an organizational culture that supports accessibility and inclusion.

The 2024 Accessibility Progress Report details the completed and ongoing advancements toward creating a barrier-free organization. Of the 42 actions in our plan:

- 36% (15 of the 42) of action items have been completed.
- 31% (13 of the 42) of action items are on track to be completed as expected.
- 21% (9 of the 42) of action items have been delayed, but are still set to be completed as part of the CRA's current Accessibility Plan.
- 12% (5 of the 42) of the action items will not be completed within the scope of the 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan.

In addition to the 42 action items listed in the CRA's Accessibility Plan, there are six additional commitments that we have made to strengthen our governance and accountability structure for accessibility. Five of these commitments are still on track to be completed by December 2025, and one is delayed from its original timeline but is on track to be completed in 2025.

As we continue working on delivering on the commitments we made in the Plan, we remain informed by the lived experiences of persons with disabilities. In spring 2024, we consulted CRA employees with disabilities to gather their perspectives on our progress to becoming a more accessible organization and our processes for internal workplace accommodations. Although these employees felt that accessibility is clearly more visible as an Agency priority, they wanted to see more tangible progress to resolve key accessibility barriers.

Other findings the consultations uncovered included:

- Participants expressed the need for improved trust and acceptance within the CRA. Many said they fear stigma or discrimination when requesting accommodations.
- They recognized the importance of direct supervisors in fostering workplace accessibility.
- Half of the respondents felt the CRA creates an environment where they are comfortable disclosing accessibility barriers.
- The requirement for increased in-office presence heightened employees' concerns about the adequacy of current accommodations and the future accessibility of workspaces.

- The accommodation process is seen as complex, involving multiple stakeholders, leading to delays and extensive paperwork, causing stress and long wait times.

Feedback plays an important role in helping us understand the experiences of persons with disabilities and to identify areas for improvement, as well as target areas requiring change. Our Service Feedback Program recorded a total of 306 accessibility feedback cases from October 2023 to September 2024, with several themes emerging:

- **Contact difficulties:** Clients faced long wait times for our contact centres and challenges with security requirements for authentication. For persons with disabilities, this could lead to the inability to complete the task due to anxiety, confusion, and the lack of availability of a support person while they are on hold.
- **Customization needs:** Clients desire more personalized experiences for better accessibility.
- **Awareness and training:** Persons with disabilities identified a need for increased internal training on disability and accessibility as some clients feel unacknowledged during interactions.

CRA employees with disabilities have also shared accessibility feedback using internal feedback mechanisms. Employees have raised the need for more education and guidance in:

- the accommodation process;
- how to work in a more accessible way; and,
- how to ensure that persons with disabilities are fully included in the design and delivery of programs and services.

Some employees have also flagged that their adaptive technology needs are beyond what is readily available within the Agency.

We have made solid progress in completing our action items over the past year, in collaboration with or as a result of feedback from persons with disabilities. The impacts of these items have improved programs and services for persons with disabilities – both employees and clients.

Important achievements affecting clients include:

- the implementation of a direct line for video relay service (VRS) users on our individual tax enquiries line – an enhancement that has improved service for deaf and hard of hearing individuals; and,
- the adoption of a new “ReadMe” page template for all external publications and the creation of information videos in accessible formats, making it easier for persons with disabilities to access the information and the forms that they need.

Important achievements affecting employees include:

- the completion of CRA targeted accessibility assessments (for example, lighting, signage) in all CRA-occupied buildings (where it was deemed feasible)

and the development of recommendations – some of which are currently being implemented; and,

- the launch of the Accessibility Hub which includes a variety of learning, training, and information tools and modules serving as a one-stop portal for accessibility information and resources.

Over the past year, we have made good progress on delivering upon our first accessibility plan and ultimately becoming a barrier-free organization. Although we have much work to be done and some challenges remain, we will continue to deliver on our accessibility agenda and build upon the momentum we have generated – in partnership with persons with disabilities.

3. Introduction

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) recognizes that accessibility is more than a legal obligation that must be fulfilled. It is an essential part of delivering programs and services, whether they be internal or external to our organization. With this in mind, we consider accessibility to be vital to our People First philosophy, through which we strive to be trusted, fair, and helpful by putting people first.

Our annual accessibility progress reports play an important role in holding the CRA accountable to the commitments in our accessibility plans. They are also an opportunity to transparently look at the work we have done to deliver on these plans. Each accessibility plan includes commitments to eliminate accessibility barriers across the seven areas of the *Accessible Canada Act*:

- employment;
- the built environment;
- 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; and,
- transportation.

The CRA's 2024 Accessibility Progress Report covers our efforts throughout 2024 to deliver on our 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan. Also, the report includes what we learned through our ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities (section 4) and our accessibility feedback channels (section 5) over the past year. Thanks to these insights, we can align our accessibility improvement efforts with the lived experiences and real needs of persons with disabilities. We can then make the most of our work to prevent new accessibility barriers and improve service delivery overall.

Section 6 details the progress we made in strengthening our governance and accountability structure for accessibility.

In section 7, we present the current status of each action item in the Accessibility Plan, including timelines for outstanding items. If we adjusted any actions or timelines since we published the Plan, we provided the revised timelines and reasons for the changes.

Section 8 reports on additional items to improving training and learning on accessibility within the Agency.

Section 9 includes information on some of the work that we are doing to strengthen accessibility that we did not formally commit to through our accessibility plan. We actively encourage our teams to find ways to improve accessibility even if they are not included in the plan, and this section is a chance to highlight some examples of this.

4. Consultations

The “Nothing Without Us” principle is central to the CRA’s efforts to effectively identify, address, and prevent accessibility barriers. In 2024, we continued to:

- consult persons with disabilities to seek their perspectives on the accessibility of their interactions and experiences with us; and,
- apply Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) to ensure we considered intersectional identity factors (for example, age, education, ethnicity, and economic status) throughout this work.

From October to December of this year, we hosted the CRA Service Consultations 2024 with individuals, non-professional representatives, and tax professionals to discuss their service experiences, needs, and the challenges they have when filing taxes as well as benefit and credit applications. The input gathered during the in-person and virtual consultations included the lived experiences of persons with disabilities. The information collected will help us gain a better understanding of service needs and expectations of persons with disabilities which will inform our 2026–2028 Accessibility Plan.

This section of the 2024 Accessibility Progress Report includes information about this year’s internal consultations. It also includes insights related to accessibility that we gathered from other research exercises carried out across our agency.

4.1 Internal consultations with employees with disabilities

Understanding the lived experiences of employees with disabilities and challenges they have with CRA systems and procedures is essential to improving CRA’s overall accessibility and creating a supportive environment for all.

From April to May 2024, we consulted our employees with disabilities to get their perspectives on:

- overall progress in becoming a more accessible organization and delivering upon the *Accessible Canada Act*; and,
- workplace accommodations processes, in particular the role of procurement and adaptive technologies.

In total, 1,040 CRA employees participated in the consultations: 983 completed an online survey and 57 participated in group interview sessions.

4.1.1 The CRA’s progress in becoming more accessible

Participants in this year’s consultations with employees with disabilities expressed that while accessibility is clearly more visible at the agency level; however, they want the CRA to take more concrete steps to address accessibility barriers.

Results from the consultations showed that:

- 60% of respondents agreed that the Accessibility Plan is helping make our agency more accessible; but, they want to see more tangible progress to resolve accessibility barriers.
- Half of the respondents felt the CRA creates an environment where they are comfortable disclosing the accessibility barriers they face.
- Some participants expressed that their accessibility needs were not being fully addressed, and increasing in-office presence to three days per week (four days for executives) could amplify their current struggles working in an in-person environment (for example, not receiving customized office furniture promptly).
- Many participants were frustrated by the lack of consultation on the requirement of in-office presence and felt that their needs were not being seriously considered as part of the transition.

The most common barriers raised by participants during the consultations were related to employment or the built environment, including hiring processes, physical workspaces, accessibility culture, and accommodation processes.

When asked about the progress we have made so far in becoming more accessible, most respondents focused on their desire for more impactful accessibility improvements. Specifically, participants:

- emphasized the need to design services and products that are accessible to all users;
- expressed that that employees with disabilities should be included and consulted in major projects to ensure their input is reflected, valued and respected; and,
- highlighted the importance of trust and acceptance and advocated for a workplace where differences are embraced, and employees are trusted and not questioned repeatedly about their disability or accessibility needs.

4.1.2 Perspectives on accommodation processes

Many participants expressed that accommodations processes play a key role in the overall accessibility of their work. Participants also:

- shared that their direct supervisors play a crucial role in fostering workplace accessibility at the CRA. Nearly 40% of survey respondents strongly agreed that their manager supports them regarding their individual accessibility needs.
- stressed the importance of managers being educated about various disabilities and the accommodations necessary to support persons with disabilities effectively. Stigmas and inexperience with administrative processes can create barriers to successful accommodations.

Participants added that not all managers have the same attitudes towards accommodations. They stated:

- some still fear that going through the accommodations process may be seen as an inconvenience or that the manager may not be willing to pursue it on behalf of the employee at all.

- a low level of understanding of disabilities and accommodations can create friction, including micromanagement of the process and poor communication during the process, between the employee and manager.
- some worry that requesting accommodations might lead to negative perceptions of their abilities or threaten their job security. This fear is increased during probation periods or when employees are striving to prove themselves in new roles.

The time and effort associated with the accommodation process can cause an employee stress and lead to fears that it will negatively affect an employee's career, especially if they have to repeatedly justify their need for accommodation. Some employees who feel this way have turned to informal accommodations strategies or to manage their accommodation needs on their own.

The CRA's current accommodation processes can be complex, and participants reported experiencing frequent delays because multiple groups (for example, labour relations, medical doctors, and various management levels) are involved.

Participants also reported that:

- the complexity of the CRA's accommodations process leads to coordination issues, extensive paperwork, and long wait times.
- some of the accommodation measures in place do not fully meet their needs, but they feel it is too difficult to address or modify them.
- the accommodations process seems to favour solutions for in-office presence over working from home. Participants explained that working from home would address their needs and remove the need for any accommodation measures so they did not understand why this is not being considered.
- more practical challenges, such as arranging medical appointments and the cost of filling out the forms needed to support accommodation requests, add further barriers for employees with disabilities.

Participants provided several suggestions for improving the accommodation process. They emphasized their desire for a process that is straightforward, prompt, and does not require them to repeatedly disclose deeply personal information. These suggestions included:

- streamlining the accommodation process and making it consistent and flexible to ensure it is fair and responsive to individual needs;
- prioritizing a social rather than a medical approach to accommodations, which could reduce the reliance on medical documents;
- increasing education and awareness initiatives to provide more information about the accommodation process and available supports;
- ensuring that flexibility and trust are kept throughout the process; and,
- lead with accessibility at top of mind.

4.1.3 Comments on adaptive technologies

Eighteen percent of respondents reported needing adaptive technology to perform their work-related duties, and the level of satisfaction with the timeliness of the deployment of adaptive technologies varied significantly. Respondents with relatively simple accommodation needs generally reported higher levels of satisfaction, whereas those with more complex needs (in other words, those that require additional approvals, procurement processes, or testing) reported being dissatisfied with time needed for implementation.

Participants also identified the following as challenges with adaptive technology:

- The CRA's high security environment can limit the use of certain adaptive technologies. Some participants wanted access to different software or products other than those our agency currently has available or has authorized.
- 60% of respondents who received adaptive equipment, devices, or software did not receive training for that equipment. Some respondents reported they would like to receive training with a knowledgeable trainer who has the appropriate competencies and security clearances to properly deliver the training.
- Several participants suggested that a list of CRA-approved adaptive technology products would be helpful. As well, the list could include descriptions on how they could use the products so they know whether the products could help them.
- A few participants shared that it is difficult to have to carry adaptive technology back and forth from home to the office.

4.1.4 Procurement experiences

Some participants expressed that procuring equipment, technology, and software to meet their accessibility needs is time consuming and difficult. The need to meet certain baseline requirements, such as security assessments and total cost thresholds, can significantly increase how long it takes to acquire an accommodation – or make it impossible altogether. They highlighted the approval process as being particularly challenging; however, 60% of respondents reported that if the item they selected did not meet their needs, they were able to ask for and get a different product.

Forty-two percent of respondents who needed an adaptive product to make their work easier stated that they were uncomfortable asking their managers for this product.

There are a range of reasons behind this hesitation:

- fear of stigma or being a bother;
- perception that the request will be denied;
- presumed budget constraints; or,
- anticipation about the difficulty of moving through a long procurement process.

4.2 Additional research completed in 2024 related to accessibility

4.2.1 Annual corporate research

As part of its annual corporate research, the CRA conducted a telephone survey with a random sample of 2,400 Canadians aged 18 years or older between November 9, 2023, and December 21, 2023. The purpose of the survey was to better understand the public perception of the CRA, as well as to better understand Canadians' experiences when interacting with our agency. Out of all the respondents, 345 identified as persons with disabilities.

Some key findings related to accessibility from this survey revealed that:

- **Equality and equity:** When asked about perceptions of equal treatment, 37% of all respondents agreed that we provide equal treatment for everyone. 34% of respondents who identified as persons with disabilities agreed, compared to 38% of those who did not identify as having a disability.
- **Openness and transparency:** More than half of all respondents (56%) strongly agreed that we hold our organization accountable for the written information we provide. Similarly, nearly half (48%) agreed that we support making government products and client services accessible to everyone. The percentages were similar for respondents with disabilities, with 55% agreeing about accountability and 47% agreeing about service accessibility.
- **Service satisfaction:**
 - 66% of persons with disabilities (compared to 68% of those without disabilities) felt the information they receive when requesting service was accurate;
 - 58% (vs 66% of those without disabilities) thought it was complete;
 - 52% (vs 62% of those without disabilities) said it was easy to understand;
 - 43% (vs 55% of those without disabilities) agreed that the service was timely; and,
 - 38% of respondents who identified as persons with disabilities felt that our services were easy to access, compared to 47% of those without disabilities.
- **Helpfulness:** 45% of all respondents strongly agreed that we make the process of filing taxes easy. Respondents who identified as persons with disabilities were less likely to agree compared those without disabilities (40% vs 46%).

These findings highlight the need for continued focus on improving accessibility, particularly in areas such as service access and the ease of doing essential tasks like filing taxes.

This research will help support our strategic planning and decision-making processes, enabling us to improve services, monitor trends in public opinion, and identify key areas for communication and engagement with specific audiences.

4.2.2 My Account portal exit survey

The CRA conducts a My Account exit survey to gain more insight about the experiences and needs of clients who use My Account. The survey includes questions for respondents who identified as being a person with a disability.

According to the 2024 survey data, those who identified as persons with disabilities reported similar levels of overall satisfaction with My Account compared to those who did not as identify being a person with a disability (83% vs 88%).

The specific issues the clients with disabilities reported encountering include:

- small font size;
- feelings of anxiety and being overwhelmed with the information;
- challenges with reading comprehension;
- unable to find paperwork;
- authentication issues; and,
- being unable to find information they were looking for.

Through the My Account exit survey, respondents suggested that we:

- improve the progress tracker;
- offer simpler options to make payments;
- simplify navigation and language;
- offer more options for authentication;
- provide optional dark mode to improve contrast for users with visual impairments; and,
- lengthen the time for a session to time out.

5. Feedback

Feedback plays a critical role in understanding client experiences and helping the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) identify accessibility barriers within its processes and services. Feedback allows us to continually improve and offer the best experience to everyone interacting with us, both internally within our agency and externally with clients.

For this report, **accessibility feedback** refers to client- or employee-initiated information we received through channels created to accept feedback about the satisfaction or dissatisfaction they encountered when accessing our products, services, or environments.

We receive accessibility feedback from persons with disabilities, CRA employees, non-profit organizations, and members of the public. All these groups provide valuable insight from diverse perspectives and lived experiences that help us identify and address accessibility barriers.

We receive and address accessibility feedback on a case-by-case basis. Once reviewed, feedback is resolved by individual subject matter experts within program areas.

5.1 Feedback received from the general public

The CRA's Service Feedback Program serves as the primary entry point for external clients to [send accessibility feedback](#) relating to CRA programs and services. This feedback provides us with actionable insights to help us remove barriers that clients are facing. From October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024, the Service Feedback Program recorded a total of 306 accessibility feedback cases.

Figure 1: Accessibility cases by delivery method from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024

Method of Receipt

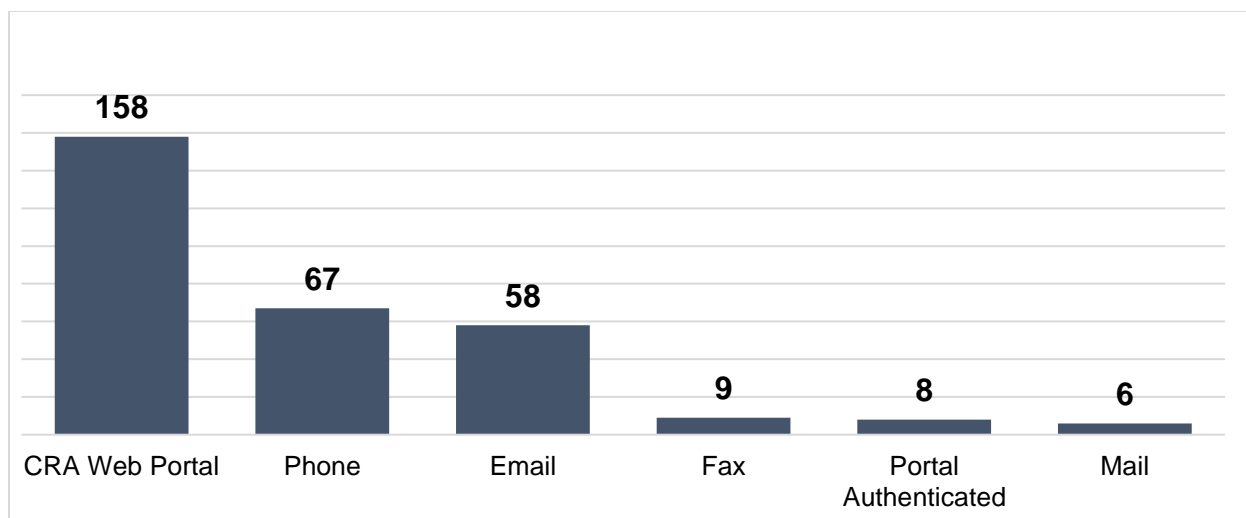


Figure 1: Accessibility cases by delivery method from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

Delivery method:

- CRA Web Portal: 158
- Phone: 67
- Email: 58
- Fax: 9
- Portal Authenticated: 8
- Mail: 6

Figure 2: Accessibility cases by barrier type, from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024

Identified Barriers

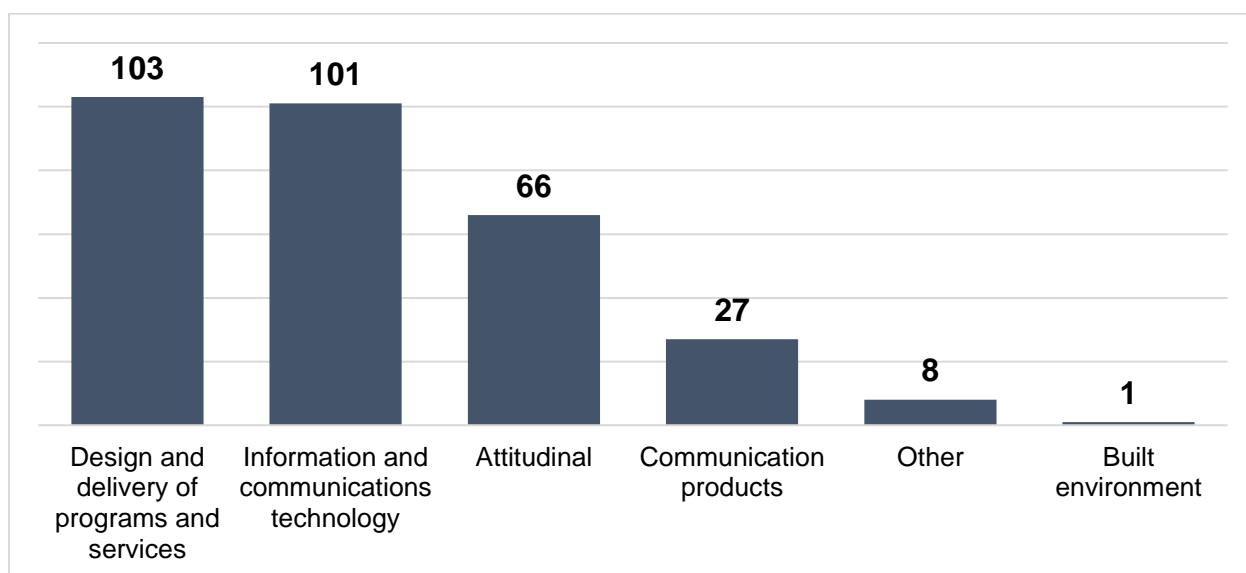


Figure 2: Accessibility cases by barrier type, from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

Identified barriers:

- Design and delivery of programs and services: 103
- Information and and communications technology: 101
- Attitudinal: 66
- Communication products: 27
- Other: 8
- Built environment: 1

Descriptions of barrier types

- **Built environment:** The built environment refers to all CRA-occupied buildings, including how employees use physical workspaces and how the public accesses these buildings when needed.
- **Information and communications technology:** Barriers include gaps in functionality, usability or robustness of CRA IT solutions. The digital environment must be accessible and useable by all CRA employees and clients.
- **Communications products:** Barriers include instances when published material (e.g. websites, forms, letters, etc.) is unclear, unusable, outdated, mis-leading or incompatible with assistive technology.
- **Design and delivery of programs and services:** Barriers related to the design and delivery of programs and services that prevent individuals from participating fully in a situation. These programs and services may be internal or external and include policies, procedures, or practices.
- **Attitudinal:** Attitudinal barriers are behaviours, perceptions, and assumptions that create misconceptions about persons with disabilities.
- **Other:** These cases are related to a barrier that cannot be categorized in any of the above options.

When analyzing this year's accessibility feedback cases, four key themes emerged.

First, we continue to hear that contacting the CRA is challenging. Clients are experiencing longer than average wait times to contact CRA telephone agents. Clients who submitted accessibility-specific feedback reported this as a barrier.

Further, some clients reported being redirected or given inaccurate information, which creates stress and makes it challenging for them to complete their intended task.

Among this feedback, we also received suggestions for improvements in response to the experience clients have had.

Some clients suggested having a callback feature to prevent taxpayers from getting disconnected while they are on hold and losing their position in the telephone queue. This would benefit individuals who are sensitive to hold music and those whose anxiety is increased by long phone wait times. They also asked us to create a separate phone

line or a service specific to those with disability or accessibility needs to reduce the impact of the stress caused by calling us.

Second, we need to continue providing more options for clients to personalize their experience when interacting with us. For example, persons with disabilities who find it difficult to use digital tools or who have limited access to technology reported challenges in finding information, completing forms, and filing taxes.

We also heard from multiple sensory-affected individuals that the current hold music negatively affects their experience when they contact us. They suggested offering the option to personalize the hold music or mute the music entirely.

Third, people are reporting having difficulty accessing our services or communicating with us because of the complex security requirements. In particular, individuals who need more assistance to interact with our contact centres have voiced frustration with the authentication processes used to validate a client's identity. These processes cause barriers to their experience and sometimes prevents them from interacting with us entirely. Clients with disabilities are reporting that they feel they have insufficient time to pass security measures online and would benefit from more time before the system times out. They also suggested we use services such as video calls to prove identity to unlock online accounts.

Fourth, our accessibility culture is changing, but more work is needed. Some clients who have accessibility needs are telling us they feel unacknowledged or unheard when interacting with us. They feel they still experience a general lack of understanding and empathy toward their situation, leading to dissatisfaction and negative service experiences.

5.2 Feedback received from CRA employees

A review of the information from the various internal feedback mechanisms has uncovered the following perspectives:

- for clearer guidance in the accommodations process and education in the internal procedures to ensure timely and effective accommodations for employees;
- to expand internal training to build a stronger understanding of accessibility, including how to apply accessibility in daily tasks (for example, creating accessible documents, facilitating accessible meetings, identifying potential accessibility barriers proactively); and,
- to expand the available adaptive technology and software solutions to support employees with disabilities because current options do not always fully meet users' needs.

Internal programs and services continue to use internal feedback to help identify and address barriers identified by persons with disabilities.

6. Building on the foundation of accessibility at the CRA

Along with action items related to the seven areas under the *Accessible Canada Act*, the CRA's 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan lists concrete actions related to its policies, procedures, and governance structures to integrate accessibility into all that it does.

This involves putting **governance and accountability measures** in place to ensure that accessibility is an important part of our decision-making. To do this, the Accessibility Plan included six action items for us to complete:

1) Establish a senior executive sponsor for accessibility in the CRA. As an agent of change, the sponsor will influence decision-making, engage colleagues to achieve accessibility objectives, and mobilize resources to ensure that accessibility is at the core of management and decision-making.

- **This role will be held by the Assistant Commissioner of the Service, Innovation and Integration Branch.**

Progress update: The Assistant Commissioner of the Service, Innovation and Integration Branch continues to solidify their role as the senior executive sponsor for accessibility both internally and externally. Activities include:

- participated in a panel discussion at this year's Canadian Congress on Disability Inclusion where they highlighted the CRA's successes. These successes included consulting with persons with disabilities, the importance of accessibility feedback, and the role of our People First philosophy in our approach to accessibility.
- held a consultation with the Persons with Disabilities Network to gain insight on the members' lived experiences to better inform them in their senior executive sponsor role.
- championed the launch of an accessibility hub for CRA employees that includes a variety of learning, training, and information tools and modules. The hub will serve as a one-stop portal for accessibility information and resources.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

2) Embed accessibility requirements into policy review mechanisms so that all future reviews of CRA policies, directives, programs, service delivery channels, and operational procedures are in line with the Act.

Progress update: We updated our corporate policy review process so that we review each corporate policy instrument that is scheduled for renewal to identify any potential accessibility requirements. We are exploring more ways, to incorporate accessibility into the policy review process, including strengthening accessibility awareness within the CRA's corporate policy community.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

3) Incorporate accessibility into our planning, decision-making, and implementation processes, such as in our major project investments.

Progress update: We are revising our planning, decision-making, and implementation processes to ensure they incorporate accessibility throughout. In particular, we have included accessibility and corporate social responsibility as requirements for planning processes and policy documents to improve best practices.

Policy and planning teams from across our agency are taking accessibility and the experiences of persons with disabilities into consideration from the onset, including updating internal templates to accessibility components. We will sustain these efforts over the coming year to increase awareness of accessibility across all levels of the agency and ensure that we fully incorporate accessibility into these decision-making processes.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

4) Develop a feedback mechanism to collect internal feedback on accessibility and strengthen existing external feedback channels.

Progress update: We continue to review existing internal and external feedback mechanisms including conducting an analysis on how we can apply accessibility feedback data more effectively for course correction and priority setting.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

5) Allocate the funding to deliver on the commitments in this plan and establish a permanent capacity to oversee the CRA's Accessibility Program.

Progress update: The CRA is allocating resources to continue advancing the Plan's commitments.

Status: On track

Timeline: April 2025

6) Develop a performance measurement framework for accessibility to measure and report on CRA's progress in removing barriers.

Progress update: We are developing a performance measurement framework for accessibility, focusing on assessing our overall level of accessibility for each of the seven areas under the *Accessible Canada Act*. As a next step, we will finalize metrics and establish baselines for each performance indicator so we can measure them against the framework.

Status: Delayed

Original timeline: March 2024

Current revised timeline: March 2025

7. Areas under the *Accessible Canada Act*

Since publishing the CRA's first accessibility plan in December 2022, we have made important strides in strengthening accessibility in all that we do. But we recognize we still have much more work to do to become barrier-free for all Canadians. This section lists the actions we committed to in our Accessibility Plan, building on the [2023 Accessibility Progress Report](#), along with a progress update and the status of each item.

Of the 42 actions that the CRA has committed to in its 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan:

- 36% (15 of the 42) of action items have been completed.
- 31% (13 of the 42) of action items are on track to be completed as expected.
- 21% (9 of the 42) of action items have been delayed, but are still set to be completed as part of the CRA's current accessibility plan.
- 12% (5 of the 42) of the action items will not be completed within the scope of the 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan.

7.1 Employment

Actions under the Employment section will improve how we recruit, retain, and promote persons with visible and non-visible disabilities.

Barrier 1: Recruitment activities often overlook accessibility and disability inclusion. Among CRA representatives involved in recruitment activities, some lack awareness about how to connect with and recruit persons with disabilities.

Action 1: We will look to remove this barrier by:

- offering prospective candidates with disabilities more inclusive recruitment activities to encourage them to consider us as an employer of choice;
- working with universities to host events specifically for persons with disabilities during the academic year;
- promoting accommodations measures available to prospective candidates;
- raising the awareness of our representatives to improve their effectiveness in recruiting persons with disabilities;
- working with on-site management services to provide accommodations for candidates during in-person events; and,
- promoting career progression opportunities targeted to persons with disabilities.

Progress update: We continue to host accessible recruitment activities and partner with organizations that support the employment of persons with disabilities (for example, the Ontario Disability Employee Network's Biz Connect Leader Series). Employment offers have resulted from these channels of engagement.

We also monitor and report on partnerships with events and organizations supporting the recruitment of persons with disabilities. We enhanced training for our

representatives to ensure all recruitment activities are accessible and that candidates are encouraged to request accommodations when needed.

As well, we:

- have put a new staffing requirement in place to improve recruitment and career progression of persons with disabilities;
- have updated our public communications to prospective candidates to clarify the measures we have to provide accommodations in the staffing process, including how to request them; and,
- are developing a product on how to apply for a job at the CRA that we will deliver to organizations that support the employment of persons with disabilities.

Status: Completed

Timeline: March 2024

Barrier 2: Persons with disabilities are not recruited, onboarded, or promoted relative to others in the general employee population.

Action 2: We will deliver on and update yearly a Strategy for Recruitment, Onboarding, and Retention of Persons with Disabilities, which will include initiatives to address recruitment barriers, initiatives to improve retention and promotion of employees with disabilities, and ways to measure progress in strengthening these areas.

Targets and initiatives in the Strategy include:

- 750 net new persons with disabilities are hired by the CRA by 2025; and,
- identify and remove employment barriers for job seekers and employees with disabilities through the pilot of a CRA Career Centre for persons with disabilities.

Progress update: As part of the Government of Canada's commitment to hire 5,000 persons with disabilities by 2025, we have committed to hiring 750 net new persons with disabilities.

To calculate the number of net new hires, we subtract the number of departures from the number of new hires:

- **new hires** include all external permanent and term employees for a period of three months (90 days) or more during the reporting period. From April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2024, we hired 4,185 persons with disabilities.
- **departures** include any employee whose employment with us ends during the reporting period. During this time frame, 3,018 persons with disabilities departed our agency.

Therefore, from April 1, 2020 (when we made this commitment) to March 31, 2024, we hired 1,167 net new persons who self-identify as being persons with disabilities, far

exceeding our commitment. We will continue its work to better recruit, retain and promote persons with disabilities.

After consulting with our Persons with Disabilities Network and other government departments, we concluded that launching the CRA Career Centre was not feasible given the level of resources required. We continue to make efforts to better resolve the barriers that persons with disabilities face in gaining access to employment and establishing meaningful careers within the CRA. For instance, we:

- have put in place a strategy for recruitment, onboarding and retention of persons with disabilities that will be in effect until 2025;
- are using data to track the impact of our recruitment and retention efforts and address any identified challenges; and,
- continue to assess if there are any impacts to persons with disabilities within the various areas of the employee journey so we can sustain our efforts.

Status: On track

Timeline: Annual updates in December 2023, December 2024, and December 2025

Barrier 3: The process to accommodate for injury, illness, medical condition, or disability is said to be complex and lengthy, and there is a lack of awareness of the support available for employees and their managers during the accommodation process.

Action 3: We will continue to build awareness in employees and managers by:

- working with providers to ensure that they comply with our accessibility technology requirements (for example, adaptive technology);
- developing additional support tools where needed as we evolve for the workplace of the future;
- promoting the Informal Conflict Resolution (ICR) Program and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to support employees as they are dealing with change related to an accommodation plan or a solution;
- identifying and putting methods in place to reduce response time for requests for accommodation due to injury, illness, medical condition, or disability;
- reviewing and creating efficiencies, whenever possible, for workplace accommodations;
- review the process for employees to obtain adaptive technology in order to find efficiencies and reduce wait times for employees to be accommodated; and,
- perform a needs analysis to determine the need for potential increase of the procurement and inventory of adaptive technology solutions to support new and existing employees requiring adaptive technology accommodations.

Progress update: So far, we have:

- integrated a guide for the accommodation process in our pre-existing employee onboarding tool to raise awareness and create efficiencies between employees and managers;
- further improved this tool to make it more user-friendly and accessible; and,
- implemented new training for both experienced and new managers on accessibility inclusion and the duty to accommodate.

To support employees navigating the accommodation process, we have promoted the Informal Conflict Resolution (ICR) and Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services through employee-led networks, newsletters, and agency-wide events. These events included National AccessAbility Week and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

We continue to make efforts to speed up and increase efficiencies in providing disability accommodations to CRA employees, especially since the number of accommodation requests for full-time telework has increased since the announcement of mandatory on-site presence.

We developed an action plan that will entirely revamp our accommodation process, focusing on reducing response times for accommodation requests due to injury, illness, or disability. We plan to reduce those times by improving file prioritization, developing standard communications procedures to free up time for officers to work on files, and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of employees and managers throughout the process. Ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities are helping identify gaps and solutions to further improve the accommodations process.

We also clarified direction for HR personnel to ensure proper documentation of accommodation cases from the start, which will minimize repetitive requests for the same information.

We made efforts to streamline the process of providing adaptive technologies to employees as part of the accommodation process. This streamlining led to a 22% reduction in the time it takes to resolve requests between October 2023 and September 2024 compared to the previous year. It also led to an increase in new requests.

As well, we launched a new peer support centre where employees who are users of adaptive technologies can exchange knowledge and help each other use the technologies in their work.

Status: On track

Timeline: Annual updates in December 2023, December 2024, and December 2025

Action 4: We will implement best practices in assessment accommodations by:

- developing content on assessment accommodations for our public web pages to increase awareness and understanding;
- promoting the use of inclusive language, accessible documents, and universal design in assessments;
- learning from best practices related to assessment accommodations and further expanding guidelines for administering tests; and,
- identifying how our assessment accommodation process could use the Government of Canada Accessibility Passport.

Progress update: We launched the CRA Writing Task Assessment, a test developed based on universal design principles, last year and continue to use it to assess written communication.

Currently, we are developing a best practice guide for assessment accommodations to further ensure efficient testing for persons with disabilities.

We are also exploring new options for administering supervised tests, to further improve accessibility during assessments.

We have been working with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat to improve the content of the Government of Canada Accessibility Passport. Candidates in staffing processes can use the Passport to help identify accommodation solutions for their assessments.

Status: Completed

Timeline: March 2024

Action 5: We will support the use of fair and inclusive standardized assessments during staffing processes by:

- working with assessment providers to ensure they meet our accessibility technology requirements;
- identifying accessibility barriers experienced by those taking standardized assessments, in consultation with the CRA Persons with Disabilities Network; and,
- developing stronger, future accessibility and accommodation requirements for CRA's assessment providers.

Progress update: We continue to work with assessment providers to offer additional accessibility features in standardized assessments, such as extra time options and demo platforms for testing compatibility with assistive technology.

As well, we are reviewing feedback gathered from persons with disabilities to identify and remove barriers in standardized assessments. We are also implementing stronger

accessibility requirements for assessment providers to ensure they meet our accessibility standards.

Status: On track

Timeline: March 2025

Barrier 4: Accommodation needs are not following employees from position to position.

Action 6: To close this gap, we will affirm that accommodation, when possible, follows an employee without them having to resubmit an accommodation request. When they move to a new team or position, their supervisor will review their existing accommodation needs against the new job duties and will ensure the appropriate accommodation measures are put in place.

Progress update: Our accommodation process continues to allow employees to carry their accommodations from position to position without needing to resubmit requests. Also, information for managers on supporting this process remains available to reinforce consistent application within the federal public service.

Efforts such as the revamping of our accommodation process, combined with the enhanced training for managers on accessibility inclusion, will help ensure accommodations follow employees as they change positions. This will reduce the burden on employees to begin those conversations.

Status: Completed

Timeline: March 2023

Action 7: We will determine how to integrate the concept of the Government of Canada Accessibility Passport in our process for accommodating injury, illness, medical condition, or disability. We will do this by considering the existing Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) we use in our process. Both tools can move with an employee to another position within the CRA or another department and can be used to start the conversation about accommodation needs.

Progress update: CRA employees can use the Microsoft Word version of the [Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport](#) to explain any barriers that affect them at work and record possible solutions. Five federal government organizations are currently piloting the digital version of the Passport. This pilot will serve to inform the next steps for the launch of the Passport. In the meantime, we are improving our accommodations process to better position us to integrate the digital version of the Passport.

We continue to encourage employees to use the Word version of the Passport, either as a complement to or instead of our IAP, based on employee preferences. We published internal communications on this to ensure understanding is consistent across all our branches and regions and that we answer questions about the delayed integration of the Passport.

Status: Action will not be completed within the scope of the 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan, because of the postponed launch of an electronic version of the Government of Canada’s Workplace Accessibility Passport.

Original timeline: June 2023. Revised to December 2024.

Current revised timeline: 2026–2028 Accessibility Plan

Barrier 5: The current forms and processes to interact with the compensation program are not accessible to all employees.

Action 8: We will replace 14 compensation based webforms and processes with the Compensation Digital Modernization Project. This project includes new fully accessible processes that will be accessible for users of adaptive technology. Once this is completed, web forms and forms-based processes used to interact with the compensation program will be fully accessible to users of adaptive technology.

Progress update: Through the Compensation Digital Modernization Project, we have made 12 of the 14 compensation webforms and processes fully accessible, including those for users of adaptive technologies. We are scheduled to launch the other two in October 2024 and March 2025; all forms undergo accessibility testing before launch.

Status: Delayed

Original timeline: March 2024. Revised to December 2024.

Current revised timeline: March 2025

7.2 The built environment

The built environment refers to all CRA-occupied buildings, including how employees use physical workspaces and how the public accesses these buildings when needed.

Barrier 6: Although all CRA buildings have been fit-up to meet barrier-free building codes, not all CRA buildings are fully accessible since the codes are a minimum requirement. This creates barriers when moving through the workspace, accessing the building, and interacting within the space.

Action 9: To meet the goals of the Act, we will evaluate the built environment to ensure that it meets accessibility standards as defined by Accessible Standards Canada. We

will also look to determine where we can make accessibility enhancements in all our spaces and how the built environment can positively affect the workplace of the future. We will do this by:

- consulting continually with the CRA's Persons with Disabilities Network; and,
- working on short, medium, and long-term initiatives with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) as our service provider. Together with PSPC, we will make sure we are in line with the PSPC strategy, Accessible Standards Canada's requirements, and our accessibility goals for the built environment.

Progress update: We completed targeted CRA accessibility assessments for all CRA-occupied buildings (excluding certain buildings, such as those where major projects were being planned or where new sites were to be constructed). Also, we have led bi-weekly meetings with the Persons with Disabilities Network in the last year specifically to discuss accessibility elements related to the built environment.

As a result of the accessibility assessments and ongoing engagement with the Network, we prepared a report with recommendations to enhance accessibility in the following areas: variable lighting, circulation space, visual alarms, automatic door openers, way-finding systems and touchless equipment. The Network noted that implementing fixed locations and desks for persons with disabilities is another priority area of improvement.

Status: Completed

Timeline: March 2024

Action 10: We will plan improvements to the built environment that we can achieve in the short-and medium-term, such as:

- installing automatic door openers;
- installing touchless equipment in washrooms;
- re-evaluating lighting;
- Installing way-finding systems and signage components, such as QR codes, NFC tags, and Braille signage;
- installing sensory elements, including visual alarms for employees with hearing disabilities (such as visual alarms); and,
- For new projects, review how to improve circulation space for employees with mobility disabilities (more circulation space surrounding tables in meeting rooms, widths of corridors, and aisles etc.).

The examination, analysis, and alignment with the PSPC strategy will be completed and a planned approach for accessibility enhancements in line with PSPC will be in place.

Progress update: After examining, analyzing, and aligning with the PSPC strategy completed in March 2023, we have developed recommendations for accessibility enhancements. We also did this through ongoing collaboration with the Persons with Disabilities Network. These accessibility enhancements focus on targeted areas we

identified as priority areas: variable lighting, circulation space, visual alarms, automatic door openers, way-finding systems, and touchless equipment.

Regional offices already began adding accessibility elements to existing spaces. These additions include installing automatic door openers, acquiring accessible furniture, and testing various lighting approaches in offices.

Next steps include developing a CRA-wide directive to ensure accessibility improvements are done at the national level and across regions, introducing pilot projects to implement various accessibility elements, and gathering data to measure the effectiveness of these enhancements.

As part of this plan, we are also including accessibility considerations in all future projects related to the built environment, such as modernizing furniture solutions with accessibility features.

We will continue working with PSPC to ensure ongoing alignment when it comes to planning and implementing accessibility elements. We will also continue to engage with the Network throughout to ensure accessibility enhancements remain aligned with the Network's priorities.

Status: Completed. Annual updates will be provided.

Timeline: Analyze alignment with PSPC's strategy by March 2023; plan approach to implement accessibility enhancements in alignment with PSPC by March 2024.

Action 11: We will upgrade our Agency's fit-up standards to include accessibility items that are over and above minimum requirements based on how we intend to enhance accessibility for employees through consultations with the Persons with Disabilities Network. A plan to respond to recommendations made by the Network will be developed.

Progress update: We developed and internally shared recommendations on accessibility enhancements in March 2024. We will develop a concrete action plan by March 2025, identifying accessibility enhancements to be implemented in 2025-2026. The plan will include pilot projects to determine the effectiveness of proposed solutions as well as a cost benefit and feasibility analysis for specific accessibility elements. The plan will also be used to upgrade our fit-up standards to include accessibility items that are over and above minimum requirements. The plan will take into consideration the priority areas highlighted through consultations with persons with disabilities.

Status: On track

Timeline: Provide recommendations by March 2024 and develop an action plan by March 2025.

Barrier 7: CRA employees who are blind, partially sighted, deaf, or hard of hearing have to rely on their manager or colleagues to get information about the status of their building.

Action 12: We will acquire and deploy a new mass-notification system that is fully accessible for all employees. The system will include different options, such as TTY, email, text message, automated phone call, and mobile application with push notifications, to receive notifications about the status of our buildings. This way, employees will not need to rely on colleagues or management to get information about building status.

Progress update: In December 2023, we deployed a new mass-notification system to ensure all employees can receive notifications about the status of the CRA's buildings based on their preferred method of communication. During the deployment, clients flagged accessibility barriers, including issues when trying to access the system using adaptive technologies. Other barriers have been found since the deployment.

We have been working to remove these barriers and have addressed some barriers that require minor fixes. However, the work needed to address all the identified accessibility issues is more than expected and requires additional resources.

Status: Delayed

Original timeline: December 2023. Revised to March 2024.

Current revised timeline: March 2025

7.3 Information and communication technologies

Actions in the information and communication technologies (ICT) section aim to create a barrier-free digital environment accessible and useable by all CRA employees and clients.

Barrier 8: Internal and external-facing dynamic ICT solutions are not accessible to all users.

Action 13: Over the next three years, we will:

- complete our review of existing applications to identify existing barriers and work to remove them to make these solutions accessible to all users;
- research, procure, certify, and deploy accessibility development and testing tools to better enable IT developers to effectively build accessible ICT solutions;
- issue requests for proposals for enterprise-wide automated accessibility testing solutions to help better identify existing accessibility barriers in ICT solutions; and,

- work toward making 60% of all internal-facing dynamic ICT accessible to all users by December 2025 and making all ICT accessible to all users by December 2029.

Progress update: We completed our initial review of the accessibility of existing dynamic ICT solutions and determined that around 20% of internal-facing and 80% of external-facing ICT solutions were accessible as of August 2024. We evaluated the efforts required to make these solutions accessible and issued requests for an agency-wide automated accessibility development and testing solution.

Due to fiscal constraints, we are postponing the procurement, certification and deployment of these automated development and testing tools to better enable information technology (IT) developers to effectively build accessible ICT solutions. We will continue to work toward having our legacy internal-facing dynamic ICT accessible to all users; however, the timeline will be adjusted based on current projections.

We continue to develop ICT solutions with accessibility in mind at the onset. For instance, we developed the Secure Drop Zone to allow the CRA, taxpayers, and third parties to safely exchange information digitally on an ad-hoc basis outside of CRA's portals. The Secure Drop Zone has undergone a full user-experience redesign to ensure accessibility.

Status: Action will not be completed within the scope of the 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan.

Original timeline: December 2025

Revised timeline: 2026–2028 Accessibility Plan depending on funding

Action 14: We will develop and implement an accessibility compliance, auditing, and tracking system. This system will give CRA employees, IT solution owners, and senior management a single point of entry to report, prioritize, and address accessibility barriers found in our IT solutions.

Progress update: We have fully developed the first iteration of the CRA's Accessibility Compliance, Auditing and Tracking System. The System:

- allows internal CRA users to report accessibility barriers they encounter within IT solutions;
- provides active feedback loops on the progress of removing reported barriers; and,
- tracks barriers even in development phases.

Due to fiscal constraints, we delayed deploying and using this solution.

Status: Delayed

Original timeline: September 2023. Revised to March 2024.

Current revised timeline: March 2025

Action 15: We will review accessibility testing and development tool requirements. As well, we will evaluate, update, and purchase testing and development tools, as required, to ensure that effective testing and development tools are available to create accessible ICT.

Progress update: We continue to review and update accessibility testing and development tools to ensure they are current with industry standards. We also continue to monitor the industry to determine where new tools could help us identify, prevent, and remove accessibility barriers within our ICT solutions. As well, we have developed training material and guides in connection with these tools, to ensure users know how to best use them to enhance accessibility. This will continue to be an ongoing initiative to ensure that ICT solutions are accessible.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

Barrier 9: Accessibility is not fully integrated into our IT governance and policy instruments.

Action 16: We will ensure we incorporate accessibility into ICT governance and corporate policy instruments (directives, standards, and guidelines). This will be consistent with an agency-wide approach to reviewing our policies, directives, programs, service delivery channels, and operational procedures in addition to ensuring we include persons with disabilities into the process whenever possible.

Progress update: We continue to incorporate accessibility into ICT governance and corporate policy directives, standards and guidelines. We also continue to work with the Persons with Disabilities Network to ensure that current and future ICT solutions are accessible to all users. To formalize the governance structure for ICT accessibility within our agency, we established a director and a director general ICT Accessibility steering committee.

As well, we have published an updated directive on making IT accessible. This directive is in line with Accessibility Standards Canada's requirements for functional accessibility that apply to ICT products and services, in anticipation of those requirements becoming the official accessibility standard for the whole Government of Canada.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

Action 17: We will add project gating frameworks for accessibility into IT solution repositories, update the software certification process to include accessibility

assessments, develop accessibility statement guidelines for IT solutions, and ensure we include persons with disabilities into the process whenever possible.

Progress update: We continue the process of reviewing our IT solution repositories and certification processes to determine the best integration path for accessibility. We are actively consulting persons with disabilities in the process. The timeline for implementing improvements in this space will depend on funding commitments for the next two years.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

Barrier 10: Static content in internal- and external-facing static ICT solutions is not accessible to all users.

Action 18: We will complete our review of existing static ICT solutions to identify and remove existing barriers and make static ICT solutions accessible to all users. We will do this by:

- setting baselines through an updated web accessibility assessment;
- updating, creating, and documenting a process for ongoing IT audits (manual and automatic testing);
- expanding user experience methodology to include testing with people with disabilities; and,
- ensuring we consider accessibility at every step of our design and production processes.

Progress update: We are actively working to remove existing barriers from static ICT solutions, starting with the top 4,000 most visited CRA web pages, including forms and publications. Due to the large number of pages that need accessibility barriers removed, we are prioritizing public-facing pages and have therefore delayed addressing the barriers in internal-facing static ICT solutions.

The fact that we do not have a suitable tool for large-scale accessibility testing, which is required to establish baselines, is also limiting the advancement of our efforts. We are currently exploring other accessibility testing tools.

Status: Action will not be completed within the scope of the 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan.

Original timeline: June 2023. Revised to December 2025.

Current revised timeline: 2026–2028 Accessibility Plan depending on funding

Action 19: We will put a process in place to ensure that new static content design patterns (internal and external) are accessible by design and that these design patterns

and components follow consistent accessibility standards and are tested for accessibility compliance before deployment.

Progress update: We implemented accessibility training for web developers, and accessibility assessment is now part of our standard web publishing process. This standard applies to all new and updated public-facing static web pages to make sure they are accessible by default. We are testing all new templates and content design patterns for public-facing web pages for accessibility before we publish them.

Status: On track

Original timeline: June 2023. Revised to December 2025.

Current timeline: December 2025

Action 20: We will ensure that accessibility is integrated into our guidance materials by including accessibility guidelines in our User-Centred Design Guide for static content design and UX research and testing. This will build a culture of accessibility and guide accessible design.

Progress update: We are working to incorporate accessibility rules and guidelines in our User-Centred Design Guide for static content. We are prioritizing items such as making embedded videos accessible using captions and transcripts, ensuring tables can be properly read by screen readers, establishing hierarchy in titles and headings, using accessible font sizes and colours, and making sure we display footnotes in an accessible way.

In addition, we are incorporating accessibility-checking mechanisms that will flag barriers when the content is submitted for publishing. Our user testing methodology has also been expanded to include testing with persons with disabilities. The testing uses a platform that allows people who use various assistive technologies to test the content for accessibility.

Status: Delayed due to limited resources

Original timeline: June 2023. Revised to December 2023.

Current revised timeline: March 2025

7.4 Communications

Communications, other than ICT, focuses on applying plain language, mailing letters, and communicating with the public.

Barrier 11: Internal and public communication products are not accessible to all users.

Action 21: The CRA will improve the accessibility of internal and external communications materials by:

- improving accessibility for agency-wide internal and external communications, such as ensuring they are concise and use consistent formatting, providing transcripts or alt-text for videos and graphic elements for our internal and external web pages, and ensuring visual elements are accessible;
- reviewing key communications materials to identify gaps in providing accessible communications;
- co-creating communications materials with people with disabilities for people with disabilities;
- improving awareness that information is available in alternate formats when requested (for example, in response to access to information requests); and,
- providing accessible options such as sign language interpretation, closed captioning and simultaneous interpretation (including for events such as focus groups, town halls, webinars, and ministerial events).

Progress update: Building on last year's efforts, we adopted a new "ReadMe" page template for all external publications, making links to request alternate formats easier to find. We are also creating information videos in accessible formats, which will make it easier for clients to find the forms they need.

Internally, we are continually improving the accessibility of the new corporate look we launched last year in collaboration with the Persons With Disabilities Network. To do this, we:

- deliver presentations to raise employees' awareness on creating accessible communications products in plain language. One session was about how to use tools that improve accessibility to ensure employees apply the principles from Web Content Accessibility Guide (WCAG) 2.0;
- started using sign language, simultaneous translation, close captioning, and transcription in internal CRA events; and,
- are making accessibility the default in locally used applications by adopting a new 12-point font as the standard default font size for Microsoft Outlook.

Status: Completed

Timeline: December 2024

Barrier 12: Lack of plain language in internal and public communications materials.

Action 22: We will ensure we use plain language for internal and public communications by:

- improving plain language in all levels of public communications. This includes ensuring that we write speeches and media responses in plain language and that they are accessible; and,

- making sure we prioritize optimizing content for highly accessed services.

Progress update: We continue to improve our use of plain language in highly accessed services on our website by reviewing, optimizing, and testing these services with users. We developed a web optimization strategy that includes various completed and ongoing projects to improve highly used CRA web pages. Some of those pages include the My Account pre-sign in, scams and frauds, collections and payments, the Disability Tax Credit, and the end of life tax journey. For example, we significantly revamped the [Cancel or waive penalties and interest at the CRA](#) page to make the page easier to navigate and the content easier to understand.

For all new communications, we are conducting plain language and accessibility checks before publication. In addition, we are:

- delivering training on plain language to CRA employees;
- encouraging employees to avoid using technical jargon and abbreviations whenever possible, even in internal communications; and,
- providing links and source information that include further context and explanations when the nature of the business communication requires the use of more technical terms.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

Barrier 13: External consultations and stakeholder engagement exercises are not always fully accessible.

Action 23: We will conduct a review of our external consultations and stakeholder engagement exercises to ensure they are accessible. The review will identify actionable items for continuous improvement to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to participation for persons with disabilities, including offering sign language (ASL and LSQ) interpretation for our activities.

Progress update: We reviewed our consultations and stakeholder engagement activities and identified how we can improve accessibility. We are now doing the following activities to continually identify and prevent barriers to participation for persons with disabilities:

- asking participants what accommodations they require and accommodating them to the greatest extent possible;
- asking participants in our evaluations if we meet their accessibility needs to identify areas for improvement;
- conducting accessibility and plain language reviews of our published information relating to consultations and stakeholder engagement; and,

- providing advice on accessible engagement to internal partners and guiding them to accessibility considerations in our consultations and engagement project guides.

We will continue to review our practices, identify areas of improvement, and incorporate feedback to ensure our engagements with the public are accessible.

Status: Completed

Timeline: December 2024

7.5 The procurement of goods, services, and facilities

The procurement of goods, services, and facilities refers to how the CRA acquires and purchases goods, services, or other items.

Barrier 14: Lack of knowledge and resources about accessible procurement for CRA employees and potential vendors.

Action 24: We will strengthen the information available to employees and vendors about accessible procurement by:

- communicating obligations under the Act to our vendors, acquisition and credit card holders, external stakeholders, and external industry to increase awareness; and,
- sending letters to active vendors specifying our accessibility obligations to increase awareness and signal the need for them to consider that the CRA will seek to procure accessible products and services that support (and align with) its legislative obligations under the Act.

Progress update: We completed targeted campaigns for existing and prospective vendors to show our intent to procure accessible products and services in line with our legislative obligations under the *Accessible Canada Act*.

To raise awareness of our commitment to increasing accessibility in our procurement practices, we sent out letters to all active vendors (whose electronic contact information is readily available) setting out our obligations, and we published an accessibility obligations notice on the CRA's public procurement web page.

To help improve our procurement processes, we also updated our solicitation templates to invite vendors to share any accessibility issues or concerns they have about our documents, or about the procurement requirements outlined in our solicitations.

Status: Completed

Timeline: Send letters to 100% of active CRA vendors by March 31, 2023, and publish an accessibility obligations notice on our external web pages by March 2024.

Action 25: We will provide direction to acquisition card holders and cost centre managers to consider accessibility, particularly when renting facilities for off site meetings or events. Communications will be sent to all acquisition card holders and cost centre managers by March 31, 2024, and cyclical reminders will be sent thereafter.

Progress update: We developed and shared internal communications that told all cost centre managers and acquisition card holders about the need to consider accessibility in the CRA's procurement activities. We wrote these communications in collaboration with the Persons with Disabilities Network.

As well, we reviewed the training materials for acquisition card holders and cost centre managers and identified ways to include more accessibility considerations. As a next step, we are updating these training materials in the 2024–2025 fiscal year.

Additionally, information sessions were offered to all employees as part of the CRA's Contracting Awareness Month. These sessions provided participants with an overview of the procurement process, including the need for clients to consider and incorporate accessibility in planning their procurements.

Status: Completed

Timeline: March 2024

Action 26: We will ensure procurement documents are available in accessible formats and convert any inaccessible documents as required. 100% of internal and external procurement templates and documents will be converted to accessible formats by March 31, 2024.

Progress update: We converted 100% of internal and external procurement templates and documents into accessible formats. We then told the employees who handle procurement files about the newly accessible documents. We also distributed communications that included links to the accessible templates, including guidance documents to ensure continued accessibility, and have established an oversight process to ensure the documents stay accessible.

Additionally, we sent a communication to all CRA cost centre managers advising them of the new accessibility requirements for CRA procurement documents. We requested that client documents supporting a procurement be drafted in an accessible format. The communication included links to resources to support them in rendering their documents accessible.

Status: Completed

Timeline: March 2024

7.6 The design and delivery of programs and services

The design and delivery of programs and services, whether they be internal or external, must be fully accessible to all.

Barrier 15: The disability tax credit (DTC) application process can be burdensome for persons with disabilities and medical practitioners. An electronic means of submitting DTC applications would streamline the process and remove some of these barriers.

Action 27: We will make the DTC application process digital to help applicants access the DTC, as well as reduce the potential for problems that may delay eligibility decisions or cause appeals. We will do this by:

- making sure DTC applicants will be able to complete their portion of the application form online. If they do not have access to online services, they will be able to complete their portion of the form over the phone. After the applicant completes the form, we will send them a unique reference number and instruct them to give it to their medical practitioner;
- ensuring that medical practitioners can use the same digital application process and that they can digitally transmit data to us in a secure online session;
- completing our current plain language review of the DTC text. The DTC program will transition all of its external correspondence to a more modern letter creation system, which most of our other tax programs now use. The new system offers several advantages over the older system, including:
 - Allowing DTC correspondence to be sent digitally;
 - An e-notification feature that mail is ready for applicants to review;
 - Ensures that all correspondence is accessible in the My Account portal; and,
- measuring client satisfaction and collecting suggestions for future development through the feedback mechanism.

Progress update: In May 2023, we made the DTC fully accessible to applicants and medical practitioners. Applicants can fill out their part of the application online and medical practitioners can use the same digital application process to transmit data to us. Applicants also have the option to complete the process by phone, either with the support of an agent or using automated services.

We are using pre-existing feedback tools to measure client satisfaction and collect suggestions to improve the DTC process. We are working to make the feedback mechanism more comprehensive so it can capture client satisfaction and collect suggestions for future development of the digital DTC application process.

Status: Delayed

Original timeline: Spring 2023

Current revised timeline: December 2025

- We launched the fully accessible DTC online application in Spring 2023.
- We will implement a comprehensive feedback mechanism to measure client satisfaction and collect feedback on the DTC online application by December 2025.

Barrier 16: Persons with disabilities experience challenges when interacting with us, including when speaking with our contact centre agents.

Action 28: We will start reviewing the channels used by clients to contact us to better identify accessibility barriers and address gaps as part of our work on the modernization of contact centres and our whole-of-agency approach to prioritizing and executing service improvements that are accessible for everyone.

Progress update: Our review of the existing communications channels and identification of accessibility barriers and service gaps is ongoing, with a focus on automated service lines and attended phone lines. We are exploring enhancements to existing service channels, including teletypewriter (TTY) and the addition of new channels, for future implementation.

We launched a direct line for Video Relay Services (VRS) in time for the 2024 tax season and delivered accessibility training to contact centre agents working this line. This is part of our efforts to improve service for deaf and hard of hearing individuals who use sign language as a preferred method of communication. Clients' use of the dedicated VRS line has been increasing since its launch, and we have received positive feedback from clients through the Canadian Administrator of Video Relay Service.

Status: Action will not be completed within the scope of the 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan due to the time required to review existing communications channels and implement accessibility enhancements.

Original timeline: Review of channels to be completed by March 2024, including a prioritized list of initial actions, policy or procedural changes required to remove barriers.
Current revised timeline: 2026–2028 Accessibility Plan.

Action 29: With the support of an external contractor, we will identify internal accessibility barriers related to the individual and business tax and benefit enquiries contact centres. This work will lead to an in-depth report about the state of Contact Centre systems and processes, as well as a roadmap demonstrating the most appropriate way to move forward in remedying identified issues.

Progress update: We completed our assessment of internal accessibility barriers related to the individual and business tax and benefit enquiries contact centres in 2023.

After that, we developed plans to expand on these findings and establish stronger accessibility requirements for contact centre technologies and processes.

Next steps include implementing actions to address the identified accessibility issues, such as identifying diverse profiles of Canadians that access our services and their experiences and incorporating technological tools specific to each of their abilities.

Status: Completed. We will provide annual updates.

Timeline: An in-depth report on the state of contact centre systems/processes will be finalized, including a roadmap to address issues identified in the report by February 2023.

Barrier 17: Persons with disabilities who use assistive technology are limited in their options to contact us online. As a result, they may not be able to access services.

Action 30: We will strengthen our online service offerings by:

- introducing chat services, including a chatbot and a live agent chat service, that have the necessary features that persons with vision, hearing, and cognitive disabilities can use successfully;
- identifying common barriers between chatbots and live agent chat services, identifying the accessibility features that will remedy these barriers, and developing accessible business requirements for IT;
- recruiting testers with disabilities to test the accessibility level of the chatbot during all stages of development and to provide feedback based on their personal experiences; and,
- dedicating IT accessibility testing teams to test the internal and external user interfaces for the live agent chat service.

Progress update: We released new accessibility features in our online chat in October 2024, including a new stream of authenticated online chat. By continually identifying gaps through user testing, we have been able to revise the online chat to improve accessibility and meet the expected standards.

We identified barriers with the chatbot and completed accessibility testing on it. The testing resulted in recommendations we need to implement to make the product fully accessible.

Status: Online chat is complete, but accessibility improvements to the chatbot are delayed.

Original timeline:

- August 2023 (chatbot) and October 2023 (online chat)
- Revised to Summer/Fall 2024 (chatbot) and May 2024 (online chat)

Current revised timeline: March 2025

Barrier 18: Few alternatives for providing consent and authorizing a representative.

Action 31: We will find other accommodation measures to serve external clients who are unable to sign forms or represent themselves using our current approaches. We will do this by:

- evaluating requirements for legal validation;
- finding a viable way for clients to give consent, for example, in the presence of a witness; and,
- updating our process to authorize a representative: while there are options that do not require a legal document, many families or guardians have had to pay to get a power of attorney.

Progress update: In close collaboration with the Persons with Disabilities Network, we identified volunteers to test other options for authorizing a representative and completed demo testing for other authorization options on three public-facing portals: My Account, Represent a Client, and My Business Account. We are currently reviewing the feedback and compiling the results. Once we have identified additional secure options from the feedback, we will develop an implementation and communications roadmap.

Status: On track

Timeline: June 2025

- Communications on alternate options for authorization will be issued, including for persons with disabilities. The first phase to promote current options completed by September 2023.
- By November 2024, an options analysis of alternatives to provide secure and accessible authorization options will be completed, developed through engagement with stakeholders including persons with disabilities.
- A roadmap to implement the secure solutions identified will be completed by June 2025.

Barrier 19: Not all persons with disabilities can contact us to provide feedback or make a complaint about the accessibility of CRA programs or services.

Action 32: We will ensure that Service Feedback Program webform is available and accessible to all, including persons with disabilities, and will complete a review of the program and of its service delivery channels to ensure they meet the requirements of the Act.

Progress update: We reviewed the Service Feedback Program web form and the Program's service delivery channels and found that they meet accessibility standards. The Program's web form, [RC193 Service Feedback](#), is available and accessible to all, including persons with disabilities. We are working to continually update and improve the accessibility of the Service Feedback web form.

Status: Completed

Timeline: March 2023

Action 33: We will make the Service Feedback process and its associated forms fully accessible, including internal procedures manuals used by employees. Processes and forms will be reviewed with stakeholders and content developers to find interim and long-term solutions to address identified accessibility barriers.

Progress update: We continue to identify and address accessibility issues associated with the service feedback process, procedures and communications, in collaboration with stakeholders, content developers and subject matter experts. We are working on updating external pages and enhancing their accessibility, notably the [Send feedback about CRA service](#) and [Send CRA accessibility feedback](#) pages. As well, we are adding accessibility features such as allowing users to copy or paste information when submitting feedback, and we are converting many Word documents to web-based material, which are more user-centric and accessible.

We have also:

- created accessibility training for those working in the Service Feedback Program;
- enhanced the accessibility of procedures manuals and work tools by converting them to plain language and updating their content; and,
- added alternative text for icons and text boxes.

Status: Delayed because we need more time to complete the action and publish the various updates within the action.

Original timeline: March 2023. Revised to September 2024.

Current revised timeline: March 2025

Barrier 20: Accessibility is not fully integrated into all of our corporate policies, directives, decision-making processes, and procedures.

Action 34: We will review all of our corporate policies to identify which policy instruments do not include accessibility components and how we can fulfill any identified gaps. As well, we will review our decision-making processes, including those for investments.

Progress update: To ensure we apply an accessibility lens in our review cycles, we have designed a process through which accessibility experts play a key role in

incorporating accessibility elements. Reviews of corporate policies and decision-making processes are ongoing. We are making revisions to all existing and new corporate policies and processes that do not include accessibility components.

Status: On track

Timeline: March 2025

Action 35: We will deliver our Integrated Service Strategy, which establishes accessibility for everyone as a principle in whole-of-agency service improvements.

Progress update: We developed an Integrated Service Strategy to ensure that we incorporate an accessibility lens when assessing and developing solutions to lessen any negative impacts and unintended barriers to persons with disabilities. The Integrated Service Strategy is a whole-of-agency approach to service improvement as a way to deliver more seamless client experiences with the intention of creating fully accessible services.

Status: Completed

Timeline: April 2023

Barrier 21: Many documents and manuals that the CRA produces do not offer accessibility information or are not offered in accessible formats.

Action 36: We will work to ensure that all documents and resources are fully accessible through the following actions:

- reviewing forms and processes to find interim and long-term solutions to address identified accessibility barriers;
- making sure we test user experience content for accessibility in keeping with Treasury Board's direction and best practices;
- making sure we offer risk assessment documents in an alternate format; and,
- using accessible infographics in future statistical reports to make web published data and Open Government reports clearer and more effective to Canadians and to ensure all content is fully accessible.

Progress update: We are continuing to:

- review forms and procedures;
- test user experience content (such as our web pages, text, images, and graphics); and,
- ensure the reports we publish use accessible infographics with alternative text.

Additionally, we are mapping the work required to remove accessibility barriers from over 2,000 CRA forms and will establish a roadmap for long-term solutions next fiscal year. Until we make all forms accessible by default, we are offering forms in alternate

formats, such as large print, Braille, and audio formats, to ensure persons with disabilities can access the forms they need.

To improve accessibility in our documents and manuals, we created an accessibility checklist that supports the transformation of existing documents and manuals as well as the creation of new ones. We also continue to provide agency-wide security awareness tools and resources in accessible formats for all CRA employees.

Status: Delayed due to the volume of content with identified accessibility issues.

Original timeline: March 2024. Revised to July 2024.

Current revised timeline: December 2025

7.7 Transportation

Transportation at the CRA mainly refers to the vehicles it owns, leases, or rents (also known as a “fleet”) that run between its offices, tax centres and other buildings; for example, trucks that it uses to deliver mail between tax centres and offices.

Barrier 22: Accessibility is currently not considered as part of the development and maintenance of fleet management tools and forms.

Action 37: We will support the creation of accessible tools and resources to manage our fleet by:

- updating the supporting forms and tools;
- reviewing fleet management forms and tools to integrate accessibility considerations (for example, the business case for acquiring vehicles); and,
- making sure that the other tools or documents we use to support fleet management are accessible (for example, authorization or taxable benefits forms and logbooks).

Progress update: We identified and converted all fleet-related forms to accessible formats, and published them on our CRA intranet site.

Status: Complete

Timeline: Converted 100% of fleet management forms and tools to accessible format by March 2024.

8. Training and learning on accessibility

Training and learning are essential parts of any organizational change, and the CRA's transition into a fully accessible organization is no different. With this in mind, the CRA's Accessibility Plan also makes commitments for the CRA to invest in training and learning on accessibility – extending the scope of the Plan even further.

With comprehensive accessibility training, CRA employees will have the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to address accessibility barriers and create accessible experiences for all.

Barrier 23: Insufficient training for CRA employees, managers and executives on how to design and provide barrier-free internal and external services.

Action 38: We recognize how important it is to make sure that clients and employees with disabilities feel respected, understood, and welcomed. We will improve the service provided to persons with disabilities by:

- Identifying ways to include accessibility awareness training and other specialized training in the learning paths of employees, particularly front-line employees who provide services to the public and those who deliver internal services.
- Using accessible online or group training tools to raise awareness of the lived experiences of those with visible and non-visible disabilities.

Progress update: We continue to work with the CRA's Persons with Disabilities Network to develop and promote accessibility awareness initiatives to employees. We are also offering courses to employees relating to disability inclusion, understanding the lived experiences of persons with disabilities (by featuring speakers who shared about the challenges they have faced), and developing strategies to help remove accessibility barriers – including resources specifically for managers.

Following a learning needs assessment conducted with the Persons with Disabilities Network, we expanded the concept of the Accessibility Hub to include different learning, training, and information tools and modules for employees. Therefore, we cancelled the previously planned Accessibility 101 series of training videos and instead will capture its offerings in the Accessibility Hub. The assessment also took into account wider Government of Canada learning offerings, such as the [Employment and Social Development Canada's AccessAbility Playbook](#) that sets out how to better understand the barriers that persons with disabilities face in accessing government programs and services.

Status: On track

Timeline: We will continually develop and publish products throughout 2023 and 2024.

Action 39: We will provide all employees with relevant accessibility knowledge and tools to provide services to persons with disabilities, whether they be CRA employees or members of the public. This work will include:

- Ensuring that procedural manuals contain the necessary information or links to information required to guide program officers in treating service feedback received from persons with disabilities;
- Creating an Accessibility Hub, which will house recommended resources for CRA employees in designing and delivering accessible programs and services;
- Creating a specialized training program for the compensation centre employees on providing accessible services, co-created with persons with disabilities; and,
- Expanding training offerings related to the Duty to Accommodate for both managers and employees.

Progress update: To better equip program officers in the Service Feedback Program in treating feedback received from persons with disabilities, we are reviewing and updating the procedural manuals they use. We are implementing changes to increase knowledge about accessibility barriers, such as by including concrete examples in training manuals. We are also exploring ways to adapt procedures to better address accessibility complaints by increasing the collaboration between service feedback officers and business areas that are responsible for the service where the complaint originated.

In addition, we launched the Accessibility Hub in October 2024. The Hub serves as a one-stop portal for accessibility information and resources available to all CRA employees. We will continue to update the Hub in the coming months and promote it across our organization.

We are currently still identifying options for an accessible client service training program to be delivered to compensation centre employees. Given that not all compensation systems are accessible, we continue to work with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and the Public Service Pay Centre on an accessible solution. In the meantime, we offer alternative formats to clients on request and have incorporated accessibility resources and tools to the current training program for compensation service agents.

Lastly, we launched new training, in the form of information sessions that we are delivering to the management community, on the duty to accommodate principles and process.

Status: Delayed due to longer than expected timeline to create specialized training for compensation centre employees on providing accessible services, and the additional time needed to update service feedback procedural manuals.

Original timeline: December 2024

Current revised timeline: March 2025

Action 40: We will launch resources, tools, and guidance for IT employees on IT accessibility. IT employees will have the resources they need to make internal IT solutions accessible. We will do this by:

- Promoting IT accessibility guidelines internally to IT employees;
- Providing current and future IT employees with access to IT accessibility training; and,
- Developing a centralized knowledge base to host all IT accessibility knowledge and promote accessibility to ensure that all IT professionals consider accessibility in all phases of the software development lifecycle.

Progress update: We continue to support our accessibility learning paths for IT professionals to learn about accessibility, how to develop software with accessibility in mind and how to test for accessibility-related issues.

We are updating “How to Test” guides to ensure they align with new IT accessibility requirements, and we are integrating new testing tools. In addition, we have acquired an accessibility training platform that we are in the process of rolling out. This platform will ensure all employees have access to up-to-date training materials on IT accessibility.

Status: Completed

Timeline: September 2023

Action 41: We will launch resources, tools, and guidance for our employees on how to create accessible communications such as documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and emails. We will equip employees with the resources and information they need to make all communications accessible. We will do this by:

- Promoting accessibility guidelines internally to all employees;
- Making training and support on creating accessible communications available to all employees; and,
- Updating system defaults to enable accessible functionality whenever possible (for example, using accessible fonts, colours, and closed captioning).

Progress update: We continue to develop and promote guides and resources to support employees in creating accessible communications and documents and understanding common accessibility barriers. We have delivered training, information sessions and presentations to employees across our agency’s branches and regions on:

- creating accessible documents using Microsoft 365 applications;
- using accessibility tools when developing and distributing communications products including web content;
- conducting user testing with persons with disabilities for new products; and,

- hosting accessible meetings and events.

Status: On track

Timeline: December 2025

Action 42: We will review the existing training offered at the CRA on all topics to assess the degree to which they are accessible and take steps to identify solutions, accommodations or alternatives for training that is not currently accessible.

Progress update: We reviewed all corporate training for all employees and have begun implementing solutions, accommodations and alternatives. However, due to current fiscal constraints, we have to delay implementing any solutions to address the accessibility barriers identified in corporate training products. In addition, we plan to implement a new, fully accessible learning management system that will affect the entire agency learning infrastructure by 2027.

We continue to convert in-class and e-learning training materials to accessible versions; all mandatory training, safety-related training and high-use training materials have been prioritized and are now entirely accessible. Of the total of 450 learning products, 215 (47%) are tagged to be converted to accessible versions – a 10% decrease from last year. We also redesigned a major internal system that offers resources and articles to employees, including on accessibility. It is now entirely compliant with the accessibility standards.

Status: Action will not be completed within the scope of the 2023–2025 Accessibility Plan due to financial constraints.

Original timeline: December 2023. Revised to December 2025.

Current revised timeline: 2026–2028 Accessibility Plan.

9. Accessibility in Action

The CRA's efforts to strengthen accessibility are not exclusive to actions under its Accessibility Plan. In support of the Government of Canada's larger goal of a barrier-free Canada by 2040, CRA employees are contributing toward improving our agency's accessibility culture, whether it be through grassroots efforts or through corporate initiatives. This desire for change, including going beyond our formal commitments and legislative obligations, must be nurtured and encouraged through the CRA's accessibility journey. **Below are examples of this initiative in action:**

- **Adaptive Technology Peer Support Centre** – To address the ongoing need for additional support and training for adaptive technology users, we have launched a peer support centre that is hosted on Microsoft Teams. This new initiative allows users to ask questions about their adaptive technology in a safe, open community. They receive advice from subject matter experts, as well as from peers who share their own personal experiences.
- **Getting employees the equipment they need** – One of our regional offices developed an inventory system to log all items that have previously been purchased but are not currently in use. The inventory will help managers determine if they need new equipment to meet accommodation needs and allows them to put existing equipment to use quickly by the employees who need it.

Culture change is a gradual process, but emerging efforts to drive accessibility culture change forward are happening. Numerous accessibility events, such as National AccessAbility Week, have increased employees' awareness of the importance of accessibility and are establishing a new understanding that accessibility is everyone's business – no matter what business area one works in.

These initiatives, among others, demonstrate our continued efforts to break down barriers in our programs, services, and functions and our commitment to becoming barrier free by 2040.

Annex A - Glossary

Accessible Canada Act

Purpose

The purpose of the *Accessible Canada Act* is to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040. This involves identifying, removing and preventing barriers in federal jurisdiction in 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, and
- transportation (airlines, as well as rail, road and marine transportation providers that cross provincial or international borders)

Principles

The Act is to be implemented in recognition of and in accordance with the following principles:

- everyone must be treated with dignity
- everyone must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the life they are able and wish to have
- everyone must be able to participate fully and equally in society
- everyone must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire
- laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the ways that different kinds of barriers and discrimination intersect
- persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures, and
- accessibility standards and regulations must be made with the goal of achieving the highest level of accessibility

Application

The Act applies to organizations under federal responsibility, including:

- the Government of Canada, including government departments, agencies and Crown corporations
- parts of the private sector that the Government of Canada regulates, such as:
 - banks
 - the federal transportation network, including:
 - airlines
 - rail, road and marine transportation providers that cross provincial or international borders
 - the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors
- the Canadian Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

The Act also applies to parliamentary entities, with a tailored approach to respect parliamentary privilege. Parliamentary entities include the:

- House of Commons
- Senate
- Library of Parliament, and
- Parliamentary Protective Service

Source: [Summary of the Accessible Canada Act](#)

Accessible Canada Regulations

The Accessible Canada Regulations set out rules and penalties to ensure that organizations abide by the *Accessible Canada Act*, which stipulates that federally regulated entities must prepare and publish accessibility plans, progress reports, and their feedback processes. Failure to comply with the Act leads to the Regulations being invoked to determine the level of violation and the penalty.

Source: [Accessible Canada Regulations](#)

Accessibility plans

The *Accessible Canada Act* requires that organizations:

- **prepare and publish accessibility plans:**
 - make accessibility plans to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the priority areas in their:
 - policies
 - programs
 - practices
 - services
 - update their plans every 3 years or as specified in regulations, and
 - consult people with disabilities when creating and updating their plans
- **set up a feedback process:** have a way to receive and deal with feedback about their accessibility
- **prepare and publish progress reports:**
 - make regular progress reports that describe the actions the organization has taken to implement their accessibility plans
 - include information in their reports on feedback received and how the organization took the feedback into consideration, and
 - consult people with disabilities when preparing their reports

Source: [Summary of the Accessible Canada Act](#)

Accessibility

The degree to which a product, service, program, or environment is available to be accessed or used by all.

Source: [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Accommodation

The process and implementation of changes to a job, tasks, and/or to the environment in which the job is accomplished that enable employees to perform job duties productively and maximize participation in the workplace. Accommodation options generally fall under three main categories: adjustments to the work schedule, adjustments to the job duties/activities, and adjustments to the work environment.

Sources: [Workplace Management – Glossary of Definitions](#) and [Employee accommodation process](#)

Assistive or adaptive device/technology

A device or system designed to help a person to perform a task. These can include assistive devices or equipment (for example, canes, crutches, walkers, wheelchairs, hearing aids and personal emergency response systems) as well as IT-related items (for example, computer screen-reading software).

Source: Adapted from [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Barrier

Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation. Barriers can be physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal.

Source: [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)

- **Mission**
Administer tax, benefits, and related programs, and ensure compliance on behalf of governments across Canada, thereby contributing to the ongoing economic and social well-being of Canadians.
- **Vision**
Trusted, fair, and helpful by putting people first.
- **Values**
 - Integrity - We establish and preserve trust with all stakeholders by applying the law fairly and upholding our standards.
 - Professionalism - We are knowledgeable, accurate, conscientious, innovative, and service-oriented.
 - Respect - We interact with people in a way that makes them feel heard and valued. We listen and respond judiciously.
 - Collaboration - We recognize and act on opportunities to work together to deliver the CRA's mandate. We consult, and share ideas, fostering innovation to improve the service experience, both internally and externally.

Source: [About the Canada Revenue Agency](#)

Clients

Individuals, businesses or their representatives served by or using services provided by a government department.

Source: [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Consultations

Consultation involves communicating with stakeholders to gather comments, opinions, and other information. Stakeholders are the people affected by a policy, program, practice, or service.

Source: Adapted from [Guidance on the Accessible Canada Regulations - Consulting persons with disabilities](#)

Department

Any of:

- the departments named in Schedule I of the *Financial Administration Act*
- the divisions or branches of the federal public administration set out in column I of Schedule I.1 of the *Financial Administration Act*
- a commission under the Inquiries Act that is designated by order of the Governor in Council as a department for the purposes of this Act
- the staffs of:
 - the Senate
 - the House of Commons
 - the Library of Parliament
 - the Office of the Senate Ethics Officer
 - the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner
 - the Parliamentary Protective Service
 - the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer
 - any departmental corporation named in Schedule II of the Financial Administration Act

Source: [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Disability

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

Source: [Accessible Canada Act](#)

Disability type

A form of limitation, be it physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory or other.

In its 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, Statistics Canada used screening questions to identify the following 10 types of disability:

- seeing
- hearing
- mobility
- flexibility
- dexterity
- pain-related
- learning
- developmental
- mental health-related
- memory

The screening questionnaire also contained a question on any other health problem or condition that has lasted or is expected to last for six months or more. This question was meant to be a catch-all if the 10 disability types did not cover the respondent's situation. This question is associated with an 11th "unknown" disability type.

Source: [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Diversity

The inclusion of different types of people. A diverse workforce in the public service is made up of individuals who have an array of identities, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, perspectives and experiences that are representative of Canada's current and evolving population.

Source: [Building a Diverse and Inclusive Public Service: Final Report of the Joint Union/Management Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion](#)

Employee

Any person employed by a regulated entity described in paragraph 7(1)(e) or (f) of the *Accessible Canada Act* and includes a dependent contractor as defined in subsection 3(1) of the Canada Labour Code, but excludes:

- (a) a person employed under a program designated by the employer as a student employment program, and
- (b) a student employed solely during the student's vacation periods

Source: [Accessible Canada Regulations](#)

Feedback

For the purposes of fulfilling the CRA's obligations under the [Accessible Canada Act](#), feedback is information received related to the:

- barriers that employees encounter;
- barriers that other people who deal with the CRA encounter; or,

- manner in which the CRA is implementing its accessibility plan.

The feedback received may be positive or critical, general or specific, lengthy or brief, identified or anonymous.

For the purposes of the [Accessible Canada Act](#) and its regulations, there is a difference between consultation input and feedback:

- Consultation input is comments received when consulting persons with disabilities in a targeted and time limited way.
- Feedback is comments received through feedback processes.

Source: Adapted from [Guidance on the Accessible Canada Regulations - Feedback processes and descriptions](#)

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus)

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) is a process for:

- understanding who is affected by policies, programs, initiatives, or issues
- identifying how the initiative could be tailored to meet diverse needs of the people most impacted, and
- anticipating and mitigating any barriers to accessing or benefitting from the initiative

GBA Plus is an intersectional analysis that goes beyond biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences to consider other factors, such as age, disability, education, ethnicity, economic status, geography (including rurality), language, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

Source: [What is Gender-based Analysis Plus - Women and Gender Equality Canada](#)

Hiring

Appointments that added to the employee population in the past fiscal year that involve:

- permanent and term employees
- terms of three months or more
- students
- term employees whose employment status has changed to permanent

Staffing measures the flow of employees into the public service and may include more than one appointment per person per year.

Source: Human Resources Branch, CRA

Inclusion

The act of including someone or something as part of a group. An inclusive workplace is fair, equitable, supportive, welcoming and respectful.

Inclusion recognizes, values and leverages differences in identities, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, experiences and perspectives that support and reinforce Canada's evolving human rights framework.

Source: [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Lived experience

Personal knowledge of the world gained through direct, first-hand interactions in day-to-day contact. The knowledge gained is based on individuals' perspectives, identities, and personal history as well as how they live and respond to the world around them.

Source: [Lived experience - Oxford Reference](#)

Source: [Lived experience of people with disabilities | Australian Institute of Family Studies](#)

“Nothing Without Us”

A key principle of the *Accessible Canada Act* that means that persons with disabilities should be consulted when developing laws, policies, and programs that affect them.

In keeping with this principle, the Government of Canada works with persons with disabilities and organizations that advocate on their behalf to better understand the full diversity of the community it serves.

Source: [Guidance on the Accessible Canada Regulations- Consulting persons with disabilities](#)

Persons with disabilities

Persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment and who:

- a) consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment because of that impairment, or
- b) believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment because of that impairment

Persons with disabilities include persons whose functional limitations owing to their impairment have been accommodated in their current job or workplace, as well as clients engaging with Canada Revenue Agency programs and services.

Source: Adapted from the [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Note: For the purposes of the Canada Revenue Agency's Accessibility Plan, a person with a disability is anyone who identifies as having a disability based on the definition in the *Accessible Canada Act*.

Persons with Disabilities Network

The Canada Revenue Agency's Persons with Disabilities Network plays an important role in shaping accessibility at our organization. The Network is composed of employees with disabilities who have lived experience with accessibility barriers, have

insights and experiences to share in helping remove barriers, and are also taxpayers themselves.

Plain language

Wording, structure, and design that are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information.

Source: [Accessibility Standards Canada](#)

Promotions

An appointment to a position at a higher pay level either within the same occupational group or subgroup or in another group or subgroup.

Source: [Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#)

Universal design

The design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. "Universal design" shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

Source: [Definitions: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)