

# Office of the Auditor General of Canada Accessibility Plan 2022–25



Office of the  
Auditor General  
of Canada

Bureau du  
vérificateur général  
du Canada

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## Message from the Auditor General of Canada

“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.”



Karen Hogan, FCPA, FCA  
Auditor General of Canada

This proverb resonates as we publish our first accessibility plan at a pivotal time for our organization.

There is no question that the past few years have been challenging and that we have had to adapt and make changes, including becoming a hybrid workforce. The future became “now.” We had to take a good look at ourselves and to talk about what we do well and what we need to do better.

As we look to the future, this plan is integral to our vision for an office that is inclusive, welcomes diversity, and is committed to the welfare of our people and those we serve.

We are building an accessibility mindset into the future course we have set for ourselves and our shared goal of one office, one team, one vision.

This means incorporating accessibility into our annual operational plans and establishing a permanent accessibility coordination role in our office. It

means continued open communications and consultations with our employees to further our understanding of the accessibility barriers we need to fix and prevent. It also means creating safe spaces for employees to share their experiences as persons living with disabilities and as disability allies.

To inform this plan’s development, we asked our employees to share insights about their work realities through a survey. More than 60% responded, and many provided powerful personal comments. The participation rate and input are inspiring and highlight the professionalism, caring, and openness of our people.

Diversity and inclusion in our workplace must and will include accessibility for all.

## About the Office of the Auditor General of Canada

The Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) is an independent office that reports directly to Parliament. The head of the OAG, the Auditor General of Canada, is an officer of Parliament.

The OAG conducts independent performance and financial audits and provides objective information, advice, and assurance to Parliament, territorial legislatures, boards of Crown corporations, governments, and Canadians. We bring an evidence-based, non-partisan, and fair approach to our work.

The OAG's primary legislative responsibilities include

- financial audits of the consolidated financial statements of the Government of Canada and the governments of the 3 territories (Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories) and of the financial statements of federal Crown corporations, territorial corporations, and other organizations
- performance audits of federal and territorial organizations and programs
- special examinations of federal Crown corporations
- environmental and sustainable development audits and monitoring activities (which are undertaken by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development on behalf of the Auditor General of Canada)

The OAG employs over 800 people across Canada. We are headquartered in Ottawa with regional offices in Vancouver, Edmonton, Montréal, and Halifax.

Our teams are composed of dedicated and accomplished professionals who bring a diverse mix of education, experience, and expertise to their work. Together, we are committed to fostering a caring and collaborative workplace where everyone feels valued and supported and everyone is treated with dignity and respect. With this plan, we are working to ensure that accessibility becomes a cornerstone of that commitment.

## General

Should you have any feedback to provide regarding barriers, or any questions or comments related to the implementation of our accessibility plan and progress reports, you may reach us by using any of the following means.

**Directly online, by completing the following information request form**

<https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/web-inquiry.html>

**By email**

[accessible@oag-bvg.gc.ca](mailto:accessible@oag-bvg.gc.ca)

**By telephone**

1-888-761-5953

**By TTY service (telecommunications device service for the hearing impaired)**

613-954-8042

**By fax**

613-957-0474

**By mail**

ATTENTION: Accessibility Coordinator  
Office of the Auditor General of Canada  
240 Sparks Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G6  
Canada

**By social media**

Direct message on any of the platform

As required by subsection 70(1) of the [Accessible Canada Act](#), the OAG has developed a feedback process in parallel with this plan.

OAG employees, people and organizations that deal with the OAG, and the general public are invited to provide feedback on this plan and the accessibility barriers they have experienced in their interactions with the OAG. You can use our feedback process to send us your comments and ideas to help us create an accessible, barrier-free Canada. We invite you to send us your feedback on

- our accessibility plan or progress report
- the implementation of the plan
- barriers you may encounter when working with us, communicating with us, or accessing our programs and services
- our feedback process

We will acknowledge your feedback within 20 business days, in the same way it was submitted. Please note that for security reasons, we delete messages with file attachments. Anonymous feedback can be submitted by mail, email, or telephone. If your feedback is left anonymously, we cannot send an acknowledgement.

All feedback will be reviewed by the Accessibility Coordinator. It will be forwarded to relevant divisions when necessary. If the feedback included contact information, any immediate action resulting from the feedback will be communicated to the person who submitted the feedback. All feedback related to accessibility will be captured in a central location for analysis and record keeping. Feedback will be used to help identify, prevent, and remove barriers in a timely manner.

Our annual progress reports on our accessibility plan will describe the feedback received. They will outline how the feedback informed our accessibility planning. The progress reports will also identify adjustments made in response to the feedback.

Subsections 8(2) and 9(5) of the [Accessible Canada Regulations](#) require that we must be able to provide our accessibility plan and feedback process in alternate formats on request. Requests for documentation in Braille or audio format must be fulfilled within 45 days of the request. All other requests must be fulfilled within 15 days.

Our Accessibility Coordinator is responsible for receiving feedback. The coordinator will also respond to requests for copies of our plan and feedback process, including in alternate formats.

Alternate formats include large print, Braille, audio, and electronic formats that are compatible with adaptive technologies that assist persons with disabilities.

## Executive summary

The Office of the Auditor General of Canada Accessibility Plan 2022–25 provides an overview of our mandate, our accessibility initiatives to date, and our commitments for the coming 3 years.

This plan reflects the accessibility barriers identified through employee input, ongoing monitoring of new and emerging government-wide accessibility policies, and information sharing with colleagues and communities of practice across the federal public service. It also underscores our acknowledgement that we have more to learn and that “accessible by default” is possible only if we apply an accessibility lens to everything we do without exception.

In this plan, we have focused on the following 7 priority areas for action and associated goals:

### Employment

**Goal:** Promote the development of human resource practices that are accessible and inclusive so that all employees, including persons with disabilities, are supported and able to contribute to the OAG.

### The built environment

**Goal:** Ensure barrier-free access and use of the physical environment for OAG employees and visitors.

### Information and communication technologies

**Goal:** Ensure that the tools, software, and documents used by employees to fulfill their responsibilities are accessible by default.

### Communications, other than information and communication technologies

**Goal:** Produce accessible communication products and activities.

### The procurement of goods, services, and facilities

**Goal:** Ensure that accessibility requirements are considered by both business owners and contracting authorities when purchasing goods and services, and that, where applicable, accessibility requirements inform the technical specifications incorporated in procurement documents.

### The design and delivery of programs and services

**Goal:** Ensure that accessibility considerations are integrated into the delivery of audit reports.

## Transportation

**Goal:** Ensure that OAG employees and contractors have access to transportation that is accessible and inclusive, allowing individuals to accomplish their work both in the office and while travelling on behalf of the organization.

## Accessibility statement

The OAG Accessibility Plan 2022–25 marks an important step in our journey alongside Government of Canada organizations, Crown corporations, Parliament, and federally regulated private industry toward a barrier-free Canada by 2040.

To get there, the OAG has committed to an “accessible by default” mindset. This mindset guides our day-to-day work and interactions with one another and with the Canadian public and parliamentarians we serve.

When the *Accessible Canada Act* came into force in July 2019, it was inconceivable that a global pandemic was on our doorstep. The pandemic turned lives upside down in unimaginable ways. It also served as a wake-up call and a compelling reminder of the rich diversity in society and of our personal and collective responsibilities to recognize and respect diversity always, not just during times of crisis.

“In many ways, the focus in 2020 was on creating the critical conditions to encourage a shift from discussing accessibility to taking action on accessibility.”

—Making It Real: Update on the Implementation of “Nothing Without Us”—  
Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada (2021)

At the OAG, accessibility is an important touchpoint for our goal of one team, one office, one vision and our 3 guiding principles:

- **We care for our people.** We foster a diverse and inclusive work environment where health, wellness, and opportunities for learning and growth are promoted. This caring culture attracts, develops, and retains skilled and engaged professionals.
- **We connect with our partners.** We nurture collaborative and respectful relationships, rooted in trust and accountability that spur government-wide improvements in the best interests of Canada.
- **We modernize our processes, products, and technologies to facilitate the delivery of our legislative auditing program.** We strive to continuously evolve and improve our approaches, tools, and products. Innovation combined with expertise supports the delivery of audits that remain relevant and add value for parliamentarians and Canadians.

This plan builds on these principles and on our commitment to greater cohesion across the OAG. It takes inspiration from the key principle of the *Accessible Canada Act*: “nothing without us.” It is deliberately dynamic. It will evolve as we continue to consult and work with persons with disabilities and correct our course as needed.

This plan is informed by employee surveys and town-hall discussions about what the revitalization of our organization needs to mean. It is also informed by a vision for our future that includes hybrid work. The hybrid model will focus on inclusion, collaboration, and flexibility, with a front-and-centre commitment to excellence in the work we do.

This plan describes the efforts we have made to date across our organization to identify, assess, and prevent accessibility barriers. It includes our planned and implemented actions to ensure compliance with legal and policy standards. It is also a commitment to prioritize accessibility across the OAG by continually integrating approaches for engaging and collaborating with people within and outside of our organization who live with disabilities, inviting their views, welcoming their contributions, understanding what this plan must mean for them, and adjusting it accordingly.

While we have made some inroads in addressing accessibility barriers in parts of our organization, we acknowledge that there is much more to understand and more changes to make.

## Priority Areas for Action

Section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act* requires federally regulated entities to explain in their accessibility plans their efforts in identifying and removing barriers and preventing new barriers in the following 7 areas:

- 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
- transportation

These priority areas are described on the following pages with activities that have a mixture of shorter and longer timelines. We aim to achieve some of the activities in the coming year and others over the next 2 to 3 years. Our annual progress reports will include updates on achievements. They will also address activities that may have been adjusted in response to feedback we receive.

## Employment

The Government of Canada, including the OAG, is committed to being an accessible employer. The government aims to hire 5,000 persons with disabilities by 2025. Specific numerical goals have been identified as performance indicators in the OAG's 2022–24 Strategic Plan. The OAG will strive to increase the representation and inclusion of persons with disabilities within our workforce through activities identified in our Triennial Employment Equity Plan—2021–24 and Resourcing Roadmap (2021–24).

The OAG is dedicated to promoting accessible and inclusive employment practices.

In summer 2021, the [Public Service Employment Act](#) was amended to strengthen diversity and inclusion requirements and to address biases and barriers faced by equity-seeking groups, including persons with disabilities. The OAG reaffirms our commitment to reduce barriers in our staffing actions and to encourage more inclusive recruitment practices.

As a result of consultations with OAG employees through an anonymous survey about accessibility in our workplace launched in fall 2022, the following barriers relating to employment have been identified:

- unnecessary job requirements
- inappropriate screening and selection criteria
- issues with the duty-to-accommodate process
- unequal access to training and development opportunities for members of designated groups
- lack of training among staff and managers
- outdated policies

To eliminate these barriers, we plan to take the following actions:

- Train managers on best practices for hiring people with disabilities.
- Create an available list of accommodations and train managers on them.
- Develop a new employment system to get a better view of equity group employees and better meet their needs.
- Update our policies, tools, and training to better serve the interests and aspirations of people with disabilities.

## Employment



**Goal:** Promote the development of human resource practices that are accessible and inclusive so that all employees, including persons with disabilities, are supported and able to contribute to the OAG.

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Develop and support accessible employment practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): Develop and implement an equity, diversity, and inclusion plan.</li> <li>• Short-term (2023): Modernize the self-identification questionnaire, tools, and data-collection process, and use the data collected to plan the OAG’s human resource management to support a diverse and inclusive workforce.</li> <li>• Short-term (2023): Examine the new learning management system, and ensure that it meets the requirements of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.</li> <li>• Short-term (2023): Support the participation of persons with disabilities in leadership development programs and career development services.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Develop a new dashboard that supports the timely monitoring of progress toward achieving representation of various groups in the levels and areas of work across the OAG using disaggregated data. Report regularly to the OAG’s senior management on representation and on any required improvements.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Launch an accessible format of the online version of the corporate onboarding program.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Leverage the use of public service–wide pools and inventories of persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Inform delegated managers about best practices for hiring persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Consult persons with disabilities in the development of employment-related policy instruments and tools.</li> </ul>
<p>Improve efficiency in the provision of adapted equipment and accommodation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): Create a list of accommodations, including assistive-technology options, available to employees in collaboration with accessibility, accommodation, and adaptive computer technology, and educate managers on what accommodations are available.</li> <li>• Short-term (2023): Implement and support the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport for OAG employees and candidates.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Provide persons with disabilities with adapted equipment and accommodations on a timely basis.</li> </ul>

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Support persons with disabilities in developing their talent, and ensure that people with disabilities are retained as talented employees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): Hire an accessibility coordinator.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Roll out leadership blueprint training to all managers to clarify expectations and accountabilities related to managing people.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Leverage the use of existing public service-wide mentorship programs for employment equity and equity-seeking groups.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Review employment systems.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Review and evaluate the design and application of assessment tools, and assess accommodations used at the OAG in the context of internal and external appointment processes, including for candidates with disabilities.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Review and assess the OAG’s qualification standards for barriers and biases.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Review existing employment advertisements to ensure that they are accessible for persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Raise awareness and provide accessibility-related training to managers and employees on identified barriers and best practices.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Review existing course material and the way the material is delivered to ensure that it meets accessibility standards.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Appoint persons with disabilities to and within the OAG management group through career development and talent management.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Review existing development programs to ensure that persons with disabilities are represented and supported at each stage, from entry to exit.</li> </ul>

## The built environment

The OAG recognizes that an accessible built environment enhances employees’ independence and provides a sense of inclusion that lets persons with disabilities interact with co-workers, access the same facilities, and perform the same functions. During our transition to a hybrid work setting on our interim floor space, the OAG has taken steps to ensure an inclusive and barrier-free work environment for our employees and for visitors to our offices.

The OAG continues to be engaged with Public Services and Procurement Canada and landlords to implement a GCworkplace design across all of our offices. The design integrates accessibility at the outset, which ensures an inclusive, equitable, and adaptive workplace. In addition, the design implements activity-based working principles, which emphasize that all employees should be able to use a variety of work points, allowing them to choose their optimal setting.

To ensure that we understand the issues and the appropriate adjustments we will need to make, we will continue to consult with employees and visitors, including persons with disabilities, the Executive Committee, the occupational health and safety committees, and the operations committees.

Our research illustrates the following barriers:

- There is a lack of sufficient parking in Ottawa, which poses a challenge for individuals with reduced mobility. While the office is relatively close to public transit, the limited parking availability for persons with mobility issues remains a concern.
- There is a need for automatic door openers at all entrances and exits of our offices for individuals with reduced mobility.
- There is a need for visual cues for emergency evacuation announcements for persons with hearing impairments.
- There is also a need for improved door-opening mechanisms for the Ottawa office, as the doors to the exterior of the building are large and heavy, which is a physical barrier for all, especially persons with reduced mobility.

To address these barriers, multiple actions will be taken, such as the following:

- Provide a map indicating all areas with accessible parking in the vicinity.
- Collaborate with Brookfield Global Integrated Solutions (BGIS) (the property manager for numerous Government of Canada buildings) on a project to provide touchless door operator upgrades and other touchless devices and features across the building.
- Promote emergency evacuation procedures for individuals requiring temporary or permanent accommodations and assistance.
- Collaborate with BGIS on a project to integrate strobe light fire and life safety systems into the building.

The OAG continues to work with interested parties and partners to identify and address barriers, incorporate accessibility plans into all relevant processes, and promote accessibility goals to all employees.

## The built environment



**Goal:** Ensure barrier-free access and use of the physical environment for OAG employees and visitors.

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Build, renovate, or retrofit all physical OAG offices according to the latest accessibility standards, best practices, and information from persons with disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023–24): Conduct employee surveys and gather feedback to use as a guide to prioritize future improvements in the physical workspace.</li> <li>• Short-term (2023–24): Ensure that employees and visitors, including persons with disabilities, know how to provide feedback on the built environment.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Review the physical workspace in consultation with persons with disabilities (employees, visitors, and other people who regularly conduct business in the buildings) to identify how it could be configured to be more accessible and inclusive.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Collaborate and develop cost-sharing plans with landlords and other Government of Canada lead tenants to improve the buildings' base accessibility features (such as digital signage, wayfinding indicators, technological beacons, hands-free door openers, wheelchair accessible circulation paths, and accessible washroom features).</li> <li>• Ongoing: Consult persons with disabilities on the physical workspace, and prepare or revise the policies, directives, and guidance (such as the re-entry handbooks, reservation system procedures, threat and risk assessments, and health and safety assessments) according to their needs.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Develop and communicate the process for eliminating and addressing barriers in the physical environment in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
<p>Build, renovate, or retrofit all physical OAG offices according to the latest accessibility standards, best practices, and information from persons with disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Explore digital wayfinding applications for mobile devices to help people to find our offices from public transit, taxi stands, and parking areas and to help them to navigate once they are inside the building.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025–26): Collaborate with landlords and building management to ensure that accessible parking spaces are available for employees and visitors who need them.</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure that all employees and visitors have a safe environment to work in.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing: Consult persons with disabilities to develop, prepare, or revise emergency evacuation plans according to their needs.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Promote accessibility features within the OAG's workspace and the surrounding building space (such as digital signage, wayfinding indicators, technological beacons, hands-free door openers, wheelchair-accessible circulation paths, and accessible washroom features) to employees and visitors as the features are implemented.</li> </ul>

## Information and communication technologies

Information and communication technologies underpin many of the OAG's processes and internal services, making them integral to identifying, removing, and preventing accessibility barriers across the organization. For the purposes of this plan, information and communication technologies include software, web applications, and corporate document templates. Preliminary work has been done to identify and understand existing barriers. This work includes, but is not limited to, consulting with employees, analyzing current and evolving Government of Canada policies, conducting secondary research on common information and communication technologies barriers, and testing selected information and communication technologies products within the OAG.

Findings from this research and testing to date have illustrated the following barriers:

- Information and communication technologies and corporate documentation do not consistently meet accessibility standards or support assistive technologies.
- Information and communication technologies subject experts are not well equipped to develop and deliver accessible systems.
- Features to increase accessibility of systems are not enabled by default.
- Persons with disabilities are not consistently consulted early enough in decision making.

To address these barriers, multiple actions have been taken, such as the following:

- Create an information and communication technologies accessibility strategy
- Upskill selected members to fill expertise gaps.
- Engage with people to understand the barriers in the accommodation process.
- Build templates and resources to help test applications and create accessible documents.
- Take steps to applying the accessibility strategy through the rollout of Microsoft 365.

Moving forward in removing these barriers, the OAG plans to identify and assess any other barriers in information and communication technologies, incorporate accessibility into all relevant processes, and upskill employees in supporting accessibility goals.

## Information and communication technologies



**Goal:** Ensure that the tools, software, and documents used by employees to fulfill their responsibilities are accessible by default.

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Assess, document, and report on known barriers in existing information and communication technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Consult information and communication technologies subject experts and employees with disabilities to review existing information and communication technologies barriers, and find ways to prevent them.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Create a robust accessibility testing, reporting, and monitoring strategy, and establish governance to support its implementation.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Track information and communication technologies accessibility requests and feedback, and assign the tasks to appropriate parties.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Review the accessibility of existing document templates used for audit methodology and corporate documentation.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Assess internal information and communication technologies accessibility maturity, including assessing existing information and communication technologies against accessibility standards.</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure that all information and communication technologies meet established accessibility standards and that accessibility is incorporated across every step of the product life cycle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Complete the next phase of the Microsoft 365 rollout to support the implementation of more accessible information and communication technologies.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Introduce project deliverables that require project teams to document their plans to incorporate accessibility.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Implement accessibility requirement specifications for all software and services, including in the procurement of information and communication technologies.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Create a mechanism to engage employees with disabilities in the user acceptance testing phases of the product life cycle.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Remediate and report accessibility issues on the basis of assessments of existing applications and templates.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Enable accessibility features on eligible devices and software.</li> </ul>

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Ensure that the OAG has the in-house skill set and capacity to create, assess, and maintain accessible documents and software.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): Share information and communication technologies accessibility tips and tricks through office-wide communication channels to increase awareness and knowledge.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Create a central repository of guidance and resources to help employees create accessible documents and help information and communication technologies subject experts create and assess accessible software.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Equip information and communication technologies subject experts with the tools necessary to create, assess, and maintain accessible software.</li> </ul>

## Communication, other than information and communication technologies

Inclusivity, accessibility, and respect for diversity are the cornerstones of all OAG communications (with employees and the public).

Accessibility in communications at the OAG is based on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat’s Guidelines on Making Communications Products and Activities Accessible and Standard on Web Accessibility.

To assess the accessibility in communications, the OAG reviewed our products and processes within the last 6 months, consulted with employees, and received feedback from users. From these activities, the OAG found the following accessibility barriers:

- the unavailability of accessible formats and communication tools, such as Braille versions of content and TTY services
- a lack of plain-language communications for the public
- a lack of regular validation of web content accessibility to ensure current practices meet standards
- the unavailability of tools, such as automated validation tools, to facilitate plain-language writing

To address these barriers, the OAG plans to do the following:

- purchase or replace appropriate tools
- contract service providers for on-demand alternate accessible format production
- increase testing of content for accessibility
- train employees on plain-language writing

## Communication, other than information and communication technologies



**Goal:** Produce accessible communication products and activities.

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Ensure that communication material is as accessible as possible in its original format and that alternative formats are available promptly on request.</p> <p>Fully implement the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat standards and guidelines for accessibility to support all internal and external users of OAG communication materials and resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): Post information about alternate formats and service standards for providing them.</li> <li>• Short-term (2023): Make forms and brochures available electronically.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Confirm that websites conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, and immediately resolve any issues.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Review WCAG 2.1 requirements to prepare for future adoption.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Establish contracts to provide documents in alternative accessible formats, such as Braille.</li> <li>• MediumLong-term (2024-2025): Test the accessibility of web products with internal and external specialists using the WCAG requirements.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Establish contracts to provide documents in alternative accessible formats, such as Braille.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Assess the accessibility of our communication approaches with the public, including the media, and adjust where necessary.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Test the accessibility of documents, such as Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, Microsoft Word documents, Microsoft Excel files, and PDF documents.</li> </ul>
<p>Increase the ease of use for tools and content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that content is easy to read.</li> <li>• Ensure that new corporate documents are accessible going forward.</li> <li>• Ensure that meetings are accompanied by real-time interpretation where appropriate.</li> <li>• Design graphics with accessibility in mind.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing: Provide alternative formats on demand within the time frames outlined by the Accessible Canada Regulations.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Secure contracts for interpretation services.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Investigate real-time captioning for office-wide meetings held with in-person components.</li> <li>• Medium-term (2024-25): Replace the existing TTY solution to better accommodate remote work and ensure reliability.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Use sans-serif fonts exclusively.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Respect the use of contrast and colour in visuals.</li> </ul>

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Ensure that OAG communications meet the diverse needs of its users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce communications for the public in plain language in line with section 4.3 of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Guidelines on Making Communications Products and Activities Accessible.</li> <li>• Recognizing that audit reports are technical in form and construct, work to apply plain language principles to enhance non specialist audiences' comprehension, and where appropriate, provide plain-language summaries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): Acquire the International Organization for Standardization's guide for plain language (ISO/DIS 24495-1) once it is available.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Expand the current courses on the principles of plain language and clear communication.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Train employees to use accessibility features.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Deploy and use secure assistive writing, plain language, and readability assessment tools.</li> </ul>

## The procurement of goods, services, and facilities

The OAG has reviewed procurement policy, including the Treasury Board's Directive on the Management of Procurement, to understand our obligations relating to accessible procurement, and we have been taking steps to adjust our approach to ensure readiness and compliance. We have also studied the experiences of our federal partners, particularly Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada, to help us identify accessibility supports that are available and being used within the public service. When some of the service providers we work with alerted us to accessibility barriers in our contract template, we created alternative formats that removed these barriers, such as by removing embedded tables. This made it more user-friendly for those with visual impairments.

The OAG has consulted with Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada on procurement guidance and tools that have been established to help organizations acquire assistive items and technologies. The OAG Procurement team has also been participating in cross-functional discussions on the topic of accessibility since 2020.

In addition, the OAG has identified the following barriers related to the procurement of goods, services, and facilities in its accessibility plan and the actions to be taken to remove these barriers:

- As part of the modernization of the financial system, the OAG is adopting new Public Services and Procurement Canada contract and procurement templates for all issued contracts under a new system. Most of the Public Services and Procurement Canada templates that we leverage are not currently in an accessible format.
- Budget owners lack knowledge on accessibility requirements and are experiencing difficulties completing the Accessibility Justification form, which is mandatory for all contracting requests.
- Business owners and contracting officers lack awareness on available tools related to accessibility and instruments internal to the OAG and external to the OAG (Public Services and Procurement Canada).
- All OAG employees lack mandatory training to assist them with developing awareness around accessibility in the workplace (Canada School of Public Service training).
- There is no access to the full, accurate list of key assistive items or services regularly required by the office.

To overcome these barriers, the OAG plans to do the following actions:

- When requested, provide contracting and procurement documents in an accessible format. Work with the internal group at the OAG and with Public Services and Procurement Canada to remove barriers in the department's contracting and procurement templates.
- Provide guidance and resources to budget owners completing the accessibility justification form. Share best practices, and identify an accessibility procurement champion within the team.
- Ensure collaboration between the OAG Procurement group and the Information Communication Technology (ICT) group to confirm that the accessibility requirements incorporated in the statement of work as part of the procurement file have been vetted by the ICT group, business owners, and contracting officers. Consult with the ICT group or the Public Services and Procurement Canada resource centre, or both, when acquiring assistive items and technologies.

## The procurement of goods, services, and facilities



**Goal:** Ensure that accessibility requirements are considered by both business owners and contracting authorities when purchasing goods and services, and that, where applicable, accessibility requirements inform the technical specifications incorporated in procurement documents.

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
Update internal procurement procedures and tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): When accessibility considerations are not applicable or not appropriate, clearly justify a reason for each procurement file. The documented justification will ensure that accessibility is always considered.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Continue to incorporate accessibility and accessible formatting into procurement documents (such as contract and solicitation templates) to ensure that bidders and suppliers have equal access.</li> </ul>
Develop an accessible procurement toolkit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term (2025): Provide business owners and contracting authorities with guidance on drafting accessibility requirements, following the lead of the Accessible Procurement Resource Centre at Public Services and Procurement Canada.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Collaborate with Human Resources group to promote training on accessibility for budget owners.</li> <li>• Long-term (2025): Identify the key assistive items or services that are bought regularly, and establish an efficient sourcing strategy for these items.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Consult with Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada regarding guidance, tools, and procurement instruments established to facilitate the acquisition of assistive items and technologies.</li> </ul>

## The design and delivery of programs and services

The OAG serves Canada through leadership and partnerships in audits that support trust in public institutions and continued public service excellence. Our accessibility plan includes actions regarding the review of tools, services, and policies in support of that mission. One potential barrier that was raised in the November 2022 Accessibility Survey related to the accessibility of audit reports from a design and delivery perspective.

In order to reduce the identified barrier, the communications team will work with the performance auditing team to advance plain language initiatives.

## The design and delivery of programs and services



**Goal:** Ensure that accessibility considerations are integrated into the delivery of audit reports.

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
<p>Ensure that OAG services meet the diverse needs of its users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term (2023): Include gender, equity, diversity, and inclusion considerations, which include accessibility requirements, into performance audit and special examination reports.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Provide expertise in gender, equity, diversity, and inclusion to audit teams at all stages of their engagements.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Develop and support transformation initiatives to use plain language to clarify complex topics for users of OAG products, particularly for audit reports.</li> </ul>

## Transportation

The transportation priority area covers travel between provinces or outside Canada by plane, train, bus, car, or boat. The OAG is committed to providing the best conditions for accessible transportation for its employees and interested parties.

During consultations held in September 2024 and in recent years with persons with disabilities and their allies, no specific barriers to transportation have been identified. This remains an area of interest and we solicit feedback on a regular basis.

## Transportation



**Goal:** Ensure that OAG employees and interested parties have access to transportation that is accessible and inclusive, allowing individuals to accomplish their work both in the office and while travelling on behalf of the organization.

 Objectives	 Actions and activities
Prepare new or amend existing tools and templates to allow employees and contractors to identify accessible transportation and other accessibility needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Update internal templates to include a means for individuals to identify accessible transportation and other accessibility needs.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Modify contracts to include an accessibility needs statement for contractors who travel on behalf of the OAG and for contractors who will work on site in our office.</li> </ul>
Develop an accessible transportation awareness session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term (2024): Offer a joint consultation and information session to all employees to share tools and resources available to persons with disabilities travelling on behalf of the Government of Canada.</li> </ul>
Make available accessible transportation resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing: Update the intranet to include guidance and resources for communicating and obtaining accessible transportation.</li> </ul>

## Consultations

Throughout the past year, we consulted our employees through surveys and town halls to create a shared vision for our future. The objective was to understand employees' views on a number of issues, such as a labour dispute, the transition to a hybrid workplace, and the transformation and revitalization of our organization. The information from these consultations provided an understanding of employees' concerns, what they felt is working, and where the OAG needs to change. This information was an important backdrop for this plan's development.

In late 2022, all OAG employees were asked to complete an anonymous survey about accessibility in our workplace. The intention of engaging with all employees was to get a general sense of the level of awareness about disability and accessibility in the OAG. The aim was also to understand the barriers employees face. The overall participation for this survey was 64% (more than 500 employees), which demonstrated a very high level of interest and engagement. More than 11% of employees who responded said that they live with some form of disability, with the most common being a chronic health condition or pain, or a mental health disability. Among these respondents, 47% reported having experienced barriers in their day-to-day work.

This initial consultation was a first step. We know we have work to do. We accept that the experiences and perspectives of persons with disabilities cannot be fully expressed in a single survey. The OAG must receive guidance, input, and feedback from persons with disabilities on all matters related to accessibility. We have already begun planning for further consultations with employees with disabilities, accessibility allies, and others who have perspectives on how the OAG can improve accessibility. The feedback we receive will guide the implementation of this plan and will inform our annual progress reports.

In parallel with the survey, employees were asked to put their names forward if they were interested in forming an employee accessibility consultation group. The first meeting of this group convened in January 2023. Discussion focused on their contributions to the plan's implementation, their views on how to expand consultation efforts, and approaches for promoting accessibility and disability awareness in our workplace.

We also sought the views of various internal partners on early drafts of the survey and the plan. These partners included the Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Ombuds whose annual report *Navigating Change* provided helpful insights. We also engaged an accessibility advocate and expert with a lived experience of disability to analyze gaps and provide guidance during the final stages in developing the plan.

To understand the broader Government of Canada context, we looked to the disability findings in the 2020 Public Service Employee Survey. We referred to the guidance, assessment tools, centralized data hubs, and communities of practice that emerged across government after the act and regulations came into force. We also researched information about accessibility at key departments, such as Public Services and Procurement Canada, Statistics Canada, and Employment and Social Development Canada; central agencies, such as the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; and other organizations, such as Accessibility Standards Canada and the Office of the Accessibility Commissioner. This research provided us with the latest updates on government-wide policies. It helped us to keep this plan on the right track and adhere to established accessibility approaches and legislative requirements.

For the revised 2024 version of the OAG 2022–25 Accessibility Plan, we held consultations with people with disabilities in September 2024. These consultations enabled us to validate that the actions and activities undertaken for the priority area of transportation were in line with users' needs. Further consultations with people with disabilities and their allies were also held in autumn for the priority areas of the built environment and information and communication technologies.

## Budget and Resource Allocation

The OAG will prioritize resources to establish operational capacity to support accessibility initiatives across our organization and in our interactions with partners (Canadians, parliamentarians, and international counterparts) and the general public. We will also engage accessibility experts and advocates with a lived experience of disability to provide guidance and insight as we build capacity, make improvements to the plan, and prepare our progress reports.

We will create and staff a full-time accessibility coordinator position to facilitate continued horizontal coordination across the OAG on all accessibility efforts. The coordinator will also represent the OAG on intergovernmental communities of practice, networks, and committees pertaining to accessibility and disability inclusion.

## Training

To support the implementation of this plan and accessibility as a whole at the OAG, employees will be encouraged to use existing and new training and developmental opportunities. This will help us to build in-house accessibility capacity and expertise.

Currently, OAG employees have access to a variety of courses and events on topics such as accessibility, employment equity, diversity and inclusion, and unconscious bias through the Canada School of Public Service, GCworkplace, and a wide range of GCcollab and GCconnex sites. The OAG will continue to offer fireside-chat events focused on diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. These events will have guest speakers who will share their lived experiences. Such events help to foster awareness and ongoing open discussion about the barriers that employees face.

The OAG will promote learning and development to support employees in their work in implementing this plan. This will include mandatory training for contracting authorities on incorporating accessibility at the early stages of procurement; training on accessibility planning, testing, development, and design for information and communication technologies experts; and training for all employees on document accessibility, the use of plain language, and accessible communications.

# Glossary

**Accessibility standards**—Standards that are used to assess information and communication technologies accessibility compliance and that align with the guidelines indicated by the Government of Canada.

**Barrier**—According to the [Accessible Canada Act](#), anything—including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice—that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory Accessible Canada Act impairment or a functional limitation.

**Business owner**—An individual who is responsible for the business or program area for which the procurement is established. The business owner is responsible for

- defining the required capabilities, intended business outcomes, and benefits of a procurement at its outset
- achieving the business outcomes and benefits following implementation

**Contracting authority**—A person who has delegated contracting authority to enter into a contract or contractual arrangement on behalf of the OAG.

**Disability**—According to the [Accessible Canada Act](#), 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.

Anyone can identify as a person with a disability if they experience 1 or more of these impairments or functional limitations that, in interaction with a barrier, hinder their full and equal participation in society.

**GCworkplace**—A modern, efficient, and inclusive workplace that responds to the needs of the public service workforce and supports a flexible way of working.

**ISO/DIS 24495-1**—An international guide under development from the International Organization for Standardization that will set out guidelines and principles for developing plain-language documents intended for the general public.

**Real-time captioning (also known as live closed captioning)**—Text-based captions used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing to access content delivered by spoken words and sounds. Real-time captions, or Computer Assisted Real-Time Translation (CART), are created as an event takes place.

**Teletypewriter (TTY)**—A communication device used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have a severe speech impairment.