



Updating your Accessibility Plan:

A Toolkit for

Prescribed Public Sector Bodies

Prepared by the Accessibility Directorate,
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■ The Purpose of this Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to help prescribed public sector bodies (PPSBs) update their accessibility plans, as required every three years under the [Accessibility Act](#).

An important note for PPSBs:

It is up to each PPSB to decide how to go about updating your accessibility plan. As you move ahead to update your accessibility plan, keep in mind you are not starting from scratch. Your first plan is an important foundation to build on. You can choose to follow one, several or all of the steps outlined in this toolkit. Break down the process into manageable steps that work best for your organization. Updating your accessibility plan is an opportunity to review what's been completed and address changing priorities. [Accessibility Act requirements](#) can be found on page 6.

Through a 10-step guide, this toolkit provides PPSBs with useful information to help them carry out the process of updating accessibility plans. This includes information and suggestions to support each step from developing the initial approach to monitoring and evaluation. Information is included to ensure PPSBs meet legislative requirements throughout the process.

■ Background: Why Nova Scotia Needs To Be Accessible

Nova Scotia has the highest rate of disability in Canada and that rate is increasing. 37.9 per cent of Nova Scotians aged 15 or older report having one or more disabilities. That number rises to 42.9 per cent for Nova Scotians aged 65 and older.

% of people with a disability



Persons with disabilities often face barriers that keep them from fully taking part in everyday community life.

In 2017, the Government of Nova Scotia passed the Accessibility Act, which recognizes accessibility as a human right. The purpose of the act is to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers in six key areas:

- built environment
- education
- employment
- goods and services
- information and communication
- public transportation and transportation infrastructure

Government is currently working on developing accessibility standards for each of these areas. Nova Scotia's goal is to have all standards developed and enacted by 2030. See updates and progress on the [development of provincial accessibility standards here](#).

¹ Statistics Canada, *Canadian survey on disability, 2017*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181128/dq181128a-eng.htm>

² Statistics Canada, *Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017 to 2022*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231201/dq231201b-eng.htm>

■ What Is the Accessibility Directorate?

The Accessibility Directorate is a division within the Department of Justice that supports the implementation and administration of the Accessibility Act. This includes overseeing the implementation of Nova Scotia’s provincial accessibility framework, Access by Design 2030, which outlines how Nova Scotia will meet its accessibility goals. The Accessibility Directorate and other government departments play an important role in developing and implementing accessibility standards and supporting organizations that are prescribed under the act to meet legislative obligations. The Accessibility Directorate also has a mandate to address issues related to accessibility and disability across government. You can [learn more about the Accessibility Directorate here](#).

■ Prescribed Public Sector Bodies (PPSBs)

Public sector organizations have a vital role in preventing and removing accessibility barriers. Under the act, government made it mandatory for specific public sector bodies to meet certain requirements. These organizations are called “prescribed public sector bodies” (PPSBs).

PPSBs represent a wide range of sectors, such as health, education, arts, and municipal government. As of July 4, 2024 there are 108 PPSBs.

PPSBs are important partners in helping Nova Scotia achieve our accessibility goals. Their work developing and implementing accessibility plans makes a significant difference to ensure all Nova Scotians can fully participate in everyday life at work, school, or play.

You can see of the list of current PPSBs accessibility plans on the [Access Includes Everyone](#) website.



When you see this symbol, it means this step is required under the Accessibility Act. You can find a complete list of requirements at the end of this document.

Requirements for Updating Accessibility Plans

There are many ways PPSBs can update accessibility plans. The legal requirements for updating accessibility plans are the same as when you created your original plan.



The following is a list of legal requirements for updating accessibility plans, as per the Accessibility Act:

- Accessibility plans must be updated within three years of the original plan deadline. For Cohort 1 the deadline for updating plans is April 1, 2025 and for Cohort 2 it is April 1, 2026.
- Have an accessibility advisory committee. Half of the members must be persons with disabilities or representatives of organizations that represent persons with disabilities.
- PPSBs must seek input from persons with disabilities and representatives of organizations representing persons with disabilities when preparing an accessibility plan.

The Accessibility Act requires your plan to include details on

- progress made to date by your community or organization to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in policies, programs, practices, and services
- action your community or organization will take to further identify, remove, and prevent barriers in policies, programs, practices, and services
- processes in place to assess the effect of your community's or organization's proposed actions on accessibility

Accessibility plans must include information on procedures the PPSB has in place to assess the following for their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities:

- any of its proposed policies, programs, practices, and services, and
- any proposed enactments or bylaws it will be administering; and
- any other prescribed information

Accessibility plans must be made publicly available online. If requested, plans must be provided in an accessible format within a reasonable time at no cost.

For a complete list of PPSB requirements as per the Accessibility Act, click [here](#). Following the [checklist on page 39](#) will ensure you are meeting your legal requirements.



When Does Your Updated Plan Need To Be Ready?

PPSBs have been split into two groups, called cohorts, based on the date when they were prescribed.

The date when PPSBs need to have their updated plan ready depends on which cohort they are in.

Cohort 1

Cohort 1 PPSBs were prescribed on April 1, 2021, and had a deadline to complete their first accessibility plans by April 1, 2022.

Those plans must be updated and made publicly available by April 1, 2025, and every 3 years following.

Cohort 1 includes

- municipalities and villages
- Nova Scotia Community College and universities
- regional public libraries



Cohort 2

Cohort 2 PPSBs were prescribed on April 1, 2022, and had a deadline to complete their first accessibility plans by April 1, 2023.

Those plans must be updated and made publicly available by April 1, 2026, and every 3 years following.

Cohort 2 includes

- Art Gallery of Nova Scotia
- Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority
- Build Nova Scotia (formerly Develop Nova Scotia and dissolved through the Build Nova Scotia Act)
- Conseil scolaire acadien provincial
- Events East
- Invest Nova Scotia (formerly Nova Scotia Business Inc., Innovacorp both dissolved through the Invest Nova Scotia Act)
- IWK Health Centre
- Nova Scotia Health
- Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation
- Nova Scotia Museum
- Regional Centres for Education
- Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency





■ How Will Government Support PPSBs To Update Accessibility Plans?

To help PPSBs meet their legislative requirements, Government provides a variety of supports including resources, training, web-based tools and advisory services.

Refer to the [Resources for Updating Accessibility Plans](#) for more information.

The [Accessibility Compliance Framework](#) outlines Government's approach to supporting compliance under the Accessibility Act, and focuses on education and support.

■ Updating your Accessibility Plan

Updating your plan is an opportunity for you to publicly share your organization's commitment to accessibility, your current and future accessibility priorities and commitments, and the progress you have made to advance accessibility through your previous plan.

This section will provide you with a suggested process to update your plan. There are many ways PPSBs can update accessibility plans while complying with the Accessibility Act. For example, you can edit your original plan or make a whole new plan.

This resource is meant as a guide to support each individual PPSB as they update accessibility plans using an approach and process that is unique to them.

Suggested 10-step Process



Consider engaging with your accessibility advisory committee throughout the updating process.

- Step 1** — Identify your approach ✓
- Step 2** — Develop a work plan ✓
- Step 3** — Update your plan's framework ✓
- Step 4** — Engage with the community for input ✓
- Step 5** — Review updated framework and community engagement results with organizational staff and accessibility advisory committee ✓
- Step 6** — Write your updated accessibility plan ✓

Step 7

Get feedback on the updated accessibility plan from organizational staff, accessibility advisory committee and key partners



Step 8

Finalize and approve your updated accessibility plan



Step 9

Launch and publicly share your updated accessibility plan



Step 10

Monitor and evaluate your updated accessibility plan



Step 1

Identify Your Approach

Updating your accessibility plan is an opportunity to build off the progress made through your first plan, incorporate new learnings, and meet changing demands and needs. Before drafting your updated plan, think about how your organization wants to approach updating your plan.

Ask yourself the following questions, as an organization:

Q: Do you have any guiding principles and key priorities to keep in mind when updating your accessibility plan?



Identifying principles to guide your process will help you to align with your organization's standards, values, business plans, and other policies/priorities.

Q: What role will your accessibility advisory committee play in the development of your plan?

Reflect on the role your accessibility advisory committee (AAC) played in your previous plan, and consider their role in the development of your updated plan. AAC's play a variety of roles across PPSB organizations.

Refer to the Role of the [Accessibility Advisory Committee](#) resource to learn more about how to re-engage the committee in your planning process.

Q: Are there any staff, leaders, committees, or partners who could contribute to the approach you intend to take?



Consider engaging those individuals and groups who were part of your first plan (such as your accessibility advisory committee members) to seek input into your approach. Their input can help you build off learnings and progress made from the first plan. Re-engaging them will invite them to continue to support the work moving ahead. Also, consider if there are any new individuals or groups who might be able to contribute to your updated plan. For example, is there a division or department that was not included in the first plan that should be included now?

Q: Will you update your own plan as an organization or work in partnership with another organization on an updated joint plan?

If you are updating a joint plan, consider how you will coordinate this process. Will you work collaboratively or independently? Will you create your accessibility advisory committee, and carry out community consultation?

Q: What will the governance/decision-making look like when you are updating your plan?

Consider the following:

- How will staff and committees work together to make decisions?
- Do you need to update the terms of reference for your accessibility advisory committee?
- What role will persons with disabilities play in updating your plan?
- If you are updating or deciding to be part of a joint plan, will you work with a collaborative committee with members from each organization, or will one organization take the lead?

Q: How will you approach community engagement, including engaging with persons with disabilities and organizations representing persons with disabilities?

Who are the key community partners you may want to include in your planning process? For example, members of the business community, non-profit sector, or other key individuals or groups who will be impacted by your updated plan.



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The Town of Lunenburg is working on a new design for the Civic Square with a central focus on increasing accessibility. The Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee will be consulted on the proposed designs and public consultations have been done, including one specifically engaging persons with disabilities. The process of including an intentional focus on accessibility for this project is different from how similar work has been done in the past, both in the focus of the project and the form of public engagement.

– Ellen Johnson, Regional Accessibility Coordinator, on behalf of the Town of Lunenburg



Q: How will you identify and document what you learned from developing and implementing your first accessibility plan? Here are some questions that can help:

- What challenges did you experience? Why did they occur?
- What successes did you have? What factors contributed to the success?
- What learnings have you had to carry forward into the next plan?

Example Planning Approaches (tailor your approach to your organization)



Keep guiding principles and priority areas from your first plan and focus on updating actions



Cross-government/organizational approach (all divisions/business units involved).



Update a joint plan with another organization.



Align plan's priorities, actions and timing with organizational business plans and budget cycles.



Nothing about us without us: Include First Voice (persons with disabilities) perspectives every step of planning process.



Carrying out Kitchen Table Conversations (small informal in-person gatherings) to seek input from persons with disabilities and others into your updated plan.



Align your plan with equity, diversity, and inclusion priorities, plans, and obligations (intersectional approach).



Present to senior leaders early in the process to build awareness and support.

Step 2 — Develop a Work Plan

Having a work plan will guide the process for updating your accessibility plan.

A work plan includes

- actions/tasks
- milestones
- timelines
- resources required
- roles/responsibilities

Ask yourself these questions:

Q: Who is leading the planning process?

- Do you have an accessibility lead or will you hire a consultant? What will their role be?
- If you are updating a joint plan, will one **organization take the lead**, or will there be **shared leadership** in the planning process between the partner organizations?

Q: What specific roles and responsibilities will your organizational staff, leadership, accessibility advisory committee, and other key partners play in developing your plan and how will they work together?



Discuss the role of staff versus committees, and determine how decisions will be made.

Q: What is your project timeline?



Include time for approvals, document design, and accessibility processes in your timeline. Plans must be made publicly available by April 1, 2025 for Cohort 1s and April 1, 2026 for Cohort 2s.

Q: What resources will you require to update your accessibility plan?

- If you require **financial resources**, do you have a dedicated budget, or will you need to seek new funds?
- How can you support your staff to ensure they have the **time and capacity** to complete this work? Consider your accessibility lead, built environment lead, communication staff, human resources staff, etc.



Consider engaging senior leadership early in the process to build awareness and understanding. You may require leadership support or financial resources to complete your process by requesting funds through your organizational budget or seeking approvals for accessing grants.

Q: How will you engage community, staff, and leadership?



See the section below on community engagement and refer to the Community Engagement and Updating Accessibility Plans resource for more information.



The Accessibility Act states that PPSBs must seek input from persons with disabilities and representatives of organizations representing persons with disabilities when preparing an accessibility plan. This includes when updating your accessibility plan.

Step 3

Update your Plan's Framework

3.1 *Assess progress made through your original plan and identify any new barriers that need to be addressed*

Identify progress made under the previous plan by analyzing the monitoring or evaluation data of your first plan. This will help you identify what aspects from your first plan you want to keep, update, and build on in your updated plan.

Suggested steps:

- Complete an assessment of each accessibility priority area and commitment from your previous accessibility plan. In your assessment, determine if actions were
 - fully completed
 - partially completed
 - not yet started
- Document which priority areas or commitments your organization would like to continue, build on, or remove.



Your organization may also have completed or started some accessibility-related actions that were not included or directly identified in the first plan. Identify and document these actions as well and consider whether they should be included in your updated plan.

Identify and document any new barriers to accessibility that came up over the past three years that were not included in your first accessibility plan. Document potential actions your organization can take to remove and prevent them and consider them for your updated accessibility plan.

If your organization has a method for receiving community input or complaints, such as an online form or email address, document any barriers that were reported. Check for any trends, such as areas where multiple complaints were received.

3.2 Review and update guiding principles and priority areas if needed

Consider revisiting your guiding principles and priority areas. These may stay the same as your first plan, or they may be updated to address new accessibility priorities. Consider getting input from your accessibility advisory committee and staff.



Guiding principles set a standard and will help your plan so it stays in alignment with your organization's current values. Consider aligning with the guiding principles found in relevant provincial policies (e.g., Access by Design 2030 or the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act) such as

- **human rights and social justice**
- **engagement and collaboration**
- **coordination and harmonization**
- **innovation and modernization**
- **equity, antiracism, and intersectionality**



Some examples of accessibility priority areas include (customize for your organization):

- **leadership (e.g. Leading by example)**
- **built environment**
- **awareness and capacity building**
- **employment**
- **goods and services**
- **information and communications**
- **transportation**
- **programs and services**
- **recreation**
- **education**
- **research and development**
- **monitoring and evaluation**



**An example
commitment statement
from the Government
of Nova Scotia
Accessibility Plan
(2022–25)**



We are committed to being accessible in the way we work, do business, and provide services to Nova Scotians.



3.3 *Review and update priority actions to remove barriers*

Through step 3.1 and 3.2 you have already documented the key actions to continue, build on, or newly create to address new barriers. Building on that list, consider what additional actions you may need to include to meet legislative requirements and to take an intersectional or integrated approach to your plan.

Review and incorporate existing legislative requirements



The plan's content (including an updated plan) must meet the legislated requirements under the Accessibility Act.

The Accessibility Act requires your plan to include details on

- progress made to date by your community or organization to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in policies, programs, practices, and services
- action your community or organization will take to further identify, remove, and prevent barriers in policies, programs, practices, and services
- processes in place to assess the effect of your community's or organization's proposed actions on accessibility

Align with accessibility standards, when enacted

Work is underway to develop accessibility standards in six areas:

- built environment
- education
- employment
- goods and services
- information and communication
- public transportation and transportation infrastructure



Keep in mind you are not starting from scratch. Your first plan is an important foundation to build from.

When the standards are enacted, you may consider including actions in your accessibility plan to outline how your organization will comply.

Consider aligning updated actions with other equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism priorities

Nova Scotia has committed to addressing inequity, systemic hate, and racism, and to supporting underrepresented and underserved communities. A more equitable and inclusive Nova Scotia includes being a more accessible province.

Consider aligning your updated accessibility plans, processes and committees with your organization's other equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility priorities and plans or other requirements such as through the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act.

Dismantling Racism and Hate Act

Passed in April 2022, the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act enables the minister to require PPSBs to develop equity and anti-racism plans. These plans must outline how these bodies will identify and address systemic inequity and racism.

The Office of Equity and Anti-Racism (OEA) is responsible for administering this act. They will begin working with municipalities and villages first to develop the equity and anti-racism plans required by the act to be completed by April 1, 2025. Other PPSBs may be required to develop equity and anti-racism plans at a later time.

The OEA and the Accessibility Directorate are working together to provide support and guidance to municipalities and villages to help them meet requirements under both the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act and Accessibility Acts. **Municipalities and villages have the option to create two separate plans or integrate legal requirements under both acts into one combined plan.**

If you are seeking more information on how to align accessibility and equity and anti-racism plans, and meet requirements from both acts, please contact the Accessibility Directorate at Accessibility@novascotia.ca.

3.4 *Identify monitoring and evaluation processes to assess the impact of actions on accessibility*



The act requires your organization to include processes to assess the impact the actions within your plan will have on accessibility.

The Accessibility Act requires PPSBs to include a report in their accessibility plan on measures they have taken and intend to take to identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers. Having a process in place to monitor and evaluate your plan and track progress will help your organization better understand the reasons for success and where improvements can be made.

Review the effectiveness of your current monitoring and evaluation process and update if needed.

For relevant sectors, when updating your monitoring and evaluation process, take into account how your organizational monitoring and evaluation process uses the tools available in the [Nova Scotia Post Secondary Evaluation Framework](#) or the [Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Toolkit for Municipalities and Villages](#).

Step 4

Community Engagement

It is important to engage with and seek input from persons with disabilities, organizations representing persons with disabilities, staff, leadership and other key partners such as private sector/business. A good time to engage with community partners is after your updated framework is drafted and before it is finalized.

You are required through the act to seek input from



persons with disabilities and representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities

in the development and updating of your plan. Consider engaging a wide range of partners that will be impacted by your plan. You can engage with community at any point, however it is recommended that you do so early in the planning process.

Consider how you will engage with community

Community engagement is working with partners and community members to shape decisions. The process of engagement is wide-ranging. Your approach to community engagement may look the same or different from your previous accessibility planning process.

You may wish to gather feedback through a town hall, online survey, door to door conversations, or an event during Access Awareness Week or International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Consider involving people who are directly impacted by accessibility barriers both inside and outside your organization. This includes staff, clients, and community members.

Engage with a diverse range of people with disabilities, including people with disabilities who also identify as African Nova Scotian, Mi'kmaq, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, newcomer, seniors, youth, and other marginalized community members.



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Through the Accessibility Act, **disability** is defined as a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society.

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Before you engage with any community, **identify the key questions you want input on.**

Example questions:

Q: Over the next three years, what role should our (PPSB) organization play in advancing accessibility?

Q: What accessibility barriers exist within our organization?

- Consider all areas of the organization, not only the built environment. Compare this to what you gathered for your original plan. Consider asking about each standard area, as well as any other emerging or priority issues.

Q: What accessibility issues have emerged over the past few years?

Q: What is working well from the actions we have taken so far to improve accessibility?

Q: What changes have you noticed in terms of culture, such as disability inclusion (when people with disabilities are valued and engaged), and ableism (the negative treatment of people with disabilities)? What actions should we consider in the plan to address or recognize these changes?

Q: Do our draft principles, priorities and actions represent a foundation that will help ensure a good accessibility plan for our organization?

Consider documenting how your organization includes and engages with people with disabilities—whether that is staff, volunteers, or community—in your accessibility plan.

Often the last step of your community engagement process is synthesizing, analyzing, and theming community engagement results. It is recommended that you compile the information into a report. This report can be easily shared with partners and may be included in the introductory section of your updated plan.

For more information on community engagement refer to the [Community Engagement and Updating Accessibility Plans resource](#) and [Engaging with Persons with Disabilities Webinar](#), developed by the Accessibility Directorate.



Community Engagement in Practice



In 2023, we started working on our Campus Active Transportation Plan. While the plan development is still in progress, the engagement sessions and meetings conducted to get community feedback was a hugely fruitful experience. The key focus of the [Active Transportation] Plan will be to develop infrastructural elements on the campus that will create a campus fit for users of all ages and abilities (AAA). People participating in the engagement session helped hugely to understand various expectations that an everyday campus user has.

– Member of a Prescribed Public Sector Body Organization



Step 5

Review Updated Framework and Community Engagement Results with Organizational Staff and Accessibility Advisory Committee

Consider holding a planning session with all areas of your organization to finalize **the priority actions** you want to include in your updated plan based on community engagement results. This is a good time to share progress made so far including

- the results of the assessment of your original plan (progress made, new barriers to address)
- draft framework
- community engagement results
- budget for carrying out the plan

Meet with staff from your organization and share the draft framework. Seek staff perspectives on what they learned from developing and carrying out the first organizational plan and if they would add or change anything to the draft framework based on their perspective.

Take time with staff to **provide an overview of community engagement results**. Engage in a discussion with staff on what actions should be considered from the engagement results, and what would be feasible to carry out to address new barriers.

Engage staff across the various functions of your organization so you have the full picture of what is possible to align actions with organizational business area priorities, commitments and budgets.

Meet with your accessibility advisory committee and go through the same process as outlined above. If it makes sense for your organization, you could also consider hosting a review session with both staff and your accessibility advisory committee at the same time.

Once the discussions have been completed, **identify any additional actions from your community engagement process** and include them in your draft plan.

Step 6

Write Your Updated Accessibility Plan

At this point you will have the main components of your updated plan identified. This step is putting all the components of your updated plan together into your draft document.

Use the framework you developed in Step 3 and the final list of actions from Step 5 as a guide to **draft the core components** of your updated plan (see accessibility plan template [here](#)).

A common updated plan outline includes:



Front section

- Front Cover
- Table of Contents



Welcome section

- Acknowledgements subsection
- Message subsection
- Introduction subsection



Background

- About
- Values and/or principles
- Methods Used
- Progress Made



Our Plan section

- Priority Areas and Actions
- Monitoring and evaluation process



Back section

- Conclusion
- Contributors
- Resources
- Glossary
- Appendix
- Back Cover



Consider hiring a plain language writer to draft the updated plan or hire a plain language editor to review and revise your draft plan. This will ensure your plan is written and communicated in a way that is easy for readers to understand the first time ([plain language](#)).



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Our Accessibility Advisory Committee was very active in developing the accessibility plan, engaging and giving constructive feedback about the plan.

– PPSB organization



Step 7

Get Feedback on the Draft Updated Accessibility Plan

Once your updated plan is drafted, it is important to re-engage those who were involved in developing the framework to give them an opportunity to review it. The approach to seeking feedback on the draft updated plan is up to each organization based on capacity, however the following tips are recommended:



- **Consult with your accessibility advisory committee to validate the updated plan before it is finalized.**
- **Gather feedback from your organization (staff and leadership) to ensure it is feasible, aligns with other plans and priorities, and meets the needs of key partners. For example, collect feedback through email.**
- **Invite feedback from your partners and community, particularly persons with disabilities and representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities. For example, post your draft updated plan online or hold an in-person meeting to get feedback.**
- **Consider contacting the Accessibility Directorate for feedback on your draft updated plan. The directorate can offer general feedback, as well as feedback on how you can ensure you meet legislative requirements.**
Accessibility@NovaScotia.ca

Step 8

Finalize your Updated Accessibility Plan

After seeking feedback on your draft plan, **revise and update** the plan.

Consult your accessibility advisory committee and have them approve the updated plan before you present it to senior leadership for approval.

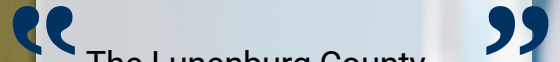
Ensure your plan is presented in an accessible format. You may wish to develop these additional formats, such as large print, ASL, or others, right away, or develop them upon request. Refer to the [Resources for Updating Accessibility Plans](#) for resources on plain language and creating accessible documents.



Approve your updated plan within three years of the previous plan's deadline. If your plan is a joint plan, you may need to have it approved through each organization separately.



Example: Consulting with your Accessibility Advisory Committee



The Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC) conducted an in-depth review of the draft Town of Mahone Bay Accessibility Implementation Plan. This is a plan that details actions the town will take to meet the commitments in the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan. The LCAAC review took several meetings where members discussed the proposed actions and brought their expertise to the document. Town of Mahone Bay Council has now accepted the plan, including the changes recommended by the LCAAC. This was an example of the dedication and expertise of the LCAAC members and how town council recognizes the value of their feedback.

– Ellen Johnson, Regional Accessibility Coordinator, on behalf of Town of Mahone Bay



Step 9

Communicate Your Updated Accessibility Plan



Accessibility plans must be made publicly available online by April 1, 2025 for Cohort 1s and April 1, 2026 for Cohort 2s. Include time for approvals, document design, and accessibility processes in your timeline. You must make your plan available in an accessible format upon request at no charge within a reasonable timeframe.

Now that you've got your updated plan, share it through a variety of channels. This way you can celebrate what you have accomplished and raise awareness about your organization's commitment to accessibility. This includes posting your updated plan on your organization's website.

Report back to staff and community

The community took the time to provide input into your updated plan—now it is time to share it with them.

You can do that by

- sharing the website link to your updated plan with all key partners
- hosting a town hall meeting
- hosting an event during Access Awareness Week or International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- posting your updated plan on your organization's social media
- emailing information about the updated plan to residents, members, students, etc. and partners
- issuing a media release

Email the Accessibility Directorate a **link** to your approved, updated plan at Accessibility@NovaScotia.ca.

While the Accessibility Directorate does not currently approve or endorse each organization's accessibility plan, we do review plans and provide feedback. We also share links to the plans online.

Step 10 ● Monitor and Evaluate Your Updated Accessibility Plan



The Accessibility Act states plans must include information on procedures the PPSB has in place to assess any proposed actions for their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities.


There are many reasons why monitoring and evaluation is important to your planning process and accessibility work. When you take the time to collect, analyze and reflect on data related to implementing your accessibility plan, you will learn about actions and approaches that are working well and those that are not. This will help you celebrate accomplishments, make informed decisions, be accountable and transparent and know if you are making a difference.

Carry out the monitoring and evaluation process you decided on in step 3.4 ([page 25](#)).

Communicate your annual progress to key partners. You can do this through an annual report.

Invite continuous feedback on your accessibility efforts by having an online form, phone number, and/or email address. Be sure to document and keep this feedback for your next update.

If at any point your organization, organizational contact, or accessibility plan changes, let the Accessibility Directorate know so we can continue to connect and support you. Email Accessibility@NovaScotia.ca

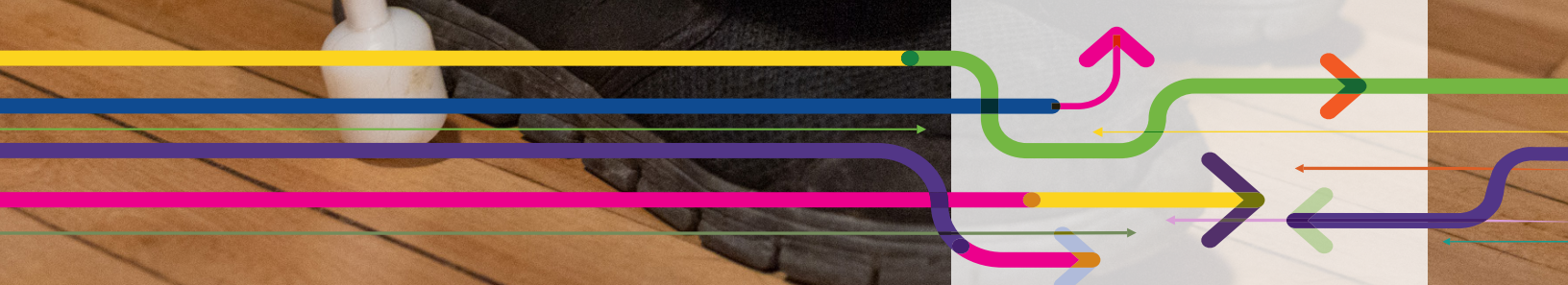


**Example:
Making your
Accessibility Plan
Publicly Available**

“ Dalhousie’s annual plan update was released December 2023 during its second annual Accessibility Week. ”

The updates are found online: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/accessibility-plan/recent-initiatives.html>

– *Siobhan Smith,
Accessibility Planning
Specialist, Dalhousie
University*



■ Requirements Checklist

The legislative requirements for updating your accessibility plan are the same as when you developed your first plan. Following the checklist will ensure you are meeting your legal requirements.



Accessibility plans must be updated within three years of the original plan deadline. For Cohort 1 the deadline for updating plans is April 1, 2025 and for Cohort 2 it is April 1, 2026.



Have an accessibility advisory committee. Half of the members must be persons with disabilities or representatives of organizations that represent persons with disabilities.



PPSBs must seek input from persons with disabilities and representatives of organizations representing persons with disabilities when preparing an accessibility plan.



The Accessibility Act requires your plan to include details on

- progress made to date by your community or organization to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in policies, programs, practices, and services
- action your community or organization will take to further identify, remove, and prevent barriers in policies, programs, practices, and services
- processes in place to assess the effect of your community's or organization's proposed actions on accessibility



Accessibility plans must include information on procedures the PPSB has in place to assess the following for their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities:

- any of its proposed policies, programs, practices, and services, and
- any proposed enactments or bylaws it will be administering; and
- any other prescribed information



Accessibility plans must be made publicly available online. If requested, plans must be provided in an accessible format within a reasonable time at no cost.

For a complete list of PPSB requirements as per the Accessibility Act, click [here](#).

■ Links to resources

The following is a listing of website and resource links found in the toolkit.

Access by Design 2030, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/access-by-design/>

Accessibility Act, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf>

Accessibility Act Review and Government Response:

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/act-review/>

Accessibility Compliance Framework, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/compliance-overview/>

Accessibility Directorate, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/>

Accessibility resources, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/resources/>

Access Includes Everyone, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://accessible.novascotia.ca/accessibility-stories>

Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017, Statistics Canada:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181128/dq181128a-eng.htm>

Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017 to 2022, Statistics Canada:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231201/dq231201b-eng.htm>

Creating Accessibility Standards, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://accessible.novascotia.ca/creating-accessibility-standards>

Dismantling Racism and Hate Act, Province of Nova Scotia:

<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/dismantling%20racism%20and%20hate.pdf>

Engaging with Persons with Disabilities resource, Province of Nova Scotia:
<https://accessible.novascotia.ca/resources/engaging-persons-with-disabilities>

Government of Nova Scotia Accessibility Plan:
<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/plan/government-accessibility-plan.pdf>

Plain language:
<http://www.plainlanguagenetwork.org>

Reviewing your Accessibility Advisory Committee resource
<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/resources/>

Community Engagement Resource
<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/resources/>

Updating Accessibility Plans Resource
<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/resources/>