

Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan: 2025 and 2026

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We acknowledge that Manitoba's public service works throughout the Treaty Territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishininew, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations and the Homeland of the Red River Métis Nation. Additionally, our work extends throughout Treaties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of Inuit.



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Greetings from the Accessibility Champion

The Manitoba government recognizes that accessibility is a human right. We are committed to building a shared future where every Manitoban has opportunities to fully participate in society on an equal basis and has the right to barrier-free and accessible workplaces and communities.

Enhancing accessibility is a shared responsibility within Manitoba's public service. This is demonstrated through government-wide actions and departmental initiatives, which aim to provide more inclusive support to employees and Manitobans seeking government services. By working together to help remove barriers, our workplaces, products, and services become more accessible to everyone.

Since the introduction of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA), the Manitoba government has been resolute in becoming a more accessible employer and service provider for Manitobans, informed by the voices of employees and Manitobans with disabilities.

As the Public Service Commissioner and Manitoba government's Accessibility Champion, I am pleased to share the **Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan (MGAP) for 2025 and 2026**, as the roadmap that will guide our efforts to advance accessibility over the next two years. Actions and measures within this plan have been grouped under the following four themes:

- Meeting or Exceeding Accessibility Standard Regulation Requirements
- Nurturing Awareness and Capacity through Education and Training
- Making Our Workspaces and Operations Accessible and Inclusive
- Fostering Inclusion through Leadership and Reporting

Alongside department deputy ministers, the Public Service Commission will continue to take responsibility for the implementation of our fifth accessibility plan.

I am proud of our accomplishments to date and our ongoing commitment to show inclusive leadership, nurture continuous learning and growth, and equip public servants with the tools, resources, and supports it needs to do its work and equitably serve all Manitobans.

Sincerely,

Dana Rudy

Accessibility Champion

Public Service Commissioner

1. Statement of Commitment

Manitoba's public service (MPS) appreciates the diversity of backgrounds, abilities, identities, and experiences of Manitobans. The Manitoba government is committed to accessibility and inclusion to ensure that all Manitobans can fully and effectively participate in society on an equal basis. This means being a champion of inclusion and accessibility and meeting the needs of people who face barriers toward maintaining dignity and independence.

As a public body, the Manitoba government must fully implement [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act \(AMA\)](#) requirements, including the existing regulated accessibility standards supporting customer service, employment, information and communication, and transportation.

The Manitoba government also commits to following standardized procedures when developing a new regulated standard related to accessible outdoor spaces.

Accessible mechanisms to solicit and obtain public feedback will continue to be an essential part of the regulatory development process for new accessibility standards. The Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan (MGAP) is grounded in the principles of access, equity, universal design, and systemic responsibility. These principles guide the measures and actions identified for 2025 and 2026.

2. What is the Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan?

The [AMA](#), enacted in 2013, requires the Manitoba government and other public sector organizations to create and update an accessibility plan every two years. The plan must describe the measures the organization will take to identify, prevent, and remove existing barriers. It must also include a report on measures that government has taken to identify, prevent and remove barriers that disable people.

2.1 Engagement Efforts

Manitoba's public service (MPS) understands the importance and value of engaging internally with public servants and externally with organizations and people with disabilities (PWD) to develop an informed accessibility plan.

From May to July 2024, the Public Service Commission (PSC) coordinated an engagement process that consisted of 12 facilitated discussions involving more than 250 participants sharing their thoughts and ideas about barriers and suggesting actions to improve accessibility across MPS. The engagement process also included a survey of public servants to gather perspectives about accessibility. Over 860 front-line staff and supervisors from all government departments responded. Survey respondents provided input about types of accessibility requests they receive, presence of accessibility barriers in the workplace, preferred ways to receive accessibility-related training, tools, and resources and supports. They also recommended government priorities for accessibility efforts in the two-year plan.

Internal engagement included facilitated discussions with Diversity and Inclusion Champions (DI Champions), Department Accessibility Coordinators (DACs), and the Manitoba Accessibility Office. To further understand the employee experience, engagement was also undertaken with members of MPS Employee Network Groups: Accessibility Supports the Promotion of Inclusion, Respect and Equity (ASPIRE), We are All Valuable and Equal (WAVE), Touchstone, Visible Minorities Network, and the New Professionals Network.

Members of the Intellectual Disability Issues Advisory Council (IDIA), Accessibility Advisory Council, Manitoba Accessibility Advisory Network (MBAAN), as well as disability-serving organizations that support individuals with vision, hearing, mental health, physical, and intellectual disabilities, provided valuable input and insights to inform this plan. The PSC also met with representatives from the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat to inform government's ongoing efforts to advance government's compliance with Manitoba's accessibility legislation and regulated standards.

3. How is the Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan Governed?

The Minister responsible for Accessibility is responsible for overseeing the administration of the [AMA](#), which applies to public, private, and non-profit sectors. This includes developing accessibility standards through regulations, raising awareness about accessibility, and promoting and strengthening the prevention and removal of barriers throughout the province.

The Manitoba government's Accessibility Champion and Public Service Commissioner, Dana Rudy, provides leadership and support to executive and senior leaders in understanding and advancing accessibility. This includes increasing awareness among all public servants about providing accessible services.

The Manitoba Government Accessibility Steering Committee provides overall government direction on accessibility for MPS. Members for 2025 and 2026 include:

- Clerk of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretary, Sarah Thiele
- Deputy Minister of Families and Director under the AMA, Michelle Dubik
- Public Service Commissioner and Manitoba government Accessibility Champion, Dana Rudy

Under the AMA, accessibility standards are developed and enacted in regulation. They are building blocks for making real, measurable, and effective changes to accessibility. Each standard focuses on a key area of daily living and outlines specific requirements and timelines for eliminating barriers in organizations, including the Manitoba government. Under the AMA, there are five regulated accessibility standards. Four have been enacted to date, and one is in progress.

1. [The Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation](#) (enacted May 1, 2015)
2. [The Accessible Employment Standard Regulation](#) (enacted May 1, 2019)
3. [The Accessible Information & Communications Standard Regulation](#) (enacted May 1, 2022)
4. [The Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation](#) (enacted January 1, 2024)
5. The Accessible Outdoor Spaces Standard Regulation (in development)

4. 2025 and 2026 Commitments

Manitoba's public service (MPS) has been working diligently to advance accessibility to meet the needs of all Manitobans. Through the Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan (MGAP), MPS will continue to collectively raise awareness and understanding of regulated accessibility standards and the responsibility of departments to implement these standards throughout all public and internal-facing processes, services, and environments.

For this period, government will build upon and strengthen efforts underway through the following priority areas.

“Accessibility is not about who has the loudest voice at the table. More visible and less visible disabilities should receive equal treatment from government.”

- External Engagement Participant

4.1 Meeting or Exceeding Accessibility Standard Regulation Requirements

During the engagement sessions that helped inform the MGAP, participants noted that government must be consistent in its actions to advance and meet [AMA](#) standards and demonstrate leadership to guide other sectors in meeting the standards, by prioritizing accessibility across government.

Participants at all engagement sessions spoke about the service, information, and communication barriers that Manitobans face when interacting with government in person and online. Some indicated there was lack of access to physical locations after standard work hours, or lack of Wi-Fi connectivity, while others identified difficulties in navigating and accessing digital resources and filling out paper or digital forms.

Participants suggested having more channels and formats of communication (e.g., video and audio), increased access to information on programs and services, including procedures to access them, and support in a variety of languages including American Sign Language (ASL). Feedback also included having websites that are easier to navigate, receiving call-backs or texts when having to wait for service, and providing access to virtual and in person supports to help individuals who may need more time to ask questions, find information, and fill out forms.

Strengthening accessible employment, particularly in the accommodations process, was another common theme discussed at many engagement sessions. Participants spoke about the importance of trust-building and open communication and increasing knowledge and training for managers/supervisors about visible, invisible, or multiple disabilities. Participants also indicated more consistent follow-through on requests for accommodations is needed to ensure timely response, as well as to ensure employees feel heard through the process.

Participants spoke about the reluctance that PWD feel about engaging in the hiring process, as well as challenges to advancing their careers after joining MPS. Participants noted the hiring process should demonstrate flexibility and compassion as essential components in supporting inclusive employment and suggested that government establish a targeted recruitment strategy for PWD to achieve better representation at all levels of MPS.

<p>“Deepening our connections will allow us to co-create a workforce that is strongly anchored in the principles of equity.”</p> <p>- MPS Survey Respondent</p>	<p>“We need the least impactful, most supportive system to accommodate employees with disabilities.”</p> <p>- Internal Engagement Participant</p>
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The following actions identify efforts that government will be taking over the next two years to meet or exceed regulated standard requirements, which were informed by feedback received through the engagement process:

4.1.1 New Regulated Standards

Government is advancing toward a fully inclusive, barrier-free Manitoba, by enacting new regulated accessibility standards under the [AMA](#) and by supporting organizations to fulfill requirements under accessibility law and practices.

Actions to be undertaken in 2025 and 2026 include:

- Developing and posting information materials to help support Manitoba conventional transportation and paratransit service providers to understand their roles, responsibilities and requirements under [the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation](#).
- Finalizing development of the Accessible Outdoor Spaces Standard Regulation.

4.1.2 Accessible Customer Service

The goal of [the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation](#) is to achieve respectful, barrier-free customer service across MPS, demonstrated through service delivery to Manitobans.

Actions in 2025 and 2026 include:

- Creating an accommodation checklist and posting it online and in public-facing offices that indicates to Manitobans what accessibility features and communication supports they may receive at the location, including any physical or environmental barriers (e.g., no automatic door, no ramp).
- Enhancing communication about requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation, including promotion of government's Sign Language (SL) policy and guidelines, and resources and tools for staff about braille services, service animals, and best practices in accessible customer service.
- Improving measures to identify, remove and prevent barriers of people with intellectual or cognitive impairments in the design and delivery of social services.

4.1.3 Accessible Employment

[The Accessible Employment Standard Regulation](#) requires all employers to consider [reasonable accommodation](#) at various stages of employment as it applies to their organizations. This includes during recruitment, offer of employment, on the job, return to work, and in training.

Actions in 2025 and 2026 include:

- Developing and implementing a workforce strategy to increase representation for persons with disabilities (PWD):
 - Continuing to promote opportunities for PWD, including reaching out to recruiters to match candidates and reviewing PWD job applications to assess where skills may align with advertised job opportunities.
 - Engaging with community organizations to provide information on the Manitoba government recruitment process, as well as solicit feedback that could inform enhancements to the process.
 - Continuing the Career Gateway Program to support term placements of PWD in departments to enhance their skills and work experience, increasing their success in competing for regular roles in MPS.
- Enhancing the Job Opportunities Website (JOW) with information and resources to better inform job seekers about accommodation supports during the recruitment process.
- Enhancing training and resources for recruiters and hiring managers on how to support accommodations during the recruitment process.

- Continuing to partner in the Project SEARCH program and SCE LifeWorks to provide work experience to students with cognitive disabilities.
- Improving communication and building awareness and understanding about requirements under [the Accessible Employment Standard Regulation](#).
- Enhancing the reasonable accommodation policy, resources, and processes to support employees and management through the accommodation process and delivering programs that sustain excellent service where everyone can work without barriers.
- Continuing to integrate discussions between supervisors and employees about accommodations as part of annual performance development conversations, including the review of workforce emergency response information for employees with disabilities.
- Continuing to explore strategies for retention and career growth for PWD at all levels within MPS, such as mentorship opportunities.

4.1.4 Accessible Information and Communication

[The Accessible Information and Communications Standard Regulation](#) focuses on removing and preventing barriers that exist digitally, in-print or through interaction with technology or people. The goal is to develop measures, policies and practices providing barrier-free information and communication.

Building on government's [Accessible Information and Communication Policy Statement](#), the actions during this two-year period will prioritize improved awareness, increased capacity and availability of accessible content, forms, documents and other printed materials, and websites.

Actions in 2025 and 2026 include:

- Sustaining support for the Manitoba government's employee network group for employees with disabilities, Accessibility Supports the Promotion of Inclusion, Respect and Equity (ASPIRE), as a forum to share experiences, bring forward accessibility concerns, and promote greater awareness of apparent and non-apparent disabilities across MPS.
- Developing guidelines to share with departments addressing how to develop electronic forms, websites, and documents that are fully accessible.
- Ensuring that accessibility is incorporated as part of the planning, procurement and modernization of government's technology solutions and web platforms.
- Continuing ongoing efforts to review department internet pages for accessibility, information, and format to ensure they meet or exceed Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA.

- Continuing the development and review of department intranet pages to meet requirements of [The Accessibility Information and Communication Standard Regulation](#).
- Improving the accessibility of web content and materials in alternate communication formats and provide alternative supports for those encountering challenges as part of the Communication and Engagement Division's (CED) web modernization of www.Manitoba.ca.
- Using a standardized access offer on all internal and public-facing government documents, forms and templates, as well as emails with attachments.
- Enhancing communication to public servants about [the Accessibility Information and Communication Standard Regulation](#), using various channels, including departmental accessibility intranet pages.
- Increasing training and job aids for MPS to better support employees with disabilities that use assistive technologies.
- Continuing the multi-year project to establish an integrated case management solution within Manitoba Justice to provide a public portal to facilitate online services, such as access to court documents.

5. Nurturing Awareness and Capacity through Education and Training

Shifts in attitude and culture can occur when public servants at all levels are provided with opportunities to learn and share with one another, grow their understanding and awareness about disabilities, build trust and empathy, including efforts to normalize conversations around disability, mental health and employee wellbeing.

“Treating people with dignity is about how you view people, but also how you engage with them and how you employ them.”

- External Engagement Participant

During the engagement process, participants spoke about the importance of empathy and developing an understanding about the diversity of disabilities to counter negative attitudes, unconscious biases and labeling.

Many participants discussed a need for more learning opportunities and greater awareness by MPS about different types of disabilities. They stressed the importance of listening and involving employees with disabilities when developing policies, programs, and processes and how accessibility improves the environment and service experience for everyone. Participants suggested that government develop various training courses addressing sensitivity and empathy, systemic ableism, practical how-to courses to create materials in accessible formats, and in-depth accommodations training for managers and leadership.

Over the next two years, government aims to strengthen and update existing training, as well as develop and deliver new mandatory and self-guided online courses, to equip public servants with the skills and knowledge they need to meet the obligations of Manitoba's accessibility legislation and regulated standards.

Actions in 2025 and 2026 include:

- Reviewing and updating existing mandatory training for all staff on accessible customer service to provide additional guidance on responding to different types of accommodation requests.
- Developing an updated Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and redesigning the Diversity and Inclusion course that all employees must complete.
- Creating and launching new self-guided courses for staff to learn how to prepare accessible Word, PowerPoint, and Portable Document Format (PDF) documents.
- Improving tracking and reporting of course completion and exploring options to recommend learning suites for certain job classifications.
- Developing resources for procured trainers and facilitators to enhance understanding of accessibility and ensure training materials and presentations provided to public servants are inclusive and accessible.
- Supporting learning opportunities to further promote mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- Improving staff awareness about disability by exploring topics such as unconscious bias and other attitudinal barriers. This may include micro-learnings, resource material and opportunities for sharing lived experiences.
- Continuing to support learning events for public servants and Manitobans that promote, educate, celebrate, and recognize accessibility and the experiences of people with disabilities.

6. Making Our Workspaces and Operations Accessible and Inclusive

Participants of nearly all engagement sessions noted the challenges faced by people with disabilities when accessing and working in government buildings where physical accessibility barriers are present. This includes ensuring buildings support access to universal and accessible washrooms, automatic door openers, accessible parking stalls, and timely removal of snow/ice. Ensuring regular accessibility audits and assessments of physical spaces was also noted. Many participants called on government to prioritize the accessibility of government public-facing buildings, including ensuring ergonomically safe workspaces for all employees.

Government recognizes that by demonstrating accessibility, equity, and diversity in our processes, operations and physical workspaces, we are creating conditions for more respectful, inclusive, supportive, and safer work environments for all. Improving the accessibility of the built environment also creates conditions that support requirements under [the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation](#).

Actions in 2025 and 2026 include:

- Ensuring that accessibility considerations are part of department continuity and emergency plans (e.g., pandemics).
- Exploring accessibility considerations in budgeting/planning processes.
- Creating a checklist of ways to include accessibility in projects and budgets.
- Finalizing an accessible procurement policy, developing standard procedures, and exploring training opportunities for employees involved in public procurement.
- Exploring options to improve navigation and wayfinding in government buildings and online for Manitobans with disabilities.
- Continuing to adhere to the requirements of [The Manitoba Building Code](#) and integrate barrier-free Universal Design principles and work environment accessibility when undertaking government projects for current and new buildings, leased spaces, upgrades and refreshes.
- Continuing ongoing accessibility improvements and considerations in outdoor spaces, including provincial parks, beaches and campgrounds.

“I don’t think government’s actions within the Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan are an issue so much as our meaningful commitment as a government to advancing the actions.”

- Internal Engagement Participant

7. Fostering Inclusion through Leadership and Reporting

Themes of accountability and governance were discussed during engagement sessions to inform this accessibility plan. Some participants asked for greater accountability among department leadership in their efforts to implement and measure how government is addressing its accessibility goals. This includes engaging in annual conversations to track and monitor progress on advancing accessibility actions. Enhanced communication between leadership and front-line staff and employees regarding accessibility challenges was also recommended to create further awareness and support to address challenges. Enhanced support and authority for Department Accessibility Coordinators (DACs) was suggested to help DACs enforce accessibility standard requirements, as well as consideration to establish full-time DAC positions.

Most participants agreed that regular communication about accessibility across Manitoba's public service (MPS), including sharing the details of the MGAP and creating opportunities to share stories and experiences of people with disabilities, will generate better awareness about how government is advancing and continuing to champion accessibility and inclusion for all Manitobans.

Government understands the importance of leading by example and affirms its commitment to accessibility by demonstrating ongoing progress to identify, prevent and remove barriers for employees with disabilities and Manitobans supported by government programs and services.

Actions in 2025 and 2026 include:

- Continuing the role of the Manitoba Government Accessibility Steering Committee to provide leadership across departments of the MGAP implementation.
- Continuing the role of the Accessibility Champion and departmental Diversity and Inclusion Champions to provide ongoing leadership and support to executive and senior managers, and Department Accessibility Coordinators (DACs) in understanding and achieving accessibility.
- Encouraging departments to make responsibilities of DACs a dedicated part of job descriptions and, in larger departments, consider establishing a full-time DAC position.
- Ensuring that the principles of inclusive leadership and accessibility are embedded into the content of all leadership programs, including foundational onboarding training for supervisors.
- Continuing to work with departments, chairs and members of agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs) to:
 - Inform all appointees to provincial ABCs of the requirement to take AMA training and track who has completed the training.
 - Develop a guide on how ABCs' chairpersons and staff can proactively support accessibility in their meetings to ensure ABC meetings are conducted using accessible spaces and provide reasonable accommodations to members as needed.

8. MGAP Achievements 2023 and 2024

The following outlines notable actions the Manitoba government undertook in 2023 and 2024 to advance accessibility across Manitoba's public service:

8.1 New Accessibility Standards

- enacted the Accessible Transportation Standard on Jan. 1, 2024, which will be in force for all obligated organizations on Jan. 1, 2027

8.2 Accessible Customer Service

- provided a consistent display and annual replacement of access offer signage at government's public-facing office locations and reception areas
- added braille to make informational signs and posters more accessible. For example:
 - promoting accessible customer service for staff by mounting 11 posters with an Indigenous Land Acknowledgment in both English and French at three office locations, including a braille format (Manitoba Advanced Education and Training)
- established a list of employees fluent in American Sign Language, that are able and willing to act as interpreters in the public facing program area of Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care
- continued to support communities and organizations through the Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program
- adopted a cloud-based Student Records Management online portal at the Manitoba Emergency Services College, in compliance with accessibility requirements, that allows students to access information and register for programs online

8.3 Accessible Employment

- ensured the Manitoba government reasonable accommodation policy and procedures are followed by working with Human Resource Business Partners to accommodate the needs of candidates during the recruitment process and use equivalency statements and plain language in job advertisements
- advanced work to develop an updated reasonable accommodation policy, procedures, and related forms and ensured departments developed and implemented individualized accommodation and workplace emergency plans for employees with disabilities, as needed
- continued to provide accommodations for staff requiring assistive devices or technology (e.g., standing desks, dictation programs, ergonomic keyboards, larger monitors for those with visual challenges, screen readers)

- strengthened recruitment efforts of persons with disabilities through promotion at career fairs, building partnerships with organizations supporting job-seekers with disabilities and continued to be an active partner in Project SEARCH, a high school transition to work program for students with cognitive disabilities

8.4 Accessible Information and Communication

- launched a new learning module developed by the Manitoba Accessibility Office for public servants through the Manitoba government Learning Management System in April 2024
- introduced a new, accessible, redesigned [AccessibilityMB.ca](https://www.accessibilitymb.ca) website and equivalent [French language website](#) by the Manitoba Accessibility Office in June 2023; the site meets or exceeds WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards
- advanced departmental reviews, inventories, and action plans during 2023 and 2024, to ensure that documents, forms and web content are accessible and made available by request in alternate formats to comply with the requirements of the Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation
- created departmental internal website pages about accessibility, where staff can find resources, tools and department-specific information about training and communications, including newsletters. Examples include:
 - internal electronic newsletters for staff that are accessible via screen readers and include alt text. (Manitoba Agriculture; Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care; Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism; Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning)
 - guidelines for updating and developing fully accessible electronic forms. (Manitoba Innovation and New Technology (formerly Consumer Protection and Government Services))
- restructured and relaunched the [Manitoba Laws website](#) in an accessible format; provided learning sessions to public servants about how to navigate the website
- created resources and messages for staff and the public about accessible communication, including training on how to create accessible documents, how to coordinate accessible events, tip sheets for accessible emails, how to prepare accessible pdf documents, writing in plain language, as well as offering alternate formats and communication supports to Manitobans seeking service
- continued to support full staff participation in department activities and events by providing accommodations such as ASL interpretation at meetings where Deaf or hard of hearing team members are present

8.5 Accessible Built Environment

- continue to consider barrier-free, Universal Design principles and work environment accessibility when undertaking any government projects for new buildings, leased spaces, or upgrading/refreshing any current building (e.g., installation of universal and accessible washrooms); examples of work completed during 2023 and 2024 include:
 - enhancements to the accessible information booth at 408 York Avenue in Winnipeg to provide clients easier access to information services and wayfinding. (Manitoba Justice)
 - lowered surface area for document and payment exchanges at the point-of-sale and reception transaction counters for Inspection and Technical Services. (Manitoba Labour and Immigration)
 - replaced toilets in fifth-floor accessible stalls with appropriately sized units (Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care)
 - installed two wheelchair-accessible temporary toilets at two rest areas along PTH 6 in 2024 (Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure)
- on Jan. 1, 2024, Manitoba adopted the 2020 National Building Code and Manitoba Labour and Immigration subsequently updated the Manitoba Building Code regulations to align with accessibility requirements, including amendments to expand the use of visual sign devices and requiring handrails on both sides of stairways and ramps
- continued accessibility improvements and upgrades at Manitoba parks, beaches, and campgrounds (Manitoba Environment and Climate Change):
 - Childs Lake Yurt village expansion - two new accessible yurts in Duck Mountain Provincial Park
 - new accessible, gender-neutral washroom shower building at Bakers Narrows Prov. Park
 - Kennedy House - River Road Prov. Heritage Park
 - Nutimik Museum in Whiteshell Prov. Park
 - new beach Mobimats at Little Grindstone, Blacks' Point, Grand Beach, Paint Lake, Wekusko, Camper's Cove Beach, Rivers, Brereton

8.6 Education, Training, Tools, and Resources

- updated and published the Manitoba government Writing Style Guide for public servants in Sept. 2024, including sections on accessible writing
- continued to communicate with public servants regarding the learning opportunities, events and information about accessibility standard regulation requirements through the weekly email CONNECT staff bulletin

- coordinated numerous accessibility-related learning events for public servants, launched new Inclusive Leadership training for senior and executive leaders, created an Accessibility Toolkit to support staff in providing accessible customer service and continued to provide accessibility updates to the Diversity and Inclusion Champions across MPS
- provided a streamlined, standardized onboarding program to all new public servants, which includes information about government's accessibility plan, the self-declaration form for emergency/evacuation assistance, and a review of policies and processes for reasonable accommodation, respectful work, and code of conduct. Many departments hosted monthly in person onboarding sessions providing this content; examples of additional training offered as part of department-specific orientation sessions include:
 - shared additional information about Manitoba's accessibility legislation and regulated standards. (Manitoba Families)
 - provided equity, diversity and inclusion training for staff on working with persons with disabilities, including mental health. (Manitoba Municipal and Northern Relations)
- incorporated annual public reporting on progress towards meeting employment equity benchmarks for all employees and in senior leadership positions, as well as percent completion of mandatory training in Truth and Reconciliation, diversity and inclusion, and respectful workplaces

8.7 Processes and Operations

- introduced an accessibility compliance form, developed by the Manitoba Accessibility Compliance Secretariat, to be completed bi-annually by deputy ministers of departments to assess their compliance with accessibility standards
- updated inclusive language on the application form for new government appointments to an agency, board or commission (ABCs), and completed a pilot to ensure that all existing members and chairs of ABCs completed training on The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and accessible customer service
- added content about accessibility legislation and standards to the government Procurement Administration Manual, with supporting procedures and processes in development
- implemented standardized processes at the department level to book American Sign Language (ASL) translators to eliminate barriers to access and promote increased usage across the department. Examples include the streamlined ASL booking process developed by Manitoba Agriculture and active offer for learning events/training delivered by the Public Service Commission (PSC)

8.8 Leadership and Organization

- identified a Diversity and Inclusion Champion and a Department Accessibility Coordinator (DAC) in every department to support advancing accessibility in their department
- held regular meetings with the Department Accessibility Coordinator Network (DACs)
- finalized DAC onboarding materials and held a training session with existing DACs in March 2023; onboarding training is ongoing and offered whenever a new DAC is identified
- created a full-time position within the PSC to lead the advancement and coordination of accessibility initiatives across MPS
- established departmental Accessibility Working Groups (or broader Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups), with cross-divisional representation, to implement specific accessibility-focused projects, measures and initiatives, and advance actions from the two-year accessibility plan
- established an Interdepartmental Accessible Information and Communication (IC) Standard Working Group to ensure the Manitoba government meets IC Standard requirements and that internal/external communications are accessible, including support for digital accessibility
- continued to promote and encourage staff participation in learning events to recognize and raise awareness about accessibility via department leadership

8.9 Funding and Supports for Manitoba's Public Sector, Municipalities, Businesses and Non-Profit Organizations

- launched the new Manitoba Accessibility Fund grant program in Feb. 2022, which awarded 30 project grants to promote accessibility awareness and support compliance with accessibility standards in Aug. 2022
- awarded 42 Manitoba Accessibility Fund grant projects to community organizations, public sector, municipalities, and businesses to raise awareness, remove barriers and support compliance with accessibility standards in June 2023

9. Appendix A: Summary Table of MGAP 2023 and 2024 Actions and Status

Accessible Customer Service	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement outstanding recommendations identified in the Manitoba Accessibility Advisory Council's Customer Service Standard Review, with regular updates publicly available on AccessibilityMB.ca. 	18 out of 22 recommendations completed; four were transitioned to be implemented as part of government's response to recommendations from the five-year review of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a procedure guide related to service animals, accessible to all employees. 	Completed and planned for publication on the internal PSC website by end of 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policy to ensure all communications meet accessibility requirements, including materials and services from vendors. 	Work in this area is ongoing and will be continued in the next MGAP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policy to inform the use of American Sign Language (ASL) in public communications, with the goal of expanding the use of ASL and real time captioning in public communications, particularly in public service announcements. 	The Manitoba government Sign Language (SL) Policy is being finalized. Planned for implementation by the end of 2024.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a user guide for the use of ASL interpreters for use by all employees and review the option of a centralized booking system to book interpreters. 	Work is dependent on the new SL Policy and will be continued in the next MGAP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the need for departments to consider Manitoba's accessibility standards in their procurement requirements in Manitoba's procurement manual for administration (PAM). 	Completed and ongoing. Accessibility content added to the PAM in Dec. 2023.
Accessible Employment	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance efforts towards achieving the nine per cent benchmark of persons with disabilities (PWD) in Manitoba's public service (MPS) by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> perform outreach and engagement with community stakeholders on ways to attract PWD into MPS increase communication to departments about the opportunities and benefits to employing more PWD in MPS leverage our existing diversity recruitment programs to recruit PWD 	Work in this area is ongoing and will be continued in the next MGAP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of the Career Options Program as a means to hire students with disabilities and the Career Gateway Program to hire employees with disabilities. 	Completed and ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the partnership with SCE LifeWorks and Project SEARCH program to provide work and life experience to students with cognitive disabilities. 	Completed and ongoing
Accessible Information and Communication	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communication plan to inform MPS about the government's responsibilities under the Accessible Information and Communications Standard. 	Completed in 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a process to receive and respond to feedback about accessible information and communication. 	Completed in 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines to support departments to update and develop electronic forms that are fully accessible. 	Work in this area is ongoing and will be continued in the next MGAP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to explore all communication platforms used in MPS with the goal of advancing accessibility and eliminating engagement barriers, including training on the use of the accessibility features. 	Work in this area is ongoing and will be continued in the next MGAP.

Accessible Information and Communication (continued)	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the development of a Community of Practice to share knowledge and promote accessibility best practices. 	Alternate methods of communication (e.g., Teams Channels) were put in place to implement this action.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the profile and content of AccessibilityMB.ca to meet the international standard Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA level, to make it easier to access tools and resources and test regularly with those with lived experience to support further enhancements to the website. 	Completed in June 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require trainers and facilitators to understand accessibility and create training materials and presentations that are inclusive and accessible. 	Completed and ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an integrated case management solution within Manitoba Justice to provide a public portal to facilitate online services, such as access to court documents. 	This multi-year project is underway and will be included in the next MGAP.
Enhanced Training and Education	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to update the mandatory AMA course for MPS with information on new standards as they are introduced and ensure that staff are completing the updated course. This will include continuing to support centralized tracking and reporting of course completion with senior leaders to support follow-up with employees who have not completed the course updates. 	Work underway will be continued in the next MGAP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training on creating accessible documents. 	Ongoing training available through government's Learning Management System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with the Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABC) Office to advance accessibility by making updates to the ABC recruitment process and inviting prospective applicants to voluntarily self-declare disability status, as well as request accommodations to participate in ABCs. 	Completed in 2023; work is ongoing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform all newly appointed members of ABCs about required training on accessible customer service, as part of their welcome letter and orientation package. 	Work is underway and will be continued in the next MGAP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness of accessibility in government newsletter such as training reminders, updates on standards, facts, promotion of course completion and tips. 	Completed and ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote learning events to employees in celebration of Manitoba Access Awareness Week, Disability Employment Awareness Month, Indigenous Disability Awareness Month and International Day of Persons with Disabilities. 	Completed and ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a centralized accessibility webpage for all staff that includes links to AccessibilityMB.ca, internal resources, trainings and learning events, DAC Terms of Reference (TOR) and updates on accessibility standards. 	Completed as part of PSC intranet refresh; content updates are ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve education, outreach and awareness of the Manitoba Accessibility Office in communities outside of Winnipeg by identifying and exploring potential private sector advertising opportunities. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the development and launch of a renewed, bilingual AccessibilityMB.ca website. 	Completed in June 2023
Enhanced Accessibility of the Built Environment	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhere to the requirements of the Manitoba Building Code, providing access in a manner that does not establish or perpetuate differences based on a person's disability. 	Ongoing

Enhanced Accessibility of the Built Environment (continued)	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate barrier-free Universal Design principles and work environment accessibility when undertaking government projects for current and new buildings, leased spaces, upgrades and refreshes. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the addition of Beacon technology, a form of digital accessibility, to public areas to assist individuals with vision impairments. 	Completed exploratory research in 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide reminders to all building managers that they need to provide notice when an environmental or accessibility feature will be available in a reduced capacity or entirely unavailable (includes parking, elevators, entrances, road or sidewalk construction). 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement accessibility in out-of-door public spaces, including Provincial parks. 	Ongoing
Leadership in Advancing Accessibility	Status of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce the obligations under the AMA to over 52,000 businesses through paid advertising, social media and direct mail campaigns, including reminders about the opportunity to apply to the Manitoba Accessibility Fund 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the second Manitoba Accessibility Awards Program in 2023 (which takes place every two years) to celebrate leadership and innovation in meeting the needs of the one in four Manitobans affected by a disability. 	Completed on Nov. 18, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of all departments every two years, to ensure the Manitoba government is consistently meeting or exceeding standard requirements and acting as a leader and champion for accessibility legislation. Develop an action plan to address results of the review. 	Launched in 2022; implementation of recommendations from internal review are underway; new compliance review underway in fall 2024.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a position that leads the advancement and coordination of accessibility initiatives across the MPS. 	Completed in April 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the role of the Manitoba Government Accessibility Steering Committee to provide leadership across departments of the MGAP implementation. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the role of Accessibility Champion to provide ongoing leadership and support to executive and senior managers in understanding and achieving accessibility. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the roles of Diversity Inclusion (DI) Champions and DACs within departments to advance accessibility initiatives. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the role of DACs as an important strategy for revitalizing accessibility awareness and communication commitments within departments, including an enhanced onboarding process for new DACs. 	Completed in 2023; work is ongoing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a forum for DI Champions in collaboration with DACs to discuss accessibility issues and support the advancement of accessibility within departments. 	Completed in May 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional corporate support to and communication with the Employee Network Group, CSWAN, to identify and address accessibility issues as they arise. *CSWAN was renamed as Accessibility Supports the Promotion of Inclusion, Respect and Equity (ASPIRE) in May 2023. 	Completed and ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the principles of inclusive leadership are embedded into the content of all leadership programs. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend the addition of an inclusion statement on all callouts for secondment opportunities, committees, and project teams to encourage diverse participation including employees with disabilities. 	Ongoing