

2021 Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Five-Year Review: Status of Recommendations at September 30, 2022

- The following table is a quarterly status update for the Minister’s information. It provides a summary of the work undertaken between June 30, 2022 and September 30, 2022 to implement twenty-two recommendations stemming from the Accessibility Advisory Council’s Five-Year Review of the Accessible Customer Service Standard. It will be posted on the MAO website.
- A formal Minister’s Annual Update for the period of October 2021 to October 2022 on progress made by government to implement the recommendations will be shared during the Minister’s annual meeting with the Accessibility Advisory Council on October 13, 2022. This report also will be available to the public.

Recommendation	Work to Date	Status and Timeline
<p>1. Conduct a review of all departments to ensure the Manitoba government consistently meets or exceeds Standard requirements, and acts as a leader and champion for accessibility legislation.</p>	<p>The Accessibility Compliance Secretariat (ACS) has issued an accessibility compliance report form to all departments via a memo from the Clerk of the Executive Council. Information collected through the compliance forms is being analyzed and results, along with recommendations to advance accessibility within the public service, will be presented to the Accessibility Steering Committee in early 2023.</p> <p>The Public Service Commission uses the MGAP Progress Tracker to track implementation of the MGAP across the government. Department Accessibility Coordinators (DACs) provide quarterly reports in the tracker. On September 16, 2022, DACs submitted a report. The next MGAP progress report is due December 2022. The PSC is developing a new two-year MGAP for 2023 and 2024. The final version will be prepared by December 2022.</p> <p>The ACS will conduct focus groups in fall 2022 with members of the Civil Servants with Abilities Network, Department Accessibility Coordinators, and Deputy Ministers. Data from these focus groups will be analyzed and presented to the steering committee in winter 2023.</p> <p>Public Service Commission coordinates follow-up actions identified by Department Accessibility Coordinators and/or Diversity and Inclusion Champions as part of their implementation of MGAP.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Accessibility compliance form will be issued to departments every two years.</p> <p>Ongoing reporting by departments and tracking document on The Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan (MGAP) have been issued to Department Accessibility Coordinators.</p> <p>Timeline for progress reporting of MGAP is every 2 years (in the second year).</p> <p>A presentation to the steering committee outlining information gathered through the focus groups and the compliance forms will be delivered in winter 2023.</p>
<p>2. Review the role of Department Accessibility Coordinators as an important strategy for revitalizing accessibility awareness and communication</p>	<p>Department Accessibility Coordinators (DACs) have been identified for all departments.</p>	

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<p>commitments within departments.</p>	<p>The Public Service Commission (PSC) has updated the DAC Terms of Reference and they are pending final approval. They will be shared with DACs fall 2022. The PSC continues to meet quarterly with DACs.</p> <p>The DIU continues to receive updates from DACs on the Progress Tracker and works with DACs to respond to questions or concerns, as needed.</p> <p>Development of an Accessibility Toolkit and Assistive Technology catalogue are in progress, with completion finalized by December 2022. This will be shared/distributed to Human Resource Consultants and to departments through DACs.</p>	
<p>3. Ensure communications and services are consistently accessible to all members of the public</p>	<p>Communications and Engagement Division (CED) has assigned a Department Accessibility Coordinator role to staff in the Strategy and Governance Branch.</p> <p>CED has formed an accessibility working group. The working group is currently compiling accessible communications resources.</p> <p>CED continues to develop a project plan to advance implementation of the review recommendations and align with implementation of the Information and Communication Standard.</p> <p>The PSC has shared resources for creating accessible documents with DACs who cascade information within their departments. The PSC continues to update the resources as additional training opportunities and tools are identified.</p> <p>The PSC is coordinating training on accessible documents. This training will be available to all public servants.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing work to ensure government-wide application.</p> <p>Starting May 2022, quarterly meetings will be held by CED and FAM to ensure internal/external communications are accessible.</p>
<p>4. Expand the provision of materials and information for the public in American Sign Language (ASL).</p>	<p>Communications and Engagement Division (CED) has formed an accessibility working group that will look at guidelines and procedures for providing ASL.</p> <p>Five videos containing information about the AMA and accompanying standards have been produced for the Manitoba Accessibility Office (MAO) by Equality Communication Centre of Excellence (ECCOE) and will be posted on MAO's redesigned website once completed in 2023.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>5. Integrate accessibility during initial stages of project and program development, especially in procurement processes.</p>	<p>The Accessibility Advisory Council intends to provide further advice and recommendations to the Minister about procurement. MAO would coordinate any follow-up work within government.</p> <p>The MAO is working with the Department of Labour, Consumer Protection and Government Services to explore how to best include accessibility in the Manitoba government Procurement Administration Manual to raise awareness of the AMA standards and highlight the need to reflect them in tender requirements as applicable.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p>6. Enhance transparency of government compliance and improve collaboration with Accessibility Advisory Council.</p>	<p>Compliance data was shared with the Accessibility Advisory Council in June 2022, as well as government’s Accessibility Steering Committee, and has been incorporated in the Minister responsible for the AMA’s annual report on accessibility for 2021/22.</p> <p>The following performance measure will be included to the annual ministerial report on accessibility: “Percentage of organizations that achieve compliance with accessibility requirements after being issued an “Achieving Compliance Plan”.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Accessibility Compliance Secretariat will continue to meet with the Accessibility Advisory Council, and gather data associated with compliance of the AMA and its accessibility standards.</p>
<p>7. Provide adequate resources to the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat.</p>	<p>A full time Accessibility Compliance Officer joined the secretariat in September 2022. Onboarding and training is underway.</p> <p>In summer 2022, a 2023/24 impact statement was prepared requesting additional FTEs to work in the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat. A proposed operating budget for the Compliance Secretariat was also included in the impact statement.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>8. Ensure compliance activities are more transparent through annual reporting.</p>	<p>In September 2022, the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat and the MAO began to consult with the Accessibility Advisory Council on potential future projects for inclusion in the two-year ministerial plan that will be released in spring 2023.</p> <p>Manitoba’s Accessibility Compliance Secretariat finalized compliance figures for 2021/2022, which were included in the 2021/22 annual report on accessibility.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>9. Measure and report publicly on the impact that the Standard is having on improving accessibility.</p>	<p>Work on this recommendation has not yet begun beyond initial research gathering.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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	It is anticipated that public views about perceived impact that standards have on improving accessibility will emerge during engagement for the independent 5-Year Review of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act in 2023/24.	
10. Establish Accessibility Compliance Secretariat protocols to report and resolve accessibility standard complaints.	Policy and procedures to handle complaints regarding alleged non-compliance were uploaded on the Accessibility Compliance website and is available for public viewing.	Completed
11. Reevaluate returning to the lower threshold of 20 employees or more that must document policies and make these available to the public.	Work on this recommendation has not yet begun.	On pause Revisiting in 2024/25
12. Substantially improve outreach and awareness to obligated businesses and organizations.	<p>The Manitoba Accessibility Office (MAO) released Issue 25 of Accessibility News (July 2022) which included information about the accessible customer service requirement to welcome service animals. It also highlighted resources for Manitoba Access Awareness Week, documents about the Accessible Information and Communication Standard, and an article about providing reasonable workplace accommodations for employees and job applicants.</p> <p>Since May 1, 2022, MAO has developed new tools and resources to assist organizations to comply with existing accessibility standards, including the new Accessible Information and Communication Standard.</p>	Ongoing
13. Improve education, outreach and awareness in communities outside of Winnipeg.	<p>The Manitoba Accessibility Office (MAO) is identifying and exploring potential private sector advertising opportunities (including outside of Winnipeg) that can be utilized to boost MAO reach and awareness.</p> <p>Over the next two years, MAO aims to expand its outreach and networking opportunities with organizations such as the Manitoba Association of Municipalities (AMM), Manitoba School Boards Association (MSBA), Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and many others.</p>	Ongoing
14. Ensure the Manitoba Accessibility Office meets its French language commitments.	Developing a new French-language version of www.AccessibilityMB.ca is part of the website redesign process during 2022.	Ongoing

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	The Manitoba Accessibility Office (MAO) is committed to providing information about accessibility standards, resources and training in French and English, including posting new website content in both languages simultaneously.	
15. Change the name of the regulation to Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation, in line with other accessibility standards.	This is part of legislative work to be undertaken in 2022/23 or 2023/24. Timeline yet to be determined.	In progress
16. Ensure organizations have access to resources and funding support to implement this Standard.	<p>The Manitoba Accessibility Fund was formally launched on February 14, 2022 and closed the first intake process on April 15, 2022.</p> <p>The Minister responsible for Accessibility approved 30 projects and a total of \$756.3K to be awarded to organizations in business, non-profit, and public sectors. These projects are to be completed by March 31, 2023.</p>	Completed
17. Enhance the profile and content of AccessibilityMB.ca to make it easier to access tools and resources.	<p>The Manitoba Accessibility Office (MAO) is working with a website designer and web developer with specialized expertise in accessible web design to ensure www.AccessibilityMB.ca conforms with World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA, and enhances navigability of the site. This project will be completed in early 2023.</p> <p>MAO will be developing a process whereby the website would be evaluated annually by an accessibility specialist working with user testers with lived experience.</p> <p>Work is underway by CED to engage a vendor to assist with accessibility upgrades to Manitoba.ca sites including AccessibilityMB.ca.</p>	In progress

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<p>18. Modernize MAO resources and awareness raising campaigns to keep them relevant and useful.</p>	<p>The Manitoba Accessibility Office’s Accessibility News (Issue 25) included a section on the Manitoba Accessibility Awareness Week webinar that offered free training on the Information and Communication Standard. This webinar was the highest registered and highest attended event in all of MAO history.</p> <p>MAO will be adding a web page to the AMA learning portal that will allow the public to download MAO’s learning modules in a “zip” file format so that modules can be integrated into an organization’s pre-existing training and as part of the Organization and Staff Development Learning Management System.</p> <p>A new training module on the Accessible Information and Communication Standard will be added to existing AMA learning portal in 2023.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>19. Ensure Manitoba’s commitment of accessibility is adequately administered.</p>	<p>Staff were seconded to fill positions of MAF Manager and Clerk 3 to coordinate the Manitoba Accessibility Fund; these positions will become permanent in fall 2022 (due to a delay in passing Budget 2022/23).</p> <p>MAO welcomed a new Executive Director in April 2022 and a new Senior Policy Analyst to cover a maternity leave in October 2022.</p> <p>A full time Accessibility Compliance Officer joined the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat in September 2022</p> <p>MAO has begun the process to hire a new Communication and Engagement Specialist. As well, a policy analyst position has been approved and will be hired in 2023 to focus on outreach to Indigenous populations.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>Allocation of additional policy staff to the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat has been completed.</p>
<p>20. Continue to monitor financial implications of recommendations on stakeholders.</p>	<p>Cost analyses are completed as part of the development of each accessible standard.</p> <p>A cost analysis for the Accessible Information and Communication Standard was completed in 2022 and cost estimates for Transportation and Design of Public Spaces are underway.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>21. Appoint an additional member to the Accessibility Advisory Council to increase the diversity of viewpoints.</p>	<p>A ninth member was appointed to Council on February 15, 2022, for a three-year term. They identify as a member of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community and is a strong advocate for people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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<p>22. Ask all members of Agencies, Boards and Commissions to identify disability status during the appointment process.</p>	<p>Manitoba Agencies, Boards and Commissions Office has updated inclusive language on the application form for new government ABC appointments.</p> <p>Work to include accessibility training as part of standardized onboarding process for all new members on ABCs is underway.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
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