

2021 Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Five-Year Review: Status of Recommendations at June 30, 2023

- The following table is a quarterly status update for the Minister’s information. It provides a summary of the work undertaken between March 31, 2023 and June 30, 2023 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.
- At June 30, 2023, 15 recommendations were complete (and ongoing), six were underway, and one has work yet to begin in 2023/24.

Recommendations (as per Accessibility Advisory Council Review final report)	Lead	Implementation Team Deliverable	Work to Date June 30, 2023	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>Public Service Commission (PSC) Families (Accessibility Compliance Secretariat)</p>	<p>Accessibility Compliance Secretariat and PSC to implement the following multi-step plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issuing a compliance form to Deputy Ministers via memo from the Clerk, with a request for DMs to complete and submit the form as employing authorities. The form was be discussed at a DMC meeting. 2. Creating a table outlining all the commitments made in the Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan for 2021 and 2022 and asking DMs and/or Diversity Champions to provide a progress report on what has been done to date to complete actions in the plan. Timeline for reporting would be every 2 years (in the second year of the MGAP) 3. Conducting focus groups to ask public servants working at various levels of government open-ended questions regarding their familiarity with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act) and accessibility within the public service. 	<p>Quarterly MGAP progress reports from DACs for their departments are due early July 2023.</p> <p>A report outlining project findings from 8 focus groups and recommendations was delivered to the GOM accessibility steering committee in March 2023 and Deputy Ministers in April 2023. Departments have been assigned to lead specific recommendations and status updates on implementation will be provided to the ACS every six months.</p> <p>PSC coordinates follow-up actions identified by Department Accessibility Coordinators and/or Diversity and Inclusion (DI) Champions as part of their implementation of MGAP.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved</p> <p>Accessibility compliance form will be issued to departments every two years.</p> <p>The ACS will monitor implementation of the recommendations from the accessibility review across departments every six months.</p> <p>Ongoing reporting by departments and tracking document on The Manitoba Government Accessibility Plan (MGAP) continues with the support of DACs.</p> <p>Timeline for progress reporting of MGAP is every 2 years. The next deadline is Dec. 31, 2024.</p>

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<p>2. Review the role of Department Accessibility Coordinators as an important strategy for revitalizing accessibility awareness and communication commitments within departments.</p>	<p>Public Service Commission (PSC)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a Department Accessibility Coordinator in all departments and provide them adequate time and resources. 2. Hold, and record, an online orientation for new Department Accessibility Coordinators. 3. Department Accessibility Coordinators and MAO to work collaboratively on developing webinars and learning events for PSC employees. 4. Hold internal Department Accessibility Coordinator Network meetings at least four times annually. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit will request regular updates on departmental accessibility goals and address any concerns Department Accessibility Coordinators may have. - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit to provide Terms of Reference to Department Accessibility Coordinators and Diversity and Inclusion Champions. 5. Include Department Accessibility Coordinators in Manitoba Accessibility Office (MAO) webinars. 6. An Accessibility Toolkit is being developed by the PSC which will provide information to Department Accessibility Coordinators on technology/services that are available, this information can be forwarded to employees, managers and Human Resource Consultants. 	<p>The PSC continues to fill Department Accessibility Coordinator vacancies when they arise.</p> <p>The PSC continues to meet quarterly with DACs. The next DAC quarterly meeting is in September 2023.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved</p> <p>DAC identified from CEDs Strategy and Governance Branch to promote accessibility in communications.</p> <p>The DAC onboarding materials were finalized and shared with DACs in June 2023.</p> <p>The Accessibility Toolkit was distributed to Human Resource Consultants and to departments through DACs at the end of May 2023, and to all public servants through the CONNECT online newsletter (May 29, 2023).</p>
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<p>3. Ensure communications and services are consistently accessible to all members of the public.</p>	<p>Public Service Commission (PSC)</p> <p>Communications & Engagement Division (CED of Finance)</p> <p>Organization and Staff Development (OSD of the Public Service Commission)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to track, and reinforce, that all staff complete AMA mandatory training which includes training on the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service. 2. OSD to work with MAO to develop and resume training for employees to prepare accessible documents. 3. CED to assist departments to introduce accessible templates wherever possible. 4. MAO to support CED in integrating accessibility into existing and new communication and engagement guides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - include an offer of alternate format or with contact information on all materials. - include offer of accommodations in online engagement or at in-person events. 5. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit of PSC to develop a Guide to Accessible Webinars and Virtual Meetings and seek the support of CED to create accessible documents and host accessible events. 6. Departments to ensure that mandatory forms are available in accessible formats. 	<p>Developing a process with Manitoba Government Inquiry to triage accommodation requests to departments for actioning. MAO preparing draft content about accommodation for use by MGI. (by fall 2023)</p> <p>Developing standardized approach to ensure access offer is made on all public materials across government, i.e. integrating access offer on website(s) as well as print material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed inclusion of access offer as part of signature line of all GOM employees. <p>CED is refreshing the GOM writing style guide which will include an appendix on accessibility (end of 2023).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MAO has met with Digital and Technology Services and Employment and Income Support division to discuss how digital accessibility requirements under the IC Standard will be integrated to internal and outward systems and processes. 	<p>Work in Progress</p> <p>Ongoing tracking of completion of AMA mandatory training.</p> <p>OSD continues to offer two courses regarding accessible documents.</p> <p>MAOs learning modules added to the government's LMS.</p> <p>Ongoing work to ensure that accessibility of communications and services have government-wide application.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings are held by CED and Families 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 & Engagement Division (Finance)</p> <p>MAO</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MAO to support CED and Business Transformation and Technology to explore future integration of ASL in priority areas, including social and health services and jurisdictional review. 2. MAO model the integration of ASL in recorded webinars and prioritize which tools to post in ASL. 	<p>CED is working with MAO to develop ASL guidelines and procedures for government communications.</p> <p>Introduction of a government-wide ASL policy is identified as a commitment in Minister responsible for Accessibility's 2-Year Plan (2023/24 & 2024/25). Timeline for putting this new policy in place is end of 2024.</p>	<p>Work in Progress</p> <p>This work is ongoing.</p>

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<p>5. Integrate accessibility during initial stages of project and program development, especially in procurement processes.</p>	<p>Procurement Services Branch (Central Services) and Treasury Board Secretariat</p> <p>Families</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to support Sustainable Procurement MB Working Group in considering accessibility in procurement activities. 2. PSC asks departments to report on accessible procurement as part of an MGAP commitment. 3. CED to require accessibility in its print items, contracts, websites and other materials. 4. Finance to include an accessibility policy and related guidance in the update of the Procurement Administration Manual. 5. Finance to send reminder to departments to include accessibility considerations in grant funding applications from external, third-party service providers. 	<p>Content about accessibility and AMA applicability in procurement has been added to new version of Procurement Administration Manual (currently with DM of Government Services for direction). Timeline: TBD.</p> <p>Exploring creation of a procedure for GOM staff that helps clarify how AMA could be integrated into a solicitation requirement.</p> <p>Determining how best to incorporate accessibility requirements into all government procurement policies as standard practice, is part of the Minister's Annual 2-Year plan (2023/24 & 2024/25).</p>	<p>Work in Progress</p> <p>This work is ongoing and will change over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This recommendation may be considered completed once government has included accessibility language to the Procurement Administration Manual, and accessibility requirements are included into all government procurement policies as standard practice (by end 2024).
<p>6. Enhance transparency of government compliance and improve collaboration with Accessibility Advisory Council.</p>	<p>Minister responsible for Accessibility</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minister to include a discussion about government compliance with the AMA in the annual meeting with the Accessibility Advisory Council. 2. Minister report to the Council on actions taken to meet the recommendations of this Review in an annual status update document. 3. Minister provides performance measures related to government's Accessibility for Manitobans Act compliance in the annual report tabled in Legislature. 	<p>Compliance data incorporated in the Minister's annual report on accessibility, starting in 2021/22.</p> <p>It includes the performance measure: Percentage of organizations that achieve compliance with accessibility requirements after being issued an "Achieving Compliance Plan."</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved</p> <p>ACS will continue to meet with the Accessibility Advisory Council, and gather data associated with compliance of the AMA and its accessibility standards.</p>

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<p>7. Provide adequate resources to the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat.</p>	<p>Families</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MAO increase its assistance to the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat, particularly in alerting public of deadlines and educating into compliance. 2. Hire a full-time permanent staff member (i.e., an Accessibility Compliance Officer), to conduct audits, inspections, site visits and to promote compliance among various sectors. 	<p>In September 2022, a full-time Accessibility Compliance Officer joined the secretariat. Recruitment is underway to hire an additional Accessibility Compliance Officer in summer 2023.</p>	<p>Work in Progress</p> <p>This recommendation is ongoing. It is reviewed regularly as part of Budget process. A status update marking completion will be provided at March 31, 2024.</p>
<p>8. Ensure compliance activities are more transparent through annual reporting.</p>	<p>Accessibility Compliance Secretariat</p> <p>MAO</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accessibility Compliance Secretariat to deliver a presentation to the Accessibility Advisory Council every six months. 2. Accessibility Compliance Secretariat to add more detailed compliance information in the Minister's Annual Report that specifies the affected standard or AMA obligations, such as Accessibility Plans. 	<p>In 2022/23, ACS staff met with the Accessibility Advisory Council on three separate occasions.</p> <p>Compliance figures will be reported in the forthcoming 202/23 annual report on accessibility.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved</p>
<p>9. Measure and report publicly on the impact that the Standard is having on improving accessibility.</p>	<p>MAO</p> <p>Executive Clerk's Office</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MAO use the 2021 survey data as a baseline for future surveys to measure public awareness and perceived impact of the AMA. 2. MAO to conduct cross-jurisdictional research to identify other ways of measuring and reporting on the Accessibility for Manitobans Act's impact e.g., quality of life index developed in Nova Scotia. 	<p>Public views about perceived impact that standards have on improving accessibility will likely emerge during engagement for the independent 5-year review of the AMA 2023/24. Public consultations as part of the independent AMA review closed in May 2023.</p>	<p>Work in Progress</p> <p>This recommendation will be informed by the 5-Yr AMA review report and implementation plan. (fall 2023)</p>
<p>10. Establish Accessibility Compliance Secretariat protocols to report and resolve accessibility standard complaints.</p>	<p>Accessibility Compliance Secretariat (ACS)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACS to provide informal report to the Council on the number of complaints received and current trends (yearly). 2. ACS to include number of complaints documented by the ACS in the Minister's annual report and analysis of trends (yearly). 	<p>Policy and procedures to handle complaints regarding alleged non-compliance was uploaded on the Accessibility Compliance website and is available for public viewing.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved</p>

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<p>11. Reevaluate returning to the lower threshold of 20 employees or more that must document policies and make these available to the public.</p>	<p>Families</p>	<p>1. Allow more time to determine impact of the lower threshold and reassess threshold as part of the five-year review of the Accessible Employment Standard Regulation.</p>	<p>Work on this recommendation has not yet begun. This recommendation will be informed by the 5-Yr AMA review report and implementation plan.</p>	<p>No Progress to Date but Plan to Take Action</p>
<p>12. Substantially improve outreach and awareness to obligated businesses and organizations.</p>	<p>MAO Accessibility Compliance Secretariat</p>	<p>1. MAO improve outreach and awareness through the launch in 2022/23 of the Manitoba Accessibility Fund (MAF), with preference given to projects that increase public awareness. 2. MAO provides regular updates about standard development, new tools, and Manitoba-specific information through the monthly electronic newsletter (Accessibility News) to subscribers.</p>	<p>Active EngageMB public engagements in Mar-May 2023 for the Transportation Standard and AMA Review. Hosted information booths at the MB School Divisions Conference and AMM, respectively. The ACS delivered presentations on accessibility requirements to MB Hotel Assoc., AMM, MB Massage Therapy Assoc., MB Library Assoc., MB School Boards Association, and Family Violence Consortium of MB and directors of school divisions.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved This recommendation has been implemented. Outreach and awareness efforts are ongoing.</p>
<p>13. Improve education, outreach and awareness in communities outside of Winnipeg.</p>	<p>MAO Accessibility Compliance Secretariat</p>	<p>1. MAO continue to target awareness initiatives outside Winnipeg and report on these efforts in the Minister's Annual Report. 2. MAO present future Manitoba Accessibility Awards for municipalities at the Association of Manitoba Municipality events and liaise with their representative on the Accessibility Advisory Council.</p>	<p>The Accessibility Compliance Secretariat has been working with school divisions and large municipalities outside of Winnipeg to ensure they update their accessibility plans for 2023 and 2024.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved This recommendation has been implemented. Outreach and awareness efforts are ongoing.</p>
<p>14. Ensure the Manitoba Accessibility Office meets its French language commitments.</p>	<p>MAO</p>	<p>1. MAO engage additional staff to update AccessibiliteMB.ca to ensure all resources and pages available in English are available in French. 2. MAO contract a bilingual trainer to provide a presentation on the AMA and its standards in French to key organizations and French-speaking regions. Record and post the webinar for future viewing.</p>	<p>A new French-language version of www.accessibilityMB.ca was developed as part of the MAO web design refresh project. MAO continues its commitment to provide information about accessibility standards, resources and training in French, including posting new website content in both languages simultaneously.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved MAO launched new English and French versions of the website in June 2023. French materials are created for all engagements, events, print/web content and correspondence with Manitobans.</p>

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<p>15. Change the name of the regulation to the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation, in line with other accessibility standards.</p>	<p>Families Justice</p>	<p>1. Families to lead regulatory amendment to change name.</p>	<p>Revisions to this regulation are underway and anticipated to come into force before October 2023.</p>	<p>Work in Progress</p>
<p>16. Ensure organizations have access to resources and funding support to implement this Standard.</p>	<p>MAO Finance</p>	<p>1. MAO to create draft Manitoba Accessibility Fund guidelines, application form, and training to support applicants during a pilot year 2022/23. 2. MAO to draft a selection process and share criteria in the guidelines. 3. Department of Finance to review and finalize guidelines and materials to operationalize the Manitoba Accessibility Fund in 2022/23. 4. MAO to create a marketing plan for the Manitoba Accessibility Fund to ensure stakeholders are aware of its launch.</p>	<p>MAF 2022/23, projects are to be completed by March 31, 2023. Several projects have been extended until summer 2023. - MAF intake 2023 received over 160 project applications, and a set of 42 projects will be receiving MAF grant funding in 2022/2023. A formal launch event is being planned for early July 2023.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved Manitoba Accessibility Fund was formally launched in February 2022 and 30 grant projects totalling \$756.3K were awarded to organizations in business, non-profits, and the public sector.</p>
<p>17. Enhance the profile and content of AccessibilityMB.ca to make it easier to access tools and resources.</p>	<p>MAO Families web team Communications & Engagement Division (Finance)</p>	<p>1. MAO continue to improve the website, both in terms of its accessibility website and the availability of easy-to-understand explanations and tools in English and French. 2. MAO seek professional guidance on improvements to AccessibilityMB.ca and accessibiliteMB.ca (French), including navigation, content organization, and accessibility to be WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliant.</p>	<p>The new MAO website, accessibilitymb.ca, was audited by Access Changes Everything to ensure accessibility of the site. The site meets or exceeds WCAG 2.1 Level AA guidelines. - Work is underway to complete yearly audits of the site to ensure continued accessibility. - MAO is working on making all resources accessible in both French and English - Work is underway by CED to engage a vendor to assist with accessibility upgrades to Manitoba.ca sites including AccessibilityMB.ca.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved MAO launched a new, accessible and user-friendly version of AccessibilityMB.ca in June 2023 which meets or exceeds WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards.</p>

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<p>18. Modernize MAO resources and awareness raising campaigns to keep them relevant and useful.</p>	<p>MAO Families</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MAO continue to develop social media content for the government's organic posts and for paid advertisement. 2. MAO continue to include social media toolkits in its celebration of Manitoba Access Awareness Week and other events, as well as in the launch of the Manitoba Accessibility Fund. 3. MAO to consult with CED about MAO operating social media pages, similar to the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. 	<p>Work is underway to ensure that most resources available on AccessibilityMB.ca are fully accessible documents.</p> <p>Accessibility News has changed to a monthly publication to keep readers better informed on accessibility-related topics.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented. Updating resources and awareness raising campaigns is continuous.</p>
<p>19. Ensure Manitoba's commitment of accessibility is adequately administered.</p>	<p>Families</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allocate an additional policy analyst to the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat. 2. MAO to hire two full-time staff to administer Manitoba Accessibility Fund in 2022/23. 	<p>MAO filled the permanent MAF Financial Clerk 3 position in January 2023. The position of MAF Manager was classified as an XO4 by Total Rewards in May 2023. A process to hire a permanent FTE for this role will begin in July 2023.</p> <p>PSC hired a full-time Accessibility Consultant to manage the DAC Network and advise on accessibility best practices for GOM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ACS hired a full-time Compliance Officer in Sept 2022. An additional compliance officer will be hired in summer 2023. 	<p>Work in Progress</p> <p>Resolved and ongoing. This recommendation is reviewed regularly as part of Budget process.</p>
<p>20. Continue to monitor financial implications of recommendations on stakeholders.</p>	<p>Families MAO</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Families and MAO continue to research cost implications as remaining standards are introduced and collect related data as standards are implemented. 2. Families ensure the eligibility criteria of the Manitoba Accessibility Fund supports compliance costs of the implementation of the AMA and its standards. 	<p>Cost analyses are completed as part of the development of each accessible standard.</p>	<p>Implemented/Resolved</p> <p>This will continue with the enactment of the two remaining standards.</p>

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<p>21. Appoint an additional member to the Accessibility Advisory Council to increase the diversity of viewpoints.</p>	<p>Families Minister Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABCs) Office</p>	<p>1. Appoint an additional Accessibility Advisory Council member from the disability community.</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>Implemented/Resolved</p>
<p>22. Ask all members of Agencies, Boards and Commissions to identify disability status during the appointment process.</p>	<p>ABCs MAO</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ABCs to update the employment equity declaration to change language to persons with disabilities. 2. ABCs to add a voluntary self-declaration of disability status and request accommodations on form requesting to participate on an agency, board or commission. 3. MAO review orientation process for new Accessibility Advisory Council members and include requests for accommodation as a standard practice in the materials. 4. ABCs to implement a policy that requires all government-appointed members (to an ABC) take mandatory AMA and Standards training, prior to, or shortly after, being appointed. 5. Departments to advise all newly appointed members about required AMA and standards training (and other standards as appropriate) as part of welcome letter/orientation package. 	<p>ABCs 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>Implemented/Resolved</p>