

Accessible Transportation Standard

Public Engagement Information Webinar

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Agenda

- Welcome & House Keeping
- Indigenous Land Acknowledgement
- Accessible Transportation Standard Overview
- Question and Answer Period
- Closing Remarks

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) and the Development of Standards

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Families Minister Rochelle Squires



Minister responsible for:

- Accessibility
- Accessibility for Manitobans Act

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) and the Development of Standards

The AMA became law on Dec. 5, 2013. The purpose of the legislation is to provide a clear and proactive process for the identification, prevention and removal of barriers that affect the full participation of more than one in four Manitobans with disabilities.

The Manitoba government has committed to enacting all five standards (regulations) under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA).

Development of Standards

To date, the Manitoba government has established three accessibility standards as regulations:

- ✓ Customer Service Standard
- ✓ Accessible Employment Standard
- ✓ Accessible Information & Communication Standard

Accessibility for Manitobans Act

The **Accessible Transportation Standard** and the **Design of (outdoor) Public Spaces Standard** are the remaining two in progress.

These five standards under the act are building blocks for making real, measurable and effective changes to accessibility.

The Importance of Accessible Transportation in Manitoba

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Importance of Accessible Transportation

The Accessible Transportation Standard is the fourth standard under the act. If we want everyone to participate in public life, we must ensure that public transportation is accessible to all.

Accessible forms of public transportation are vital to ensuring that people with disabilities can participate in all aspects of daily life, be it work, education, attending medical appointments, socializing and more.

Importance of Accessible Transportation

- To date, Manitoba has seen advancements in making both public transit and paratransit accessible and available in our cities and rural communities.
- The Accessible Transportation Standard will add to and extend these efforts to ensure all aspects of transportation become more accessible.

Accessible Transportation Standard Development Background

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Standard Development Committee (SDC)

Manitoba's Accessibility Advisory Council developed a committee of subject matter experts that became the Transportation Standard Development Committee.

This committee held 15 meetings between December 2018 and August 2019.

Standard Development Process

During the standard development meetings, the Committee reviewed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards and relevant guidelines from other Canadian and American jurisdictions.

The committee presented preliminary recommendations to the Minister's Accessibility Advisory Council on Sept. 9, 2019.

Public Consultations/Recommendations

Beginning in October 2019, Manitoba's Accessibility Advisory Council held consultations, including a public meeting on Nov. 7, 2019, where more than 100 people attended in-person and via webcast.

The council received submissions from a significant number of individuals and organizations including: the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, Winnipeg Transit, Independent Living Resource Centre, Visually Impaired Resource Network, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians and Barrier Free Manitoba.

On Jan. 31, 2020, the Accessibility Advisory Council made their recommendations on an Accessible Transportation Standard to the Minister of Families.

The Proposed Accessible Transportation Standard

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Scope of the Standard

Developing this accessibility standard for public transportation will help operators of conventional transportation and paratransit, municipalities, schools and vehicles-for-hire create a system of transportation that is more inclusive for all Manitobans, regardless of abilities.

The proposed Accessible Transportation Standard includes measures related to training, policy development, equipment, vehicle design and operating matters such as fares, hours of service and routes.

Who must comply with the Accessible Transportation Standard

Under the proposed Accessible Transportation Standard, the following organizations will be required to adhere to basic accessibility standards with respect to transportation:

- conventional transportation providers
- paratransit providers
- municipalities
- schools
- vehicles-for-hire

Conventional Transportation Providers Proposed Requirements

- ✓ The standard will ensure that **transit infrastructure** is accessible, that it is maintained, and is cleared of snow during the winter months.
- ✓ **Technical design requirements:** Meet technical requirements provided for accessible lifting devices, priority seats, mobility aid spaces, steps, grab bars and handrails, floor surfaces, lighting, and route signage.

Conventional Transportation Providers Proposed Requirements

- ✓ **Fares:** Do not charge people with disabilities a higher fare than people without disabilities, and do not charge for storing mobility aids or mobility assistive devices, such as wheelchairs or walkers.
- ✓ **Stop announcements:** Provide on-board audible and visual stop announcements.

Conventional Transportation Provider Proposed Requirements

- ✓ **Priority seats:** Provide clearly marked seating for people with disabilities (one or more)
- ✓ **Service Disruptions:** (definition: where a route/scheduled service is temporarily changed and the change is known and/or planned before the start of the trip).
- ✓ If there is a service disruption, **offer alternative accessible arrangements** and provide accessible communication about the disruption.

Paratransit Proposed Requirements

- ✓ Develop an **eligibility application process** and assessment criteria used to determine whether an applicant is eligible for paratransit services.
- ✓ **Document the assessment criteria** and make it publicly available in accessible formats.
- ✓ If the provider does not make an eligibility decision within 14 days of receiving the application, the person is eligible for **temporary use**.

Paratransit Proposed Requirements

- ✓ Do not charge for storing mobility aids or mobility assistive devices, such as wheelchairs or walkers.
- ✓ Make services available to eligible **visitors**.
- ✓ Do not restrict the **number of trips** that a person with a disability can request.
- ✓ Do not prioritize trips based on destination or purpose.
- ✓ To the extent possible, allow for same-day reservations. If same-day reservations are not possible, accept reservations up to three hours before the end of the service period on the day before the intended travel day.

Paratransit Proposed Requirements

- ✓ Offer comparable **hours and days of service** to conventional service providers within the same municipality.
- ✓ **Service Delays (30 minutes or more)**
If a person has to make a reservation for services, the provider must:
 - Identify the person's preferred method of communication.
 - Inform the person of the delay through their preferred contact method.
- ✓ Allow passengers to travel with a **companion, children or support person**.

Proposed Requirements for both Conventional & Paratransit Service Providers

- Create **accessible measures, policies and practices** on accessible transportation and make these documents publicly available, and available in an accessible format.
- Provide **training to staff** on the safe use of accessibility equipment, emergency preparedness and response procedures, among other instructions.

Proposed Requirements for both Conventional & Paratransit Service Providers

- Hold at least one **public meeting** each year to review measures, policies and practices, and allow members of the public to provide feedback.
- There must be **fare parity** when:
 - Conventional transportation and paratransit service are offered by the **same provider**; and
 - Conventional transportation and paratransit services are provided by **different providers** in the **same municipality**. Paratransit providers cannot charge more than the highest fare charged for conventional transportation services in the municipality

Manitoba School Boards and Independent Schools

1. Manitoba school boards would have to provide integrated accessible school transportation services. If this is not possible, the boards would have to arrange alternative accessible transportation.
2. School buses run by independent schools would have to meet minimum accessible design requirements.

Vehicles-for-hire Proposed Requirements

Vehicles-for-hire that operate in a municipality with a vehicle for-hire bylaw would have to:

- ✓ not charge a higher fare or charge a fee for the storage or transportation of a mobility aid or medical device
- ✓ not refuse or deny service because a person is disabled by a barrier or requires reasonable assistance
- ✓ not refuse or deny service to a person using a service animal
- ✓ provide vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format, on request

Types of Vehicles-for-hire

Includes:

- ✓ taxis
- ✓ limousines
- ✓ personal transportation providers;
 - **private transportation services** (often vans or larger vehicles from companies like BDC Contractors)
 - **ride share vehicles** (accessed through an app or website such as Uber and MY CAB app)

Proposed Obligations of Municipalities

This section applies to a municipality that has a vehicle-for-hire-bylaw. The municipality:

- ✓ would have to consult with the public at least once every two years to identify the number of accessible vehicles-for-hire that are required in the municipality
- ✓ would have to inform the operator of a vehicle-for-hire of the requirements set out in Standards for Mobility Aid Securement Devices and Occupant Restraint Systems and the Related Exemptions Regulation, Manitoba Regulation 28/2019. (Noted in section 53(3) of the regulation)

Proposed Obligations of Municipalities

A municipality would have to include the following information in its accessibility plan:

- the number of accessible vehicles for hire required in the municipality
- the number of accessible vehicles for hire that operate in the municipality
- a plan to address the deficit, if applicable

Accessible Transportation Standard Proposed Compliance Dates

Obligated organizations will have until Jan. 1, 2026 to comply with accessibility requirements.

Transit operators will have an additional 10 years to upgrade existing buses to meet physical accessibility requirements (i.e. Jan. 1, 2036).

Manitoba Accessibility Fund (MAF)

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Manitoba Accessibility Fund (MAF)

To offset some of the costs to organizations related to this, and other accessibility standards, the Manitoba government established a \$20 million endowment fund in April 2021, managed by the Winnipeg Foundation.

Manitoba Accessibility Fund (MAF)

Organizations can apply for Manitoba Accessibility Fund grants of up to \$50,000 on an annual basis.

In 2022, thirty organizations were awarded a total of \$756,000 in funding for projects removing accessibility barriers to services, raising awareness and supporting compliance with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act legislation and standards that are currently in force.

MAF Intake

From Jan. 30 to March 10, 2023, organizations were invited to submit project applications of up to \$50,000 as part of the second intake of the MAF grant program.

Information about MAF is available on www.AccessibilityMB.ca as well as the Manitoba Grants Online portal.

Informational webinars about this grant program were held on Feb. 2, 15, 20 and in French on March 2. The recordings of these webinars will be added to the MAO website.

Please contact MAF@gov.mb.ca or go to the [MAO website](#) for more information about this funding opportunity.

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Questions?

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Thank You!

For more information, please visit:

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This presentation along with all other documents are available in alternate formats upon request.