

Communications Security Establishment Canada

Accessibility Plan 2026 to 2028

The Communication Security Establishment Canada (CSE) Accessibility Plan 2026 to 2028 identifies key barriers to accessibility and outlines concrete actions to remove them, in alignment with the *Accessible Canada Act*. The plan also outlines the actions that will be implemented to remove these barriers from the workplace and foster a more inclusive and equitable environment for the entire workforce.

Related links:

- [Accessibility feedback process](#)
- [Accessibility feedback form](#)
- [Communications Security Establishment Canada Accessibility Plan 2022–2025 - Communications Security Establishment Canada](#)

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Message from the Chief

At CSE, we are committed to fostering a workplace that is inclusive, respectful, and accessible to everyone. I am proud to share our Accessibility Plan 2026 to 2028, a renewed commitment to building a barrier-free environment where all individuals can thrive.

This plan reflects our core belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to contribute fully, without obstacles in their way. It builds on our ongoing efforts to remove barriers, enhance accessibility, and ensure that all staff, regardless of ability, can participate meaningfully and equitably.

Developed in consultation with the CSE staff, including those with disabilities, and key stakeholders, the plan outlines clear actions and measurable goals across priority areas such as physical accessibility, digital inclusion, and inclusive workplace practices.

As we move forward, we remain focused on identifying and eliminating both visible and non-visible barriers. Visible barriers may include physical obstacles such as inaccessible workspaces or technologies, while non-visible barriers can be harder to detect—such as biases, stigma, or policies that unintentionally exclude individuals. Addressing both types of barriers is essential to strengthening the diversity of our workforce and ensuring our culture reflects the values we uphold as public servants.

We recognize that creating lasting change requires sustained effort. While we've made meaningful progress, we know there is always more to do. Accessibility is an ongoing commitment—not a one-time initiative. This plan sets out tangible steps we will take over the next 3 years to support all staff and applicants including those with disabilities, improve access to our spaces and systems, and embed inclusion into everything we do.

Our mission depends on the strength of our people. By fostering an environment where everyone can thrive, we not only uphold our values, but we also strengthen our ability to serve Canadians.

Accessibility is a shared responsibility. I encourage everyone to engage with this plan, share feedback, and help us build a workplace that supports the needs of all individuals. Together, we can ensure that CSE continues to lead in creating an accessible and inclusive environment.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this plan and to those who continue to champion accessibility across CSE. Let's keep building a workplace where everyone belongs.

Caroline Xavier (she/her)
Chief

1. General

1.1 Providing feedback

Your feedback will help CSE identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers in the workplace.

All feedback regarding accessibility will be reviewed and addressed, regardless of whether it is submitted anonymously. Please note that CSE is unable to acknowledge or respond directly to anonymous submissions.

1.2 How to provide feedback

To submit accessibility feedback to CSE, use the [Accessibility feedback form](#).

You can also contact the Senior Advisor for Accessibility at CSE:

- by email: accessibility-accessibilite@cse-cst.gc.ca
- by mail:
Senior Advisor, Accessibility at CSE
c/o Human Resources
Communications Security Establishment Canada
P.O. Box 9703, Terminal
Ottawa, ON K1G 3Z4
- by telephone: [\(613\) 991-8635](tel:(613)991-8635)
- by text telephone (TTY): [\(613\) 991-9228](tel:(613)991-9228)

In your feedback, please include the following:

- your contact information, for example
 - your full name
 - mailing address
 - phone numbers
 - email address
- a clear, concise and detailed description of what you are requesting
- a description of what you would like to see changed
- if you are submitting a complaint, please also include the names and/or positions of all individuals involved in the matter and the dates and locations of the events
- your signature and the date of signature (if written)
- if you do not wish to provide your personal information, you can submit anonymous feedback (instructions below)

Please do not include any confidential information (for example, a social insurance number) in your feedback.

If you request a response to your feedback, we will respond using the same format used to submit your feedback.

Your feedback will always remain anonymous in CSE's public reports. You will not be identified with your feedback. The only time your feedback will be connected to you is when you request a personal response.

1.3 Submitting anonymous accessibility feedback

If you want to provide anonymous accessibility feedback:

- do not state your name or provide any other identifying information (for example, your email address or phone number)
- do not include your return address on the envelope if you send feedback by mail

Please note that CSE is unable to acknowledge or reply to anonymous feedback.

1.4 Requesting an alternate format for the accessibility feedback process

You can request an alternate format of the accessibility feedback process and/or the CSE accessibility plan by contacting the Senior Advisor for Accessibility at CSE (accessibility-accessibilite@cse-cst.gc.ca).

Please include your telephone number, email address and mailing address so that we can send you the requested alternate format.

Formats available:

- print
- large print (larger and clearer font)
- braille (a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers)
- audio (a recording of someone reading the text out loud)
- electronic formats that are compatible with adaptive technology

We will provide the requested format to you as soon as possible. Print, large print and electronic formats may take up to 15 days. Braille and audio formats may take up to 45 days.

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2. Executive summary

CSE is committed to advancing accessibility in alignment with the Accessible Canada Act. This Accessibility Plan outlines the barriers we've identified, the actions we are taking to address them, and our priorities for the next 3 years. It will guide our ongoing efforts to identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers across the organization. While we've made important progress, we recognize that much more work lies ahead.

This plan also supports and advances the priorities outlined in the *One CSE Framework*, reinforcing our commitment to building a workplace that is inclusive, effective, and future-ready.

- **Priority 1: Integration and institutionalization of EDIA across the agency** – As one CSE we are fostering a culture of belonging by removing barriers and embedding accessibility into everyday practices, so all staff feel valued, supported and connected.

- **Priority 2: Enhanced mission effectiveness** – By ensuring timely access to accommodations, adaptive tools, and inclusive work environments, we enable all staff to contribute fully to CSE’s mission and operational excellence.
- **Priority 3: Empower the workforce through inclusive leadership, equitable opportunities and career development** – We are embedding accessibility into leadership development, mentorship, and career progression to ensure equitable opportunities for all individuals to grow and lead within the organization.
- **Priority 4: Enhance the employee experience by emphasizing wellness, psychological safety, and belonging** – Our plan supports a modern, agile workforce by integrating accessibility into digital tools, hybrid workspaces, and evolving work models, while promoting environments that support mental health, inclusion and overall well-being.
- **Priority 5: Focus on enhancing the experience of our current and future talent** – We are committed to improving the employee experience by ensuring that accessibility is considered at every stage of the talent journey—from recruitment and onboarding to retention and advancement—so that all individuals can thrive at CSE.

Together, these priorities guide our efforts to create a workplace where accessibility is not just a requirement, but a driver of innovation, inclusion, and excellence.

Strategic goals

- **Barrier identification and removal:** Continuously identify and eliminate accessibility barriers across all areas of the organization, including employment, physical spaces, communications, procurement, programs, and services.
- **Barrier prevention:** Take proactive steps to prevent new barriers from being introduced, ensuring sustainable and long-term accessibility.
- **Inclusive culture:** Foster a workplace that is accessible, diverse, equitable, and inclusive, where all staff can thrive.

Key actions to remove accessibility barriers

To support these goals, CSE has identified a range of actions across several key areas:

- **Enhance duty to accommodate (DTA):** We are developing comprehensive DTA policy suite documents which will support individuals in receiving the reasonable accommodations they need to perform their work effectively and fully participate in CSE’s operations. The Government of Canada (GC) Workplace Accessibility Passport will be introduced, along with informational resources and a dedicated page on the intranet for easy access to relevant material.
- **Recruitment:** We are improving recruitment, assessment, and security screening processes to be more inclusive. This includes training hiring teams, removing unnecessary barriers, and nominating an Assessment Accessibility Ambassador to promote inclusive assessment practices. We are exploring partnerships with organizations that promote inclusive hiring

and support neurodiverse candidates, to help inform and strengthen our recruitment practices. These improvements are being integrated into both internal and external hiring processes to ensure accessibility is embedded throughout the employee lifecycle.

- **Infrastructure improvements:** We are actively enhancing physical accessibility across our facilities through thoughtful infrastructure upgrades including:
 - Automatic door openers-** Ensuring seamless entry/exit for individuals with mobility challenges.
 - Height adjustable desks-** Supporting ergonomics needs and promoting inclusive, adaptable workstations.
 - Sensory-friendly workplace design-** Reducing visual and auditory distractions to create environments that promote focus, comfort and support for neurodiverse individuals.
- **Communication:** We are reviewing internal and external communications to ensure they are clear, consistent, and accessible. This includes developing guides, checklists, and training on inclusive communication, accessible document creation, and best practices for diverse audiences.
- **Procurement:** We are developing tools and guidance to support staff in considering accessibility requirements when purchasing goods and services, ensuring inclusive procurement practices.

Commitment to action

CSE understands that meaningful change requires more than good intentions—it requires action. This plan reflects our commitment to embedding accessibility into decision, policy, and process. By working collaboratively and improving continuously, we aim to build a workplace that is accessible, inclusive, and equitable for all.

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3. Accessibility statement

CSE is committed to the goals of the *Accessible Canada Act* and to helping build a Canada without barriers by January 1, 2040. We are working to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in the following areas:

- employment
- the built environment
- communications
- information and communication technologies (ICT)
- the procurement of goods, services, and facilities
- the designing and delivering programs and services
- transportation

CSE values the contributions of people with disabilities and is committed to creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, respected, and included. We are actively working to

remove existing barriers and prevent new ones, while building a sustainable culture of accessibility and inclusion.

We are committed to fostering a healthy, safe, and respectful workplace that is—free from harassment, discrimination, and violence, including domestic violence. While preventative measures are in place, we recognize that ongoing efforts are needed to address persistent barriers and ensure that no one is treated unfairly based on personal characteristics or identity.

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4. Progress on CSE's Accessibility Plan 2022 to 2025

4.1 Overview

CSE's 2022 to 2025 Accessibility Plan focused on identifying and removing barriers across key areas including employment, the built environment, communications, ICT, procurement of goods, design and delivery of programs and services, transportation and training. This section provides a summary of the progress made to date and outlines the remaining work that will carry forward into the 2026 to 2028 plan.

4.2 Summary of key achievements by priority area

Priority area: employment

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- updated recruitment practices and hiring documents to make it more welcoming and accessible for everyone.
- engaged with staff and affinity groups representing people with disabilities to learn about employment-related challenges.
- included accessibility as part of our efforts to support equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.
- made improvements to help new employees with disabilities feel supported as they start their jobs, while settling in their roles and as they grow in their careers.

Priority area: the built environment

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- addressed accessibility issues in the workplace as they come up
- installed automatic door openers and added clearer signs to help everyone move around more easily
- addressed physical obstacles in shared spaces to make it safer and easier for people to move around

Priority area: information and communication technologies

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- assessed internal systems for accessibility compliance
- improved compatibility of digital tools with assistive technologies
- provided guidance and support for accessible document creation and digital content

Priority area: communications

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- adopted plain language principles in internal and external communications
- offered alternate formats for key documents and communications
- encourage staff to use clear and respectful communication that makes everyone feel included

Priority area: the procurement of goods, services and facilities

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- added accessibility requirements into procurement policies and templates so everyone can use them more easily
- provided training to procurement staff on accessible procurement practices
- ensured that purchased goods and services met accessibility standards

Priority area: the design and delivery of programs and services

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- reviewed how services are provided to identify and remove accessibility barriers.
- engaged people with disabilities to share their experiences on accessibility.
- implemented changes to improve access to programs and services.

Priority area: transportation

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- launched a pilot shuttle service, with future improvements planned to achieve full accessibility

Priority area: training

Key achievements in this priority area include:

- updated CSE's online courses to improve accessibility, including the addition of a note tab to support screen reader use and enhance the learning experience for all users
- developed targeted training modules for managers and service providers
- promoted a culture of accessibility through ongoing learning opportunities

4.3 Completed and ongoing actions

The following actions from the **2022 to 2025 Accessibility Plan** have been successfully completed and are no longer tracked in the new plan. The plan originally identified **14 barriers** and outlined **66 actions** to address them. Each action was designed to address a specific barrier to accessibility, and together, these actions helped improve the overall inclusiveness and accessibility of the environment at CSE.

A total of **41 actions were completed**, representing a **62% completion rate**.

Most of these completed actions will remain ongoing to uphold accessibility standards and support continuous improvement. While considered complete in terms of initial implementation, these ongoing actions will not be specifically identified in the Plan. However, they will still require regular monitoring and updates by the responsible area.

Below is the list of completed actions including those that are ongoing. All these actions have been removed from the new Plan and are no longer being tracked.

- improving employees' experience with accommodation and ensuring that accessibility options are readily available
- establishing a working group meant to bring together stakeholders from various parts of the organization
- communicating to all staff about Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) services and the availability of ergonomic equipment and assessment
- offering various accommodation services to support candidates during the selection, hiring and security processes for both internal and external candidates
- participating in several outreach events geared toward the recruitment of people with disabilities and attend disability-specific recruitment events, aiming to improve workplace access and employment opportunities for Canadians with disabilities
- dedicating a recruiter to each of the 4 designated employment equity (EE) groups.
- pursuing opportunities with neurodiverse candidate placement organizations
- implementing a self-declaration program to enable CSE to assess EE representation within the pool of candidates and provide hiring managers with required information to make an informed decision in support of EE objectives
- creating a process to work with hiring managers to determine the accommodation required and to ensure candidates' accommodation needs are reasonably met throughout the entire selection process
- making all assessment-related information/material available in accessible formats for applicants who request it
- identifying an Assessment Accessibility Ambassador to contribute effectively to the accessibility strategy for the Public Service of Canada, particularly in supporting accommodations for hiring candidates with disabilities or those requiring work accommodations

- improving EDB's ramp between the Visitor's Center and the main building—installing railings on both sides and purchasing motorized scooters to aid those with mobility challenges
- creating an area of refuge on each floor of both CSE facilities where individuals with mobility challenges can wait for assistance during an emergency
- installing an emergency evacuation chair in every stairwell to help people with health conditions and physical disabilities
- creating a process to identify 2 volunteer employees per individual with mobility challenges to assist in evacuation
- adjusting the height of waste collection bins at the EDB to accommodate people with mobility challenges
- implementing provision of video relay service in the EDB Visitors Center
- ensuring public-facing and internal CSE content meets or exceeds accessibility standards outlined by Government of Canada policies
- creating and making available a web accessibility checklist
- creating a handbook for clients on responsibilities for creating accessible features for audio and visual products
- reviewing new internal communications for the use of plain/accessible language for all messages
- creating an inclusive language guide for inclusive writing
- reviewing and updating branding, including corporate templates for accessibility (e.g., briefing notes or PowerPoint templates).
- identifying and providing training to new CSE employees on accessibility considerations for procurement
- developing and delivering biannual information sessions to managers that include information and best practices for accessible procurement.
- sharing and discussing the Accessible Procurement Resource Centre (APRC) FAQs—considering Accessibility in Procurement document.
- working across business lines to ensure managers are aware of accessibility requirements and obligations across the Government of Canada and how these relate to CSE
- CSE stakeholders supporting employees with disabilities will work together to clarify the barriers and align their efforts in the application of related policies, processes, and procedures
- making accessible parking available at both campuses for employees and visitors
- designating a para-transpo pick-up location in front of CSE facilities
- implementing shuttle services from the parking lot to the front door of the EDB.
- adding 1 additional accessible parking spot at the front of the EDB
- producing training videos with captions in both official languages
- including a note tab in online courses to allow learners to use a screen reader
- updating CSE's online courses to improve accessibility
- developing a 'Creating Accessible eLearning' guide for Learning Advisors
- reviewing MS Word accessibility tool to eliminate accessibility issues
- testing training documents with the MS Word accessibility tool to ensure training documents meet accessibility requirements

- ensuring that documents are compatible with the text-to-speech feature in MS Word
- testing all online learning courses and expanding the use of NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA) screen reader technology
- Offer neurodiversity training for employees through the Canada School of Public Services (CSPS)

4.4 Actions carried forward and removed

As part of the transition to the **2026 to 2028 Accessibility Plan**, a review of all actions from the previous plan was conducted to determine their relevance and alignment with current priorities.

- **Actions carried forward: 15 actions** have been carried forward into the new plan. These actions remain relevant and will continue to support the removal of persistent barriers, address emerging needs, and reinforce CSE's commitment to accessibility and inclusion.
- **Actions removed: 10 actions** have been removed from the new plan. These were either deemed no longer applicable or consolidated into broader initiatives to streamline efforts and reduce duplication.

4.5 Measurement and impact

CSE has made meaningful progress under the 2022 to 2025 Accessibility Plan. We measured success on accessibility through a combination of employee feedback, internal tracking, and consultation outcomes. These methods helped assess both the effectiveness of initiatives and the ongoing impact of accessibility barriers in the workplace.

How we measured success

- **Employee feedback:** Insights into employee satisfaction, inclusion, and accessibility experiences were gathered through multiple internal engagement tools, including the Public Service Employee Survey (PSES), open and targeted consultations and an internal accessibility survey
- **Accessibility feedback tracking:** Tracking of accessibility-related feedback helped identify recurring gaps and provided opportunities to address issues in real time
- **Collaboration:** Ongoing collaboration with the CSE Accessibility Stakeholders Working Group helped surface systemic barriers and informed the evaluation of initiatives, ensuring that lived experiences and diverse perspective were reflected in our progress assessment

Together, these tools provided a comprehensive view of our progress and helped identify areas where accessibility barriers still exist, guiding future improvements.

Employee experience and satisfaction:
According to the 2022 PSES¹:

¹ [2022 Public Service Employee Survey results: Persons with a disability - Canada.ca](#)

Employees with disabilities reported increased satisfaction in several areas:

- feeling valued at work rose from 60% (2020) to 64% (2022)
- satisfaction with workplace accommodations remained high at 75%

CSE-wide results² show strong engagement:

- 92% of employees feel their ideas are valued
- 88% would recommend CSE as a great place to work

Impact of accessibility barriers:

Barriers in the workplace have contributed to:

- reduced employee engagement and satisfaction for persons with disabilities
- challenges in career progression and retention, especially for staff who may face systemic or structural barriers in the workplace
- uneven implementation of accessibility practices across activity areas

Impact of accessibility initiatives:

Initiatives implemented during the 2022 to 2025 period have led to:

- increased awareness and strengthened collaboration on accessibility initiatives
- ongoing reviews were conducted for internal platforms and tools, leading to updates that improved compatibility with assistive technologies
- accessible document templates and captioning tools were introduced, improving access to information and participation in virtual meetings

These results demonstrate that while progress has been made, continued efforts are needed to ensure accessibility is consistently embedded across all aspects of the organization.

4.6 Lessons learned

Through consultations and implementation efforts, we learned that early engagement with persons with disabilities, clear accountability, and regular progress tracking are essential to achieving meaningful outcomes.

Participants strongly supported the use of digital tools, such as online assessment and feedback forms, to help identify and remove barriers, particularly in employment and service delivery.

They also emphasized the importance of assigning clear ownership for actions and monitoring progress. Without accountability, even well-designed actions risk being overlooked or inconsistently implemented.

² [Surveys and awards - Communications Security Establishment Canada](#)

Consultations further highlighted the need for accessibility plans and communications to be written in plain language and shared transparently to ensure they are usable and inclusive for everyone.

Accessibility was consistently described as a continuous journey. Participants expressed the need for ongoing opportunities to provide feedback, and for the organization to demonstrate how that input is being used to drive meaningful change.

Additional lessons learned include:

- **One-size-fits-all solutions are not effective:** Accessibility needs vary widely, and flexible, person-centred approaches are more impactful than standardized solutions
- **Leadership commitment is a key driver of progress:** Visible support from senior leaders, managers and supervisors helps build momentum and fosters a culture of inclusion
- **Training must be ongoing and practical:** Everyone benefits from regular learning that supports the application of accessibility principles in daily work
- **Intersectionality must be considered:** Accessibility efforts must account for overlapping identities (for example, disability, race, gender, language) to avoid reinforcing other forms of exclusion
- **Feedback and response mechanisms build trust:** When participants see their input reflected in decisions and actions, it increases engagement and confidence in the process. Transparent mechanisms for ongoing feedback are key to building trust and sustaining meaningful consultation

These lessons have directly informed the development of the new plan.

4.7 Applying an intersectional lens to accessibility

CSE recognizes that accessibility barriers do not affect all individuals in the same way. Our approach is informed by Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus), which considers how diverse identities—including gender, race, Indigeneity, disability, age, and sexual orientation—intersect to shape experiences of inclusion and exclusion.

This plan reflects our commitment to removing systemic barriers that can affect individuals differently across the organization. We will continue to use disaggregated data, lived experience, and inclusive design principles to ensure our actions reflect the needs of the entire workforce and applicants.

Accessibility is not just about physical or digital access; it's about creating a workplace where everyone can thrive.

4.8 Accessibility and reconciliation

As part of our commitment to reconciliation, CSE acknowledges the unique accessibility needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals and applicant pool. We recognize that colonial systems have created barriers to equitable participation, particularly in employment, service delivery, and workplace culture.

This plan includes actions to ensure culturally safe spaces, inclusive communication, and respectful engagement with Indigenous communities. We will continue to collaborate with Indigenous affinity groups and apply trauma-informed approaches to accessibility planning. By integrating reconciliation into our accessibility efforts, we aim to build a workplace that respects Indigenous rights, perspectives, and lived experiences.

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5. Consultations

CSE recognizes that identifying, removing, and preventing accessibility barriers are essential to building a diverse and inclusive workforce. The 2026 to 2028 Accessibility Plan was shaped through meaningful consultations with individuals across the organization, particularly persons with disabilities and key stakeholders, to ensure that the actions we take reflect real experiences and needs.

Consultation process

To support the development of the plan, CSE hosted a series of virtual consultation sessions in late May and early June 2025. These sessions were designed to gather insights on accessibility barriers and to hear directly from individuals across the organization in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

We held 5 sessions in total:

- **bilingual session for persons with disabilities** on May 29, 2025
- **English session** on June 3, 2025
- **French session** on June 4, 2025
- **English session** on June 4, 2025
- **French session** on June 5, 2025

A total of **83 individuals participated across all consultation sessions** held during the development of the new Accessibility Plan. The invitation to participate was extended to all employees through the weekly internal communication channel. One dedicated session was held specifically for persons with disabilities—welcoming individuals with both visible and non-visible disabilities—to ensure their perspectives and lived experiences were meaningfully included.

This strong turnout reflects the importance of accessibility across the organization and the willingness of staff to contribute to positive change.

All sessions were held virtually using Microsoft Teams. To ensure accessibility, features such as live captioning and chat participation were available. Participants could also provide feedback by email to the Accessibility team's mailbox.

To complement the live sessions, we launched an anonymous accessibility survey during the same period. This provided an alternative for those who preferred to share their experiences privately. The anonymous survey received 18 responses, which reinforced many of the themes raised during the sessions.

What we heard

Feedback from consultations and the survey was analyzed across seven key areas. The following frequent topics emerged as the most common:

1. Employment

- **Accommodation:** Frequently mentioned in relation to flexibility, accessibility, and individual needs. The barrier lies in the lack of proactive, consistent or well-understood processes for identifying and implementing accommodation effectively
- **Hiring:** Barriers related to exams, platforms, and assessment processes
- **Accessibility:** Challenges with tools, communication, and physical spaces
- **Lack of support or understanding:** Especially from management, affecting inclusion and retention

2. The built environment

- **Accessibility and mobility:** Issues with the ramp, parking, elevators, and emergency evacuation routes
- **Workspace design and ergonomics:** Lack of assigned desks, non-ergonomic furniture, and inconsistent equipment availability
- **Sensory and cognitive needs:** Open-concept spaces and elevated noise levels were identified as barriers for individuals with sensory sensitivities. Employees also noted that these environments can negatively impact cognitive functioning—such as concentration, memory, and information processing
- **Health and wellness infrastructure:** lack of rest areas, equitable access to wellness events, and medical accommodations—such as quiet spaces and ergonomic supports—were identified as key barriers to supporting employees with health-related needs

3. Information and communication technologies

- **Inclusive design and development:** Accessibility is often overlooked in early design and development stages
- **Training and awareness:** Developers and users lack sufficient training on accessibility standards and tools
- **Tool usability and integration:** Many platforms are not user-friendly, lack integration, or are not accessible by default

- **Communication and media accessibility:** Internal videos, meetings, and audio-visual tools often lack captions, transcripts, or multilingual support
- **Support and reporting structures:** Processes for reporting or resolving ICT accessibility issues are unclear or nonexistent

4. Communications (other than ICT)

- **Accessible formats and tools:** Inaccessible emails, documents, and presentations limit access for users with disabilities
- **Clarity and simplicity:** Overly complex language and unclear agendas reduce comprehension and engagement
- **Inclusive communication practices:** Lack of sign language interpretation, alternative formats, and hybrid options excludes some participants.
- **Feedback and engagement:** Limited opportunities for anonymous input and short notice for events hinder inclusive participation
- **Awareness and culture:** Low awareness of accessibility obligations and stigma around disability disclosure affect communication equity

5. The procurement of goods, services, and facilities

- **Procurement documentation and standards:** Accessibility requirements are often unclear, inconsistent, or missing
- **Awareness and training:** Stakeholders lack understanding of accessibility requirements
- **Vendor accountability:** Vendors may misrepresent the accessibility of their products or face no consequences when they fail to meet accessibility standards
- **Equipment and accommodation processes:** Rigid procedures and travel requirements create barriers to accessing needed tools
- **Communication and transparency:** Limited updates and unclear processes hinder implementation of accessible procurement

6. The design and delivery of programs and services

- **Inclusive design and planning:** Accessibility is often treated as an afterthought, with limited application of inclusive design or GBA Plus analysis
- **User involvement and representation:** People with disabilities are not consistently engaged in program development
- **Policy and process challenges:** Rigid policies and complex procedures unintentionally exclude or burden users with disabilities
- **Communication and awareness:** Accommodations are not clearly communicated, and stigma discourages requests
- **Training and resources:** Staff lack access to practical tools, training, and centralized guidance on accessible program design

7. Transportation

- **Transportation services:** CSE currently offers shuttle services between buildings and to and from the parking area, which were recently introduced as part of a pilot initiative

During the consultation sessions, no specific feedback was received regarding transportation barriers in general. However, some comments mentioned that the shuttle service, although still in its early stages, has presented some accessibility challenges:

- **Wheelchair accessibility:** Not all shuttles currently in operation appear to have features that accommodate wheelchair users. A suggestion was made to explore the inclusion of accessible shuttles in the future to ensure inclusive transportation options for all staff.
- **Thermal comfort:** While CSE has policies in place to support thermal comfort in office settings and during events, concerns were raised about temperature regulation on shuttles. One incident involved a malfunctioning air conditioning unit. In response, standby vehicles have been made available to help ensure a comfortable experience for all passengers.

CSE will continue to monitor the shuttle service and gather feedback to identify and address any accessibility barriers as the pilot progresses.

External consultations

During the development of this plan, CSE did not have the capacity to conduct external consultations. However, as part of our ongoing commitment to accessibility, we are actively working to strengthen our planning processes and expand engagement with external stakeholders in preparation for future accessibility plans.

As part of our ongoing efforts, CSE regularly participates in interdepartmental meetings within the Security and Intelligence (S&I) community, where we share lessons learned and best practices related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) and GBA Plus. We also take part in the Government of Canada's interdepartmental Community of Practice on accessibility, which helps ensure we stay informed about the latest tools, resources, and approaches to accessibility across the public service.

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6. Areas described under section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act*

The plan focuses on the following areas:

- **Employment:** Creating a diverse and inclusive workplace free from discrimination, with accessible conditions for daily work and career growth
- **The built environment:** Designing physical spaces that are accessible to everyone
- **Information and communication technologies (ICT):** Ensuring digital tools and content are accessible to all users
- **Communications (other than ICT):** Providing information in accessible formats and ensuring inclusive communication practices

- **The procurement of goods, services and facilities:** Including accessibility requirements when purchasing goods, services, and facilities
- **The design and delivery of programs and services:** Delivering inclusive, people-focused programs and policies
- **Transportation:** Ensuring that transportation services and systems under federal jurisdiction are designed to accommodate the needs of all individuals, including those with disabilities

The following are the identified barriers and mitigation actions for each areas:

6.1 Employment

This section focuses on employment policies, practices, services, and programs. It outlines how CSE can better recruit, hire, support, and promote people with disabilities—both visible and non-visible.

Through consultations with staff and collaboration with affinity groups, we heard that many barriers still exist in the workplace. These include challenges related to recruitment, onboarding, career development, and workplace accommodations.

The barriers and corresponding actions listed below reflect what we heard and are the first steps toward removing these obstacles. They aim to create a more inclusive and supportive work environment for everyone.

Barrier 1

Some individuals may not know about the duty to accommodate (DTA) process or the accessibility options they can use.

- **Action 1.1:** Implement the internal DTA policy suite documents.
Timeline: March 31, 2026
- **Action 1.2:** Develop easy-to-understand instructions, FAQ and/or training sessions on how to use the DTA Policy and process. This should include helpful resources and guidance for managers to support their teams as well as candidates (internal/external) within selection processes.
Timeline: March 31, 2026, for the Procedures/FAQ and associated training during fiscal year 2026-2027
- **Action 1.3:** Implement the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport, a tool for public service workers and applicants to document the support and tools they need to succeed at work.
Timeline: March 31, 2026
- **Action 1.4:** Develop clear guidelines, FAQs, and/or offer information sessions to support the use of the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport, helping individuals navigate the tool and enabling managers to support their teams effectively.

Timeline: March 31, 2026

- **Action 1.5:** Establish a new role, the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport Advisor, to assist employees and managers in identifying and addressing individual workplace barriers. This role will help ensure that employees receive the necessary accommodations and tools they need to succeed and contribute fully.

Timeline: March 31, 2026

- **Action 1.6:** Develop a Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport page on the intranet (Connexion) that provides employees and managers with easy access to relevant documents and related resources.

Timeline: March 31, 2026

Barrier 2

CSE's recruitment and hiring processes are more complex than most federal jobs and includes strict security screening. This can make it harder for people with disabilities and individuals from equity groups — including neurodivergent candidates — to apply for and succeed in getting jobs at CSE.

- **Action 2.1:** Improve the recruitment, assessment and security screening processes to make them more accessible and inclusive. This includes providing clear information, offering accommodations, training hiring managers/teams, and removing unnecessary barriers in the security interviews.

Timeline: November 30, 2026

- **Action 2.2:** Develop clear procedures to ensure that all necessary accommodations are in place for the employee's first day of work, including orientation and onboarding sessions.

Timeline: March 31, 2026

Barrier 3

CSE currently lacks a formalized recruitment strategy that intentionally includes persons from underrepresented groups, including persons with disabilities.

- **Action 3.1:** Develop an overarching hiring strategy that focuses on removing barriers faced by persons from underrepresented groups, including persons with disabilities. The strategy should align with the Clerk's Call to Action objectives, support EE objectives, and ensure compliance with CSE's legal obligations, including those under the Accessible Canada Act.

Timeline: March 31, 2026

Barrier 4

The job application process does not clearly explain how applicants can request accommodations or what accessibility supports are available, which may discourage or disadvantage candidates who need these accommodations.

- **Action 4.1:** Develop easy-to-follow instructions or procedures to help hiring managers respond to accommodation requests from candidates. This will support a fair and inclusive assessment process throughout the entire selection process.
Timeline: November 30, 2026
- **Action 4.2:** Update the job application process to clearly outline how applicants can request accommodations and what accessibility supports are available. This information should be easy to find on job postings and application platforms to ensure all candidates feel supported and informed.
Timeline: November 30, 2026

Barrier 5

Limited awareness of non-visible disabilities can lead to stigma, inconsistent support and ineffective management practices.

- **Action 5.1:** Host workshops or information sessions and develop resources for managers on non-visible disabilities such as mental health conditions, chronic pain and learning disabilities.
Timeline: March 31, 2027

Barrier 6

Systemic barriers in hiring, retention, and advancement for equity-deserving groups, including persons with disabilities, due to inconsistent accessibility and equity practices across employment processes.

- **Action 6.1:** Develop and implement a comprehensive and inclusive tool to support hiring managers, HR professionals, and leadership in understanding, identifying and mitigating employment barriers for the 4 designated employment equity groups.
Timeline: March 31, 2026

6.2 The built environment

CSE is committed to creating inclusive and accessible physical spaces that enable everyone—regardless of ability—to move freely and safely. The built environment encompasses how individuals navigate buildings and public spaces, and CSE continues to prioritize barrier-free design in all its facilities.

While CSE's campuses were not originally constructed with accessibility as a central design principle, the organization is working diligently to incorporate features that support independent access for persons with disabilities, reflecting a growing commitment to universal design and inclusive infrastructure.

As part of our ongoing efforts, CSE has identified several barriers within the built environment and developed targeted actions to address them. These initial steps represent continued progress toward eliminating physical obstacles and enhancing accessibility across all CSE spaces.

Barrier 7

Accessibility challenges at CSE include attitudes, organizational practices, and physical barriers. Some campus facilities are not fully accessible to individuals with disabilities.

- **Action 7.1:** Install additional automatic door openers on common doors at the EDB and Vanier campuses each year.
Timeline: March 31, 2027
- **Action 7.2:** Ensure all workstations have height-adjustable desks.
Timeline: April 30, 2026
- **Action 7.3:** Conduct a comprehensive accessibility assessment of our built environment to identify physical barriers, explore potential actions to eliminate these barriers, and address any gaps in accessibility.
Timeline: September 30, 2028
- **Action 7.4:** Review and improve lighting conditions in workspaces to ensure they support accessibility needs, including reducing glare, flicker, and providing adjustable lighting options where feasible.
Timeline: September 30, 2028
- **Action 7.5:** Complete the conversion of all desks, workstations, and classrooms to include accessible ergonomic furniture, such as sit-stand desks and ergonomic chairs, to support diverse accessibility and comfort needs.
Timeline: September 30, 2028

Barrier 8

Individuals with hearing sensitivities, vision impairments, neurodivergence, or mobility challenges face barriers like distracting noises and overwhelming visual environments in the workplace.

- **Action 8.1:** Review and improve workstation design to minimize visual distractions and enhance focus and comfort for all staff, with particular attention to the needs of individuals with sensory sensitivities or attention-related disabilities.
Timeline: December 31, 2028
- **Action 8.2:** Install sound-absorbing panels in workspaces to support persons with hearing sensitivities.
Timeline: December 31, 2028

6.3 Information and communication technologies

As part of its continued commitment to accessibility, CSE has reviewed its digital environment to identify existing barriers within ICT. Targeted actions have been developed to address these challenges, ensuring that all users, including those with disabilities, can navigate, access, and use CSE's digital tools effectively and without limitations.

Barrier 9

Information and communication technologies currently offer a limited range of accessible features and activities for individuals with disabilities, restricting their full participation.

- **Action 9.1:** Ensure all new internal applications are designed to meet accessibility technical standards.

Timeline: March 31, 2027

6.4 Communication (other than information and communication technologies)

Effective and inclusive communication is essential to ensuring that all individuals can fully participate in the workplace. CSE is committed to providing information in formats that are clear, accessible, and responsive to diverse needs—whether through written documents, signage, presentations, or verbal exchanges. By promoting the use of plain language and offering alternative formats, CSE strives to remove communication barriers and foster understanding across all levels of the organization.

As part of its ongoing commitment to accessibility, CSE has identified key communication-related barriers and developed specific actions to address them. These efforts aim to ensure that everyone, including individuals with disabilities, can access and engage with information confidently and without obstacles.

Barrier 10

Some public-facing and internal content does not fully meet accessibility standards, making it harder for some users to access and use the information.

- **Action 10.1:** Work towards meeting WCAG 2.1 (Level AA) standards on cse-cst.gc.ca.
Timeline: December 31, 2028
- **Action 10.2:** Make sure all new internal applications (related to ETS) follow accessibility technical standards so everyone can use them.
Timeline: March 31, 2027
- **Action 10.3:** Work with vendors and use audits to make sure the applications they provide meet accessibility requirements.
Timeline: September 30, 2028

Barrier 11

Written communications are not always distributed in accessible formats, which can limit access for some individuals.

- **Action 11.1:** Review and update published internal communication documents to ensure they use plain language and are accessible to everyone.
Timeline: December 31, 2028
- **Action 11.2:** New product will have clear, consistent and accessible layouts.
Timeline: March 31, 2027
- **Action 11.3:** Apply the Treasury Board's design system to all external web applications to make sure they are easily recognizable as CSE products.
Timeline: September 30, 2028
- **Action 11.4:** Develop easy-to-use guides, checklists, and examples of inclusive communications and make these resources available to everyone.
Timeline: September 30, 2027
- **Action 11.5:** Provide regular training or information sessions for staff and managers on inclusive communications, including the use of inclusive language, plain language, and accessible formats.
Timeline: March 31, 2028

6.5 The procurement of goods, services and facilities

CSE is committed to integrating accessibility into all procurement processes to ensure that goods, services, and facilities acquired meet the diverse needs of all individuals, including those with disabilities. This means considering accessibility from the start when selecting suppliers and making purchasing decisions.

As part of this commitment, CSE has identified barriers within current procurement practices and developed targeted actions to address them. These steps will help ensure that all procured items and services contribute to a more accessible and inclusive environment.

Barrier 12

Procurement processes do not consistently consider accessibility requirements, which can result in the purchase of goods or services that are not accessible to all users.

- **Action 12.1:** Create easy-to-use guides to help individuals include accessibility requirements when buying goods or services.
Timeline: June 30, 2026
- **Action 12.2:** Establish a streamlined process for accessibility-related purchases to reduce delays and ensure employees receive necessary tools and supports promptly. This may include identifying fast-track procurement options, clear approval procedures, and dedicated support for managers and employees navigating the process.

Timeline: August 30, 2028

6.6 The design and delivery of programs and services

CSE is working to ensure that all programs and services are accessible and inclusive for everyone. This means considering accessibility from the outset, during the planning, design, and delivery stages, so that services meet the needs of individuals with diverse abilities.

As part of this work, CSE has identified barriers that may prevent some individuals from fully accessing or benefiting from its programs and services. Targeted actions have been developed to remove these barriers and improve accessibility for all.

Barrier 13

There are no clear or required accessibility standards in place, which makes it difficult for staff to understand what's expected and results in inconsistent accessibility practices across the organization.

- **Action 13.1:** Create clear accessibility guidelines and practical tools for the whole organization. These should cover areas like digital content, physical spaces, communications and events, and be based on recognized standards such as the WCAG and the Accessible Canada Act.

Timeline: June 30, 2027

- **Action 13.2:** Provide regular training or information sessions/references for staff and managers on how to follow accessibility standards, using real-life examples and practical tools.

Timeline: March 31, 2028

- **Action 13.3:** Develop a detailed document listing the accessibility tools and services available in the organization and create an accessibility page on CSE's intranet (Connexion) where individuals can easily find this information and other related resources.

Timeline: September 30, 2027

- **Action 13.4:** - Establish clear participation requirements and set up comprehensive reporting mechanisms for both Accessibility Champions and Leads, including activity areas, to ensure consistent involvement and accountability. To strengthen representation and coordination with the CSE Accessibility Stakeholders working group.

Timeline: June 30, 2026

6.7 Transportation

Transportation services play a key role in ensuring equitable access to the workplace for staff. Accessible transportation supports independent mobility, safety, and inclusion, particularly for persons with disabilities. This area focuses on identifying and removing barriers related to shuttle services, with the goal of improving the overall accessibility for everyone.

Barrier 14:

Challenges have been identified in accessing shuttle services between building. These include limited availability of accessible vehicles.

- **Action 14.1:** Introduce accessible shuttle vehicles equipped with ramps, securement systems, and designated seating.

Timeline: January 1, 2026

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7. Glossary

Accessibility

Accessibility is about identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to ensure the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in society. Barriers can be physical, architectural, technological, attitudinal, or related to information, communications, policies, or practices.

Accommodation

Changing to the way things are usually done so that everyone can fully take part at work or in services. This could include adjusting work hours, providing special equipment, offering documents in different formats, or making physical spaces easier to access. Accommodations are based on individual needs and help remove barriers, especially for people with disabilities, so that everyone has an equitable chance to succeed.

Affinity groups

Employee-led communities that bring together colleagues with shared experiences, interests, or concerns. These groups provide a space for individuals across the organization to connect, share ideas, raise issues, and suggest practical solutions. They play an important role in shaping a more inclusive and responsive workplace by partnering with management and helping CSE learn from the past. Affinity groups are key to building a more open, supportive, and engaged organization.

Barrier

Anything – including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice - that hinders the full and equal participation in society or persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.

Cultural safety

An environment free from discrimination or judgment, that respects and supports the identities and experiences of Indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups.

Disability

Any impairment (including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment) or a functional limitation (whether permanent, temporary, or episodic), in nature or evident or not, that—interaction with a barrier—hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.

Duty to accommodate (DTA)

The legal obligation to adjust the working conditions for an individual (or group) to ensure that those individuals who are otherwise fit to work are not unfairly excluded, and to do so in a timely manner. The duty to accommodate is initiated when working conditions, such as rules, standards, or aspects of the physical environment have a negative impact on a worker based on a prohibited ground of discrimination and the individual requires accommodation to do their work. The employer must arrange the individual’s duties or workplace to enable the individual to do his or her work if it can do so without undue hardship.

Employment equity (EE)

Ensuring fair representation of the 4 designated groups—women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities—as outlined in the *Employment Equity Act*. This involves implementing hiring and employment practices that remove barriers and address systemic disadvantages. This includes positive measures and reasonable accommodations to support equal access to jobs, promotions, and career development opportunities within the workplace.

Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport

The Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport is a tool that helps staff document their individual accessibility needs and tools or approaches in a consistent and confidential way. It supports proactive accommodations, so individuals don’t have to explain their needs repeatedly. The passport also helps guide conversations about removing barriers—whether through design improvements or specific accommodations.

Inclusive

Practices, environments, and attitudes that actively welcome, respect, and support the full participation of all individuals, regardless of their abilities, identities, backgrounds, or experiences. An inclusive workplace ensures that everyone has equitable access to opportunities, resources, and decision-making, and that differences are valued as strengths.

Intersectionality

An intersectional approach recognizes that people experience barriers to accessibility differently based on the unique combination of their social identities (for example, gender, race, Indigeneity, disability, age, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status). These identities do not exist in isolation; they interact in ways that can compound experiences of discrimination or disadvantage.

In the context of accessibility planning, applying an intersectional lens helps ensure that policies, programs, and services are inclusive and responsive to the diverse realities of individuals and communities. This approach is aligned with the Government of Canada's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and supports the identification and removal of systemic barriers.

Neurodivergence

Atypical neurological development or functioning, such as autism, ADHD, or dyslexia. Neurodivergent individuals may experience and interact with the world differently.

Persons with disabilities

Individuals who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric, or learning impairment. This includes people who consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment because of their impairment, or who believe that an employer or potential employer may view them that way. It also includes individuals whose functional limitations have been accommodated in their current job or workplace.

Plain language

Writing that is clear, concise, and easy to understand. It helps ensure information is accessible to everyone, including people with cognitive or language barriers.

Self-declaration

The voluntary disclosure of personal information by applicants during appointment processes. This information is collected for statistical purposes related to staffing and, in the case of processes targeted to employment equity groups, to determine an applicant's eligibility.

Self-identification

The voluntary provision of employment equity information by staff. This data is used for statistical analysis and to monitor the representation and progress of employment equity groups within CSE. It also supports workforce reporting and planning efforts.

Staff

Individuals employed within CSE, including full-time, part-time, casual, and contract workers. In the context of accessibility, "staff" encompasses all personnel who contribute to the workplace and may require or support accommodations, inclusive practices, and barrier-free environments.

Visible and non-visible disabilities

Visible disabilities are impairments or functional limitations that are apparent to others. These may include mobility disabilities (e.g., use of a wheelchair or cane), vision or hearing impairments, or other physical conditions that are outwardly observable.

Non-visible disabilities, also referred to as hidden or invisible disabilities, these are disabilities that are not immediately apparent to others. They may include cognitive, mental health-related, learning, developmental, or chronic health conditions that significantly impact a person's ability to carry out daily activities. These disabilities can affect concentration, memory, communication, or energy levels, and may fluctuate over time.

WCAG

The **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)** are internationally recognized standards developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities. These guidelines apply to websites, non-web documents, and software applications.

WCAG includes three levels of conformance:

- Level A (minimum)
- Level AA (standard for most regulations, including in Canada)
- Level AAA (highest, for specialized content)

The Government of Canada requires compliance with WCAG 2.0 or 2.1 Level AA for public-facing websites and digital services.

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