

# Accessibility Report

*June 2023*



## INTRODUCTION

In December 2013, the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)* became law. Since that time, the Government of Manitoba has been developing accessibility standards to address barriers for Manitobans.

In December 2016, an accessibility plan was created by the division's accessibility committee. The purpose of the plan is to show the division's commitment to moving towards equitable access and participation for people with disabilities in accordance with the AMA. The plan highlights the division's accessibility achievements, any barriers to accessibility and the division's plan of action. The committee has developed work plans that adhere to identified AMA timelines. The work of the committee is ongoing, having a mandate to implement accessibility standards within the given timelines. Committee members are: Adrian Alleyne, Communications and Research; Tracy Hills, Director, Human Resources; Elise Downey, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO; Kent Brewer, Director, Information Technology; Mark Bruce, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources; Karen Boyd, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programming; Tammy Mitchell, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services.

## ACCESSIBILITY ACHIEVEMENTS

All 42 schools in our division are accessible. Although our maintenance and transportation buildings continue to pose accessibility challenges, accommodation plans are in place at both locations.

The divisional website has attached alt-text on images to ensure greater accessibility for all people. Alt-text ensures individuals with visual impairments can get a description of the image on the website. In addition, a training document has been prepared for school secretaries which outlines guidelines for adding proper text and tags to images on school websites. All secretaries in the division have been trained in this process. An accessibility tab has been updated and is located in the divisional website's quick links section for easy access. A translation service has also been added to the website.

Policy ECABB (Accessibility) supports the activities of the Accessibility Committee. Guidelines for the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service have been prepared and posted on the RETSD website; training has been assigned to all existing employees and to new employees to the division. The module is accessed via the division's Learning Management System (Smarter U).

Policies GBA-R (Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility Procedures), GBA-E (Reasonable Accommodation Request), GCE/GCF (Recruitment and Hiring of Employees) and GCE-R (Procedure for Hiring of Employees) have been updated to support the Accessible Employment Standard Regulation that was passed in 2019.

The Human Resources Department has implemented a training strategy so that all employees of the division – current and future – who are responsible for people management (including recruitment, selection, and/or supervision) will have accommodation training. The training covers the requirements in the new Accessible Employment Standard Regulation, including instructions about how to make employment opportunities accessible to persons disabled by barriers.

The Information Technology Department was successful in its application for an accessibility grant. The funding will be used to purchase software that will ensure our website’s compliance with the Accessible Information and Communication Standard.

The following table represents the Accessibility Committee Work Plan to date:

DATE	ACTION	COMPLETED
29 Nov. 2016	- Team attended AMA Training Workshop	√
5 Dec. 2016	- Team drafted the divisional Accessibility Plan	√
21 Dec. 2016	- Team finalized the divisional Accessibility Plan	√
18 Jan. 2017	- Team participated in the webinar on the employment section of the AMA	√
9 Mar. 2017	- Team met to prioritize workflow for policy development, customer service guidelines & website accessibility	√
20 Mar. 2017	- Team attended AMA training	√
23 Mar. 2017	- Team trialed potential online accessibility training developed in Ontario	√
5 May 2017	- Team shared progress updates on policy development, customer service guidelines & website accessibility	√
6 June 2017	- Team finalized policy, customer service guidelines & website guidelines; team began development on a staff training module & year-end report	√
28 Sept. 2017	- Team finalized year-end report & staff training module	√
18 Oct. 2017	- Team drafted communication plan for customer service guidelines	√
Nov. 2017	- Policy ECABB – Accessibility is passed	√
Dec. 2017	- Customer Service Training module completed by all staff	√
March 2018	- Alt text training available for staff who support school websites	√
March 2019	- created checklists for administrators to use when arranging interviews	√
June 2019	- Team attended provincial AMA training workshop held as part of Manitoba Access Awareness Week	√
October 2019	- Trained all secretaries in using alt text and creating hyperlinks	√
May 2020	- Compliant with Workplace Emergency Response Information and Workplace Emergency Assistance	√
May 2021	- Compliant with Accessible Employment Standard Regulation	√
June 2022	- Websites updated	√
March 2023	- Applied for an Accessibility Grant	√
June 2023	- Received a \$10,000 Accessibility Grant	√

## NEXT STEPS

The committee is working on a strategy for compliance with the Accessible Information and Communication Standard as required by the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act*.