

Requirements under the *Accessible B.C. Act*

There are over 750 public sector organizations listed in the [Accessible B.C. Regulation](#). Organizations are required by September 1, 2023 to establish:

- An accessibility committee
- An accessibility plan
- A tool to receive feedback on accessibility

These requirements are intended to get organizations planning for accessibility in a way that is informed by people with disabilities. They are flexible and there are lots of different ways to approach the requirements.

Accessibility Plan

- An Accessibility Plan outlines the activities the organization plans to do to identify, remove and prevent barriers.
- Organizations can determine the content of their own plans.
- Organizations must consult with the accessibility committee, and make the plan publicly available.
- The plan must be reviewed and updated every 3 years.
- **By September 1, 2023** organizations must have a publicly available accessibility plan. This can be a draft plan, a plan that the organization is consulting on, an existing plan that is amended to include accessibility, a plan developed jointly with others, a webpage with links to strategies and plans that already exist that remove barriers, etc.

Strategies to comply:

- Organizations could adapt existing plans or strategies, such as Healthy Community Plans, Disability Assessments, Age-Friendly Plans, Official Community Plans, or Diversity and Inclusion Strategies to include language on accessibility. For example, the City of Nanaimo has included an “Access for All” section in their [City Plan – Nanaimo ReImagined](#).
- Organizations could choose to work together to create plan for a wider region.
- Organizations might have a web page listing next steps in developing their accessibility plan.

Accessibility Committee

- An Accessibility Committee provides advice to the organization on their accessibility plan and how to remove and prevent barriers.
- Accessibility committees should aim to have at least half of its members be persons with disabilities and/or represent a disability-serving organization.



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Requirements under the *Accessible B.C. Act*

- Membership should also aim to reflect the diversity of British Columbians and include Indigenous peoples.
- **By September 1, 2023** organizations must have an accessibility committee.

Strategies to comply:

- Organizations could adapt an existing committee such as an Age-friendly committee or a Healthy Communities Network with an updated terms of reference, to include an accessibility lens.
- Organizations could work with other organizations to develop a joint committee.
- Organizations could start small with a group of employees to be their first accessibility committee.
- Organizations can list their initial actions and intent to create an accessibility committee on their website

Feedback Mechanism

- A feedback mechanism provides a way for those in or interacting with the organization to provide feedback on barriers and the accessibility plan.
- Feedback received must be considered when updating the accessibility plan
- Feedback can be shared with the accessibility committee to support their work
- **By September 1, 2023** local governments must have a way for people to provide feedback on barriers.

Strategies to comply:

- This might be an email address, a webform, a designated individual in the organization such as a social planner, etc.

For more information please visit: [Frequently Asked Questions about the Accessible B.C. Regulation for Organizations.](#)

For questions about compliance, please contact: engageaccessibility.gov.bc.ca

Resources to Support Compliance

DABC has created the [BC Accessibility Hub](#) website with shared resources that support all prescribed organizations. DABC also recently launched an [Accessibility Toolkit](#) that guides prescribed organizations through the process of establishing an accessibility committee, an accessibility plan and a feedback mechanism.

Please reach out to DABC with your questions or requests for support:

aop@disabilityalliancebc.org



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Accessibility Legislation for British Columbia

May 17, 2023



***Accessible B.C. Act* Background**

- Received Royal Assent in June 2021.
- Establishes a statutory framework for government to work in partnership with people with disabilities and the broader community to identify remove and prevent barriers to the full and equal participation of people with disabilities.
- Builds upon the model developed in other provinces and complements the Federal *Accessible Canada Act*.



Overview of the Accessible B.C. Regulation

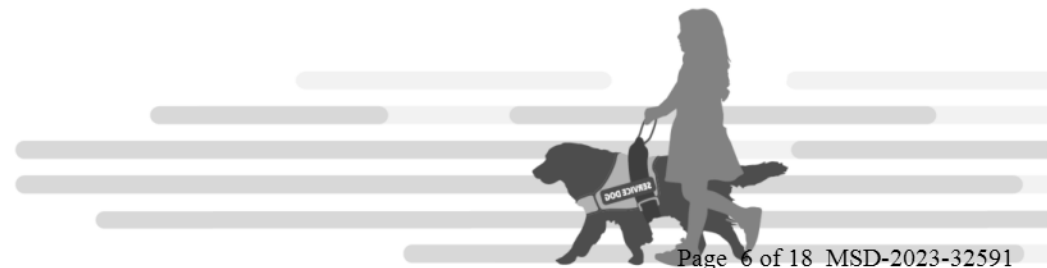
- The Accessible B.C. Regulation requires over 750 organizations in the public sector to comply with Part 3 of the *Accessible B.C. Act*. This includes:
 - School districts and independent schools
 - Post-secondary institutions
 - Local governments
 - Libraries
 - Municipal Police departments
 - Crowns
- School Districts are in the first phase of organizations and must comply by September 1, 2023



Key Features of the Accessible B.C. Regulation

Part 3 Requirements

- Organizations must establish:
 - An Accessibility Committee;
 - An Accessibility Plan; and
 - A tool to receive feedback on Accessibility.
- These requirements are intended to get organizations planning for accessibility in a way that is informed by people with disabilities.



Accessibility Plan

- Outlines the activities to identify, remove and prevent barriers.
- Organizations:
 - Can determine the content of their own plans
 - Must consult with their accessibility committee on the plan
 - Must make the plan publicly available
 - Must review and update the plan every 3 years
- **By September 1, 2023** School Districts must have a publicly available accessibility plan.
 - This can be a draft plan, a plan that the organization is consulting on, an existing plan that is amended to include accessibility, a plan developed jointly with others, etc.

Accessibility Committee

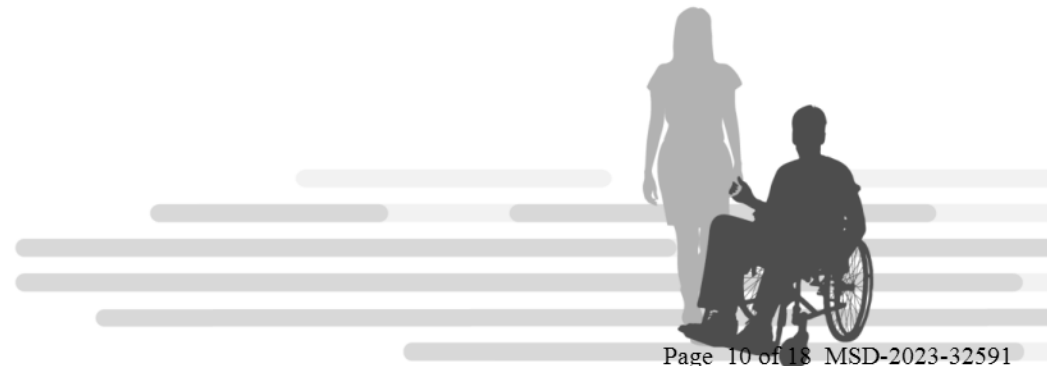
- Provides advice to the organization on their accessibility plan and how to remove and prevent barriers.
- Committees should aim to have at least half of its members be persons with disabilities and/or represent a disability-serving organization
- Membership should also aim to reflect the diversity of British Columbians and include Indigenous peoples
- **By September 1, 2023** School Districts must have an accessibility committee.
 - This can be an existing committee with an updated terms of reference, you might have started recruiting for an accessibility committee, or you might have a committee that has started identifying barriers.

Feedback Mechanism

- A way for those in or interacting with the organization to provide feedback on barriers and the accessibility plan
 - Feedback received must be considered when updating the accessibility plan
 - Feedback can be shared with the accessibility committee to support their work
- **By September 1, 2023** School Districts must have a way for people to provide feedback on barriers.
 - This might be an email address, a webform, a designated individual in the organization, etc.

Complying with the Accessible B.C. Regulation

- The regulation allows organizations to evolve their approach to the plan, committee and feedback tool over time.
- You may choose to continually evolve your approach to these requirements over time and with feedback from people with disabilities.
- Requirements are framed flexibly, and organizations will have significant discretion coming into compliance.
- Various strategies will be available to obligated organizations:
 - Building on existing work
 - Collaboration



Resources to Support Compliance

- Government provided Disability Alliance BC (DABC) with \$3 million over three years to develop resources that will support public-sector organizations to meet the legal requirements of the Accessible BC Regulation.
- DABC has created the [BC Accessibility Hub](#) website with resources to support prescribed organizations, new materials are being added frequently.



Resources for the Education Sector

- DABC is collaborating with BCCAISE and Untapped Accessibility on resources to support the education sector.
 - **Workshop** – Jumpstart your Accessibility Plan (May 2023)
 - **One-on-one support** – Individualized support hours (May - July 2023)
 - **Member connect session** – Peer discussion on plan development, obstacles and successes (June 2023)
 - **Support to develop** – four workshops to support school districts in engaging with their communities (Spring/Summer 2024)

Comments? Questions?



Poll

Where is your district at on its accessibility journey?

Emerging

Developing

Proficient

Extending



Celebrating Success

- At your table share one action related to accessibility that your district has taken or will take
- Next write down an action that another district is doing that intrigued you

Areas of Focus

Identify your areas of focus for advancing accessibility

Built Environment	Attitudes	Policies and Practices	Information and Communication	Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit buildings• Accessibility features:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ramps• Power doors• Audio loops• Accessible playgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti-bias training for teachers and staff• Accessibility awareness training for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review policies and processes for accessibility• Strategic planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wayfinding and signage• Web accessibility updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Software for producing accessible documents• Flashing fire alarms• Specialized tools (tablets, etc)

Working Together

- Identify 3 key partners or champions for this work
- **Bonus challenge:** register for the Jumpstart your Accessibility Plan workshop or email the registration link to someone within your district that should attend!

Thank you!

