

Requirements for Local Governments under the *Accessible B.C. Act*

Local governments are among over 750 public sector organizations listed in the Accessible B.C. Regulation and 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** local governments 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:

- Local governments 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.
- Local governments could choose to work together to create plan for a wider region.
- Local governments 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.



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- Accessibility 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** local governments must have an accessibility committee.

Strategies to comply:

- Local governments 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.
- Local governments could work with other organizations to develop a joint committee.
- Local governments could start small with a group of employees to be their first accessibility committee.
- Local governments can list their initial actions and intent to create an accessibility committee on the local government 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 at www.gov.bc.ca/accessibility

For questions about compliance requirements please contact:

engageaccessibility.gov.bc.ca



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