

Accessibility plan

2024-2025



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General information

If you would like to request the Cooperative de telecommunication d'Antoine-Labelle's accessibility plan or feedback process description in an alternative format, or if you would like to provide feedback, you can reach the person responsible by:

- Mail:** Jessica Thibault, Human Resources Advisor
Cooperative de telecommunication d'Antoine-Labelle
203-600, boul. Albiny-Paquette
Mont-Laurier, Québec J9L 1L4
- Email:** accessibilite@ctal.ca
- Telephone:** 819-623-2825 Monday to Friday, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. A member service advisor will complete the accessibility feedback request form and forward it to the person in charge.
- In person:** In person on tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday between 9 a.m. and noon and between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. A form will be given to you and you can drop it off in the dedicated box once completed
- Social media:** You can submit your feedback via our official Facebook page, by private message, taking care to detail the obstacle encountered.

Application

CTAL is subject to the Canadian Accessibility Act, which came into force on July 11, 2019. This law aims to make Canada a barrier-free country by January 1st 2040. To achieve this, organizations must recognize, eliminate and prevent barriers in the following priority areas:

- Employment;
- The built environment (buildings and public spaces);
- Information and communications technologies;
- Communications, other than information and communications technologies;
- Acquisition on goods, services and facilities;
- Design and delivery of programs and services;
- Transportation.

Définitions

Obstacle

Obstacles to the performance of everyday activities correspond to difficulties encountered by people in the activities of domestic and daily life. They may also arise in other activities such as leisure, education or employment. Here are just a few examples of the difficulties that people with disabilities are likely to experience:

- Moving from one room to another;
- Going up or down stairs;
- Speaking so as to be understood;
- Understanding what is being said in a conversation, meeting or on the telephone;
- See characters in a printed document or on a screen, even with the aid of glasses or contact lenses;
- Etc.

Handicap

In Quebec, a handicapped person is defined as: «Any person with a disability resulting in a significant and persistent incapacity and who is subject to encountering obstacles in the accomplishment of everyday activities. » Impairment is therefore a characteristic of the person. The term « incapacity » refers to a person's abilities, i.e. his or her functioning. It is a reduction in a person's ability to perform an activity or to function on an intellectual, psychological, physiological or anatomical level.

Several types of disability can be encountered: motor, visual, auditory, intellectual or related to speech, language, other senses, organic functions, an autism spectrum disorder or even a serious mental health disorder.

Introduction

This document deals with accessibility at the Antoine-Labelle telecommunications Cooperative (CTAL). CTAL attaches great importance to accessibility for people with disabilities. This document has been designed to comply with the Canadian Accessibility Act (CAA) and to inform the public of the steps that have been taken or will be taken to identify, eliminate and prevent barriers in seven priority areas.

In addition, federally regulated organizations must prepare and publish accessibility plans, implement an accessibility feedback process, and publish an annual progress report on their accessibility plan.

Consultations (internal and external)

CTAL knows how important it is to be accessible. That's why we sought the views of Cooperative members on any obstacles they might have encountered. To this end, the following methods were used:

- Sending out a survey to all working members of the Cooperative, to obtain any comments from people who might have encountered obstacles;
- The provision of a paper form, which was placed in the store to obtain feedback from people visiting our premises;
- Sending a questionnaire to all our members and their families via social networks.

Principles

Commitment to consultation with user and worker members

The Cooperative is committed to actively involving the members concerned in the accessibility process. This can be done through surveys, focus groups or other consultation methods. By understanding the needs and concerns of those directly involved, the plan can be better adapted to meet those needs effectively.

Commitment to awareness-raising

Raising awareness is a crucial aspect of any accessibility plan. Incorporating images and visual aids on our website will help raise awareness of accessibility issues and promote an inclusive culture. Images illustrating everyday scenarios involving people with disabilities, accessibility solutions, or simply inclusive messages about inclusion will aim to raise awareness among website users and fulfill our commitment to accessibility.

Commitment to proactivity

The Cooperative is committed to proactivity by implementing a series of concrete actions aimed at continuously improving its level of accessibility. Aware of the importance of creating an inclusive environment for all, it takes proactive measures to meet the needs of people with disabilities and provides regular training for staff on good reception and assistance practices. In addition, it is committed to regular consultation with the population concerned in order to identify new opportunities for improvement and to meet the changing accessibility needs of its customers and employees. By adopting a proactive approach, the Cooperative strives to create an environment where everyone not only feels welcome, but also fully integrated and valued.

Employment

The Cooperative has around thirty working members. Depending on their job title, some work in CTAL's offices, while others work on the road and off-site. Office workers have the option of teleworking two days a week or more, depending on the situation and with the agreement of their immediate superior. There are currently no disabled employees.

The organization conducted a survey to identify potential obstacles encountered by its worker members in the course of their work. This was done with the aim of understanding and addressing potential problems. During this survey, no obstacles were raised by staff members.

In 2023, the Cooperative had all workstations assessed by an ergonomist in order to optimize working conditions and ensure the well-being of its worker-members. In response to the ergonomist's recommendations, CTAL ensured that it had the necessary equipment to meet the specific needs of each employee.

To promote inclusion, the organization offers different ways of applying for jobs within the organization. Candidates can choose to apply by e-mail, in person, or even by spontaneous application. This diversity of methods aims to make the recruitment process accessible to all.

CTAL also plans to support its managers in addressing specific accessibility concerns, including mental health, cognitive and other less visible disabilities and neurodiversity.

The job offers, the employment integration process and the work environment will be adapted to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities, thus promoting their full participation and professional fulfillment.

Regarding internal policies, the Cooperative is committed to using clear and understandable language. It is essential that all employees fully understand the issues supported by these policies. When updating and revising these policies, the human resources manager will pay particular attention to this aspect.

In addition, the person in charge will ensure that all information is conveyed orally to each person concerned, and that everyone understands the various concepts. As a result, an article dealing with accessibility obligations has been added to the Cooperative's human resources policy and presented to all working members.

CTAL will ensure that all hiring communications identify the organization as an equal opportunity employer. The hiring process will therefore be transparent, accessible and non-discriminatory.

The organization's objective is that all current staff members, as well as anyone interested in joining CTAL, should be able to develop in a professional environment free of barriers.

An analysis of employment documentation and processes will be carried out, and changes will be made where necessary to promote inclusion. In addition, a statement encouraging people with disabilities to apply will be added to the careers page of the organization's website.

Built environment

Considering that the Cooperative is a tenant of the facility, it does not have full control over its built environment. It is therefore possible that changes that are solely under the owner's control could have an impact on accessibility.

However, CTAL will endeavor to make the necessary accessibility modifications to the extent that this is feasible as a tenant. If not, we will contact the landlord to ensure that accessibility concerns are addressed in the best possible way.

The Coop welcomes customers to its boutique, located on the 2nd floor of the building. People can get there via the stairs or the elevator, which is available to all customers. The boutique is open from Tuesday to Thursday, between 8 a.m. and noon, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Working members have individual workspaces, some with closed offices and others with open-plan offices. Two bathrooms are accessible to staff and customers and are wheelchair accessible.

Over the past year, the Cooperative has taken steps to improve lighting on its premises, by adjusting the brightness in certain areas, increasing or decreasing it as required.

The Cooperative has drawn up an evacuation plan in the event of fire, but this has not been assessed from the point of view of accessibility for people with disabilities. Before January 2025, CTAL plans to review the building's accessibility and determine the appropriateness of introducing other accessibility features wherever possible.

Within the building, the various exits are clearly identified with illuminated signs, and the doors are highly accessible.

User parking is shared with several other businesses that share the same building. In front of the door leading to CTAL, a single disabled parking space is available.

The Cooperative also leases land and a warehouse that are not close to the head office but are still accessible. Access is restricted to worker members. The warehouse is used to store equipment and provide maintenance for vehicles belonging to CTAL. This Cooperative entity is accessible to worker members, and CTAL will continue, throughout the duration of the plan and thereafter, to comply with the requirements of the applicable law. With the aim of targeting the various obstacles and assessing the improvements to be made to building accessibility, the organization will make sure to analyze all the problems encountered and the measures to be taken to meet this commitment.

Information and communication technologies ICT

The Cooperative is firmly committed to prioritizing accessible communications. It considers it crucial that information be clearly understood by all and accessible in formats suited to everyone. As such, it offers individuals the freedom to choose the mode of communication that best suits them in terms of accessibility and is committed to responding using their preferred method. On its website, the Cooperative offers several means of communication, including e-mail, phone, and regular mail. The communications team works diligently to create an environment that is both user-friendly and adaptable.

The Cooperative is also committed to eliminating minor obstacles on its website, identified during consultations, or discovered by other means. Those responsible for creating or modifying online content will receive web accessibility training by December 2024. This training will make it easier for them to identify areas requiring improvement in shared content.

The Cooperative has a technical support department on its team, which facilitates modifications and adaptation of information and communication technologies to different accessibility needs.

On the CTAL website, several support tools are available, such as tutorial videos, user guides and frequently asked questions. The website is also available in English. However, some areas for improvement have been identified, such as color contrasts, accessibility of buttons and forms, and other minor enhancements, which will be corrected in the coming year.

Optimization of certain systems is already underway, and certain adaptation measures will be integrated to improve the use of internal systems so that they are better adapted to different realities.

When using social media, the Cooperative makes sure to use inclusive language and avoids discriminatory terms. It ensures that its content is accessible to all, whatever their origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.

Finally, online tools will be used to assess the accessibility of content on social media in the future, and any necessary corrections will be made.

Communications other than ICT

This section refers to non-digital communications. These communications encompass a wide range of means by which CTAL exchanges information. In this document, this type of communication includes branding guidelines, advertising, marketing and official meetings.

CTAL interacts with the public through newsletters, emails, social networks, phone exchanges, text messages and in-store presence. Member services can be reached by telephone between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. any day of the week. In addition, technical support hours have been extended thanks to an external call center, enabling people to benefit from technical support until 9pm in the evening.

During installation appointments, the technician sends a text message to the user member to let them know that he is on his way to their home. This allows members to prepare for their arrival.

To promote its services, the Cooperative has adopted various means of communication, including sending leaflets, personalized letters, billboards, radio advertising and events.

As the company rolls out new services or develops new sectors, representatives of the organization sometimes go directly to people's homes to prospect.

Working members are empowered to use the phone relay service to meet the needs of user members with hearing disabilities.

For emergency calls, the VoIP service will attempt to automatically route the 9- 1-1 call, via a third-party service provider, to the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) that corresponds to the address on the user member's subscription record. However, due to the limitations of VoIP phone services, the 9-1-1 call may be routed to a different location from where the call would be routed by traditional 9-1-1 service. For example, the call may be transferred to a third party who specializes in handling emergency calls. This call center is different from the PSAP that would answer a traditional 9-1-1 call and where the contact information is displayed automatically; therefore, it may be necessary to provide the name, address and telephone number to the call center operator.

Design and delivery of service programs and facilities

The terms "design and delivery of programs, services and facilities" refer to programs and services offered to residents of the MRC d'Antoine-Labelle.

The Cooperative is committed to carefully assessing accessibility for all, taking into consideration the various disabilities and specific needs of everyone. Currently, it follows a universal design approach, creating service programs and facilities that are accessible and usable by as many people as possible, without requiring additional modifications.

Staff are trained and informed about the principles of accessibility and how to adapt programs and services to meet the needs of people with disabilities. In addition, CTAL will consider any feedback from people with disabilities in order to address their needs and concerns.

To offer accessible services, the Cooperative will provide accessible documentation for programs and services, such as large-print versions to meet the needs of people with disabilities. By investing in the design and delivery of our service programs and facilities, CTAL can ensure that they are accessible, promoting inclusion and participation for all people, regardless of ability.

Acquisition of goods, services and facilities

The term "acquisition of goods, services and facilities" refers to the processes of obtaining material goods, services or facilities required to meet an organization's needs. This may include purchases, service contracts, leases, acquisitions and other means by which CTAL acquires what it needs to operate.

CTAL purchases a variety of goods, services and facilities that support its activities and operations. It is committed to integrating accessibility requirements from the outset of the purchasing process for these goods, services and facilities from our external suppliers.

However, our dependence on certain suppliers can present challenges when it comes to making changes to some of the services we offer, sometimes resulting in delays. For example, when TV functionality needs to be changed, or even during a service outage.

In addition, as a non-owner of the telecommunications network, the Cooperative faces limited budgetary constraints for the acquisition of goods, services and facilities, which can hamper efforts to improve accessibility.

To remedy this, when acquiring goods, services and facilities, CTAL will pay particular attention to accessibility right from the start of the process to ensure that they do not pose barriers to anyone using them. It will integrate accessibility criteria into procurement processes, clearly specifying accessibility requirements for goods, services and facilities.

Potential suppliers will be assessed on the basis of their ability to provide accessible products and services, considering their previous experience with accessibility.

Monitoring and follow-up mechanisms will be put in place to assess suppliers' compliance with accessibility requirements, and corrective action will be taken where necessary.

By integrating these measures into its procurement processes, the Cooperative will be able to help ensure that the goods, services and facilities it acquires are accessible to all, regardless of disability.

Des mécanismes de surveillance et de suivi seront mis en place pour évaluer la conformité des fournisseurs aux exigences en matière d'accessibilité et les mesures correctives seront apportées si nécessaire.

Transportation

The Cooperative does not offer transportation services. For this reason, no actions or obstacles have been defined for this priority area.

Conclusion

This accessibility action plan aims to ensure that the Cooperative offers products, services and facilities that are accessible to all, thereby promoting the inclusion and participation of people of all abilities.

This document represents only the beginning of a process of continuous improvement, and CTAL is committed to continuing to improve accessibility in the future.