

## Consulting with Canadians Questionnaire – AAC Answers

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1. How can the Government of Canada raise awareness of and change attitudes in relation to accessibility (in the short term and long term)?

**Answer:** Promote accessibility using all types of media.  
Implement mandatory training requirements.  
Compile resources to streamline processes and training.  
Develop and provide easy to understand literature/resources to explain the economic benefits of accessibility.  
Implement accessibility training in the education system.  
Develop and provide easy to understand literature/resources on the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.  
Develop and provide easy to understand literature/resources to explain how making things accessible benefits everyone.

2. How can the Government of Canada show leadership in improving accessibility and removing barriers for Canadians with disabilities?

**Answer:** Hire people with disabilities and share the success stories.  
Hire people with disabilities for all roles, not just roles relating to accessibility.  
Minimize discriminatory practices during the hiring process (example, requesting a drivers licence if it is not actually a requirement).  
Ensure all communications are in an accessible format.  
Pass the legislation to highlight accessibility is an importance to Canada.

3. Do you have examples of collaborative models that have led to the creation of shared expectations and sustained culture change within organizations in relation to accessibility?

**Answer:** This question was not easily understood.  
The City of Peterborough, Ontario, (City) incorporates accessibility into the procurement process to ensure organizations doing business with the City receive the relevant accessibility training.  
The City has an Accessibility Advisory Committee and two sub-committees that work with the City to create shared expectations and sustained culture change.  
The City has conventional transit and an accessible transit service that work together to provide transportation to the community.

4. Do you have any input regarding this goal?

**Answer:** It is important to focus on removing barriers for everyone.  
Inclusiveness is key.  
Ensure all of the legislation has minimum requirements that must be met.

5. How should the legislation define “accessibility” and/or “barrier”?

**Answer:** Accessibility – Equal access to goods, services, information and environments for everyone.

Barrier – Anything that prevents people with disabilities from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability. Examples included attitude, technology, architectural/structural, information and communication, and systemic.

6. Overall, which approach or approaches do you think would be best for accessibility legislation? Are there other approaches that you would suggest?

**Answer:** A prescriptive approach with detailed requirements and timelines for compliance/implementation.

7. If a prescriptive-type approach were to be taken, do you have any input on how standards could be developed?

**Answer:** Create a large working group consisting of people with various types of disabilities, private sector representatives, lawyers and relatives of people with various types of disabilities.

International collaboration.

Rely on representatives from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO).

8. If an outcome-based approach were to be taken, do you have any input on how accessibility outcomes could be established?

**Answer:** Create a large working group compiled of people with various types of disabilities, private sector representatives, lawyers and relatives of people with various types of disabilities.

International collaboration.

Rely on representatives from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO).

9. Are there other organizations within federal jurisdiction that should be covered by the legislation?

**Answer:** Organizations that receive funding from the federal government.

Organizations that are contracted by the federal government.

Federal penitentiaries.

Airports/airlines.

Railroads/train stations.

First Nations (this item had mixed discussion on whether it should be included).

10. Are there organizations that should be exempt from the legislation?

**Answer:** None at this time.

11. The legislation could potentially set out different requirements and timelines for different types and sizes of organizations. Do you have any comments or suggestions for this?

**Answer:** None at this time.

12. We have listed six areas where accessibility could be improved. Of these, which are the most important to you? Are there other areas that should be included?

**Answer:** All of the areas listed compliment one another and are equally important. However, there is recognition that there is an urgency to increase employment for people with disabilities.

Ensure a focus on customer service is included in the program and service delivery area.

13. We have listed some potential mechanisms that the legislation could describe for the ongoing identification and prioritization of accessibility issues. What do you think of these mechanisms? Are there other mechanisms you would suggest?

**Answer:** Consultation should take place annually.

Ensure there is representation of various types of disabilities in parliament.

Have a separate Minister of Persons with Disabilities.

14. Canada has a number of laws in place to address human rights issues and improve accessibility. Do you have any comments on how the new accessibility legislation could interact with these existing laws? Should the legislation describe a process by which these laws would be reviewed and potentially revised?

**Answers:** Put in requirements for training on all complimentary/related pieces of legislation.

15. Should the legislation build on accessibility standards already developed by provincial/territorial governments and other countries?

**Answer:** The federal legislation should build on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the current Americans with Disabilities Act and any other provincial/territorial accessibility legislation.

16. What monitoring mechanisms do you think should be considered for the legislation (including ones not listed here)?

**Answer:** Develop a strong action plan, progress reports, reviews and audits. Include the progress, as well as organizations that comply/don't comply, in the federal auditors report.

Complaint mechanisms could be done through the Human Rights Code, as is done in Ontario.

17. What enforcement mechanisms do you think should be considered for the legislation (including ones not listed here)?

**Answer:** All mechanisms listed should be considered.

18. Do you have suggestions for how the Government could help organizations to improve accessibility and remove barriers?

**Answer:** Financial support would make a big difference, but most of the statements listed would help. A reduction in reporting requirements however should not be listed as an incentive.  
Create standardized template and guidelines pertinent to all standards created.

19. Do you have suggestions for how the Government could encourage, support and recognize organizations that show accessibility leadership?

**Answer:** Same as above.

20. In relation to the implementation and effectiveness of the legislation, how often would you want the Government of Canada to report to Canadians?

**Answer:** Every two years.

21. What kinds of things should this report look at?

**Answer:** How can it be improved, compliance, and international and provincial accessibility trends/changes.

22. How often should the legislation be reviewed?

**Answer:** Once every four years with every term.

23. Are there specific considerations for how any such review should be conducted?

**Answer:** Put together a committee consisting of people with various types of disabilities, private sector representatives, lawyers and relatives of people with various types of disabilities.