

Accessibility in the Workplace

Good for Everyone, Law in Manitoba

Accessible Employment Training

Facilitator's Guide

Introduction

The Accessibility Standard for Employment requires all employers to remove and prevent barriers at various stages of employment. An employer must ensure they provide training to staff that covers the following responsibilities:

- recruiting, selecting, or training employees
- supervising, managing, or coordinating the work of employees
- promoting or redeploying employees
- developing and implementing employment policies and practices.

Learning outcomes should include an understanding of how the Accessibility Standard for Employment affects employment practices in their organization, resulting in accessible employment policies and practices that fulfill the standard's requirements;

- offer reasonable accommodations when recruiting new employees;
- inform applicants about workplace accommodation policies and practices when making an offer of employment;
- consider workplace accommodations to remove a barrier affecting an employee's performance or opportunities for training and advancement;
- develop and implement individual accommodation plans for employees upon request;
- let employees know about employment policies and practices and provide updates, with information in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request;
- follow a return to work policy for employees who have been off work due to a disability, and have a process to determine reasonable workplace accommodations; and,
- provide individual emergency response information to keep employees with disabilities safe, and ask employees who require assistance during an emergency for permission to share information with individuals who have agreed to help.

Public and private sector employers with 50 or more employees must also document their Accessibility Standard for Employment policy, including a training plan.

Please visit [AccessibilityMB.ca](https://www.accessibilitymb.ca) for tools to support compliance.

Please contact the Manitoba Accessibility Office, for more information or alternate formats: MAO@gov.mb.ca or 204-945-7613.

Note to the Facilitator

Employers can complete the Accessibility Standard for Employment learning module on their own. However, group participation and discussion is required to best relate the training content to your workplace.

A facilitator sets that agenda of the shared learning and ensures all voices are heard. The goal is to help apply the law to the context of the organization and to determine next steps toward barrier removal and full compliance with the standard.

Only organizations with 50 or more employees must document their policies, but writing policies down is a best practice to share with current and new employees. Please visit [Sample Accessible Employment Policy \(PDF\)](#) at AccessibilityMB.ca for further information.

The Manitoba Accessibility Office worked with business and community organizations to produce the eight-minute video [Accessibility in the Workplace: Good for Everyone, Law in Manitoba Video](#). One way to start your discussion is to listen to the experiences of Manitobans who face workplace barriers and who benefit from workplace accommodations.

Choose all or some of the following questions and scenarios to discuss current and future policies and practices in your organization.

Questions to Guide Group Discussion

The Accessibility Standard for Employment requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to people with disabilities. Most accommodations offer an adjustment to how things are usually done at little or no expense. A workplace accommodation is reasonable if it:

- is required for an employee to carry out workplace responsibilities or to access benefits available to employees
- would not result in undue hardship, such as safety risks to other staff

Reasonable accommodation levels the playing field for employees with disabilities, so they can equally access opportunities available to others in the workplace. The employer and employee share the responsibility to find the right solution.

Question 1: Organizations must reasonably accommodate employees in a number of ways. Ask participants to brainstorm different ways and modifications to meet individual employee needs for example, adjusted hours to deal with childcare, or modified tasks following an injury. If you are comfortable doing so, encourage staff to share their experiences of accommodations within the workplace.

Question 2: Data from Statistics Canada in 2017 estimate that nearly one in four Manitobans has a disability. Approximately how many people with disabilities work for your organization? Might there be more employees affected by disability? Are all disabilities visible?

Question 3: Why might colleagues not want to share information about their disability or the barriers they face? How could your organization foster an open and respectful environment that encourages employees to disclose these things?

Question 4: What reasonable accommodations could your organization offer to include people with disabilities in your workforce? What are some limitations based on health and safety concerns? You may wish to consider specific disabilities. For help with ideas, visit [Job Accommodation Network: JAN](#)

Question 5: Employees who typically do not require workplace accommodations may still face barriers during emergencies, such as an evacuation or a pandemic. What accessibility issues could your organization include in your emergency plan? How can employees be encouraged to participate in the plan?

Question 6: In what ways do people with disabilities benefit from your organization's services? What are the advantages of employing individuals who understand barriers faced by customers or clients?

Question 7: Describe the steps your organization could take to remove barriers to Manitobans with disabilities during the recruitment, interview, and selection phases of employment.

Scenarios for Group Discussion

To encourage discussion, the four scenarios below can be shared with the group. Once participants have shared their views, the group may then wish to compare its responses with the options and steps provided below.

Scenario 1: An employer has offered a flexible work schedule to an employee with a hidden disability (chronic fatigue). Some of her colleagues claimed the employer showed favouritism.

Discuss options for the employer to explain the accommodations to other employees.

- Option One: The employer schedules a half-day learning event on employment accommodations for everyone.
- Option Two: The employer explains to those with questions the reasons for the accommodation request and provides examples of situations where accommodations may be needed.
- Option Three: The organization ensures that accessibility is considered when developing policies and procedures and that there is a contact person or committee to facilitate policy development, including the implementation of hiring procedures encouraging applications from people with disabilities.
- Option Four: All of the above.

Scenario 2: An employee in a manufacturing company with a learning disability has difficulty remembering all the different tasks associated with a job. Discuss possible solutions to accommodate this employee.

- **Option One:** A supervisor provides written instructions with each major task broken down into smaller, colour coded sequential sub-parts.
- **Option Two:** The employer discusses other accommodation possibilities with the employee, including a flexible work schedule to maximize productivity.
- **Option Three:** The organization ensures accessibility is considered when developing policies and procedures and that there is a contact person or committee to facilitate policy development. The organization implements hiring procedures encouraging applications from people with disabilities.
- **Option Four:** All of the above.

Scenario 3: A teacher has returned to work following a stroke. She had difficulty balancing, standing, walking and grasping small objects. Discuss possible solutions to accommodate this employee.

- **Option One:** The teacher receives stand/lean stool, adjustable laptop tray and laptop connected to the classroom smart board. Grab bars are mounted in the classroom and hallways to assist with balance.
- **Option Two:** The school principal organizes learning session on workplace accommodations for all staff.
- **Option Three:** The organization ensures accessibility is considered when developing policies and procedures and that there is a contact person or committee to facilitate policy development. The organization implements hiring procedures encouraging applications from people with disabilities.
- **Option Four:** All of the above.

Scenario 4: An employee has lost a significant amount of vision following surgery. Outline the steps you would take as the supervisor to create an individualized accommodation plan.

- **Step One:** Initiate request for accommodation. Employer and other human resource personnel (such as supervisor) respond to request. .

- **Step Two:** Gather relevant information and assess needs including meeting with employee to discuss workplace barriers and possible solutions.
- **Step Three:** Develop and document individualized accommodation plan.
- **Step Four:** Implement individualized accommodation plan.
- **Step Five:** Review individualized accommodation plan.

For more information, please contact the:

Manitoba Accessibility Office

630 - 240 Graham Avenue

Winnipeg MB R3C 0J7

Phone: 204-945-7613 (in Winnipeg)

Toll-Free: 1-800-282-8069, Ext. 7613 (outside Winnipeg)

Fax: 204-948-2896

Email: MAO@gov.mb.ca

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Legal disclaimer: This training resource is not legal advice. It aims to assist organizations to meet the basic training requirements under Manitoba's Customer Service Standard Regulation. The training does not replace the content of the Customer Service Standard Regulation or The Accessibility for Manitobans Act. If there is any conflict between this training resource and the regulation or the act, the latter two shall prevail.