



2023-25

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

December 20, 2022

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1. General

1.1 Description of Farm Credit Canada

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is a Crown corporation, reporting to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. We lend money, share knowledge and offer software to almost 102,000 customers. Our customers include farmers, ranchers and other producers, and people who own businesses related to Canadian agriculture. We're a team of more than 2,000 employees, working out of 102 offices located primarily in rural Canada, with a corporate office in Regina, Sask.

1.2 Statement of commitment

FCC is committed to helping make Canada barrier-free by 2040. We take our responsibilities to Canadians seriously, and this includes Canadians with disabilities. We're committed to becoming more accessible because we understand the importance of our work to Canadians. Canadians depend on our customers to get food to their tables, and our customers depend on us. As such, we are committed to noticing, naming and

removing barriers to accessibility in our workplace and in how we serve the industry that feeds the world.

We believe all employees and teams at FCC play a role in making FCC more accessible and inclusive. Our Director, Employee Experience and Inclusion, along with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team, are FCC's designated lead on ensuring we take action as outlined in this plan to meaningfully remove accessibility barriers.

1.3 Contact information and feedback process





FCC welcomes feedback from our employees, customers and members of the public about accessibility at FCC and about this plan. We're committed to reviewing this feedback and taking steps to address barriers that are identified. Feedback can be submitted anonymously.

What feedback can you provide?

You can provide feedback on the barriers you experience when interacting with FCC or feedback that will help to inform work laid out in our accessibility plan. If your feedback is about a particular issue, make sure to be descriptive and include details such as the date, place, location, platform, webpage or program/service involved.

How your feedback will be used

Your feedback will be considered as part of the continuous improvement of our accessibility efforts. Some feedback may be addressed right away, and some may be addressed in the development of our future accessibility plans. The feedback we receive and how we take it into consideration will be included in our progress reports.

How to provide feedback	Contact information
 Mail	ATTN: Diversity and Inclusion, HR Farm Credit Canada 1800 Hamilton Street Regina, SK Canada, S4P 4L3
 Telephone	Monday to Friday 7 a.m.– 7:30 p.m. ET Toll-free (Canada only): 1-888-332-3301
 Feedback form on our website	Feedback form
 Email	accessibility@fcc.ca

Confidentiality

The feedback you provide is meant to help us identify, remove and prevent barriers. All feedback submitted through the feedback form is anonymous unless you wish to receive a response from FCC. We'll then require your name and contact information. Your feedback won't be associated with your name and will only be shared with those FCC employees directly involved in furthering our accessibility efforts or responding to your specific request. We therefore urge you to be as honest and detailed as possible.





1.4 Alternative formats

An electronic version of this plan that is compatible with assistive technology can be downloaded immediately from our website at: <https://fcc-fac.typeform.com/to/MRsDgFBn>

The following formats are available upon request within the timeframes indicated:

- Print – 15 days
- Large print – 15 days
- Braille – 45 days
- Audio – 45 days

You can request an alternative format of this description of the feedback mechanism and/or FCC's Accessibility Plan by:

 Mail	ATTN: Diversity and Inclusion, HR Farm Credit Canada 1800 Hamilton Street Regina, SK Canada, S4P 4L3
 Telephone	Monday to Friday 7 a.m.– 7:30 p.m. ET Toll-free (Canada only): 1-888-332-3301
 Feedback form on our website	Feedback form
 Email	accessibility@fcc.ca

1.5 Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this plan:

Disability: Any impairment or difference in physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning or communication ability. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary or can change over time.

Barrier: Anything that might hinder people with disabilities' full and equal participation. Barriers can be architectural, technological, attitudinal, based on information or communications, or can be the result of a policy or procedure.

Accessibility: The design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies and rules in a way that allows all people, including people with a variety of disabilities, to access them.

2. Areas described under Section 5 of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA)

2.1 Organization-wide initiatives

FCC has taken steps towards accessibility across the organization. These include working on a culture of inclusion and building our knowledge on accessibility.

Employee mental health is a priority at FCC. The pandemic has shown how important it is to have support for mental well-being. We've created programs and resources around mental health for our employees and our customers. Our employees shared with us that they appreciate that mental health is a focus for FCC, both internally and for our customers. They also shared feedback about how we can do even more to support a culture of well-being and inclusion. We've made goals throughout this plan using this feedback.

Another step FCC has taken to be more accessible is focusing on built-environment accessibility. In the last few years, two facilities management staff became Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certified. They're using their training to make FCC offices across Canada more accessible. We know there are still barriers to accessibility in some of our offices, and we have included goals in this plan to reduce these barriers.

We're proud of these and other steps we've taken to make FCC accessible. However, we know there's more work to do to advance accessibility across FCC.

The following actions will help make this goal a reality:

- By 2023, FCC will launch a way for customers, employees and stakeholders to provide feedback related to the FCC Accessibility Plan and to identify any accessibility barrier they have experienced.
- In 2023, FCC will develop a strategy on the ongoing engagement and consultations with people with disabilities, internally and externally.
- In 2023, FCC will begin implementing our engagement and consultations strategy for people with disabilities.
- In 2024, FCC will create a way for customers, employees and stakeholders to request information in alternative formats. We will also make sure that we have a process to fulfil those requests.

2.2 Employment

Over 2,000 people work at FCC. Some of our employees identify as having a disability, while more probably have disabilities that they haven't shared with us. Some employees communicated that they would like to see an increase in knowledge about disability to reduce stigma, and we've included this feedback in our goals.

We need to prioritize accessibility so that all our employees can work without barriers. This includes improving training and providing employees with resources and knowledge about disability and accessibility.

The following goals have been created around accessibility and employment:

Accessing employment:

- In 2023, FCC will add statements to our Careers landing page and our job postings reflecting our commitments to being an equal opportunity employer. FCC will also add information on how to access accommodations in the hiring process.
- In 2023 and beyond, FCC will create and implement a talent sourcing strategy about how we find and hire

people. This strategy will include tactics to increase the recruitment, retention and advancement of people with disabilities.

Employee development:

- In 2023, FCC will assess internal learning and knowledge gaps around accessibility. This will include a focus on three specific groups: leaders (people-managers); employees who have a role in accessible services and service delivery; and all employees.
- In 2024, FCC will implement disability awareness knowledge sharing and support for managers and senior leadership. This will include awareness and learning for managers related to mental health inclusion and support.
- In 2024, FCC will implement disability awareness knowledge sharing and support for all employees. This will also be built into FCC's onboarding process for all new employees.
- Continuing in 2023, FCC will ensure all new learning content is developed according to web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) standards.

- In 2024, FCC will begin updating pre-existing training modules on a priority basis considering WCAG standards and feedback from people with disabilities.

Equitable and inclusive workplace:

- In 2023, FCC will continue to improve its Employee Writing Centre to feature the best practices available for increasing accessibility at FCC.
- In 2023, FCC will review our accommodations policies.
- In 2024, FCC will update its employee and manager handbooks to include clear language and process maps around requesting and providing accommodations.
- In 2023, FCC will establish internal resources and/or affinity groups. This will enable employees with lived experience with diverse disabilities, including mental health disability, to guide FCC, share their experiences and support each other.
- In 2023, FCC will review, update and formalize our remote work/flexible work policy to include accessibility considerations.
- In 2023, FCC will include gaps related to representation of employees with disabilities into our annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy update. We use that data to inform ongoing talent, retention and advancement strategies.
- In 2024, FCC will review employee benefits to determine which benefits are highest priority, and which employee benefits pose the greatest barriers.
- In 2025, FCC will work with our health benefits provider to identify whether any improvements to the employee benefits package are possible.

2.3 The built environment

FCC has over 100 offices across Canada. Some are larger offices in cities, while most are in rural parts of the country. We lease all our office space, and offices have different levels of accessibility. We've created goals to make our current offices more accessible, and we've also created goals to make sure new offices are accessible. We've prioritized our larger corporate and regional offices in this accessibility plan. However, we are working to improve accessibility in all offices.

The following goals have been created to reduce barriers in the built environment:

- In 2023, FCC will, with guidance from the Rick Hansen Foundation certification program, determine and document our minimum accessibility standards for new office space.
- In 2023, FCC will determine a schedule of inspection and maintenance of building accessibility features.
- In 2024, FCC will assess the state of accessibility based on our newly created minimum accessibility standards and identify priority needs/gaps across the organization.
- In 2024, FCC will incorporate the updated minimum accessibility standards into the new office space processes and review criteria.
- By the end of 2023, FCC will review emergency evacuation processes and procedures based on the Canada Labour Code Part II and the Government of Canada's guidelines for creating an accessible emergency response plan.

2.4 Information and communication technologies (ICT)

Web and electronic technology are important in the modern workplace. FCC has employees and customers all over the country, and web technology helps us to do our work and connect to our customers. Technology can make things more accessible, with certain features helping reduce barriers. But if technology isn't built with accessibility in mind or people don't know how to use it in an accessible way, it can create barriers.

The following goals have been created to make FCC's information and communications technology more accessible:

- In 2023 and beyond, FCC will continue to offer learning sessions to all employees on the use of accessibility features embedded in internal systems and tools.
- In 2023, FCC will implement informal learning paths for relevant IT staff to increase their knowledge on how to provide accessible solutions for employees, customers and others.
- In 2023, FCC will develop a prioritized list of older systems to review and update to WCAG standards.

- In 2024, FCC will update the onboarding process for IT employees who play a role in delivering technology solutions and improving accessibility. These updates will include formal accessibility learning and clear guidance on internal IT accessibility policies and processes.
- Starting in 2023, accessibility reviews will be built into all new user experience design and testing, and to all plans to update older systems. FCC will continue to conduct accessibility reviews on other existing older systems to understand gaps.
- In 2024, IT and partners will have a documented formal governance and process for accessibility review of existing older technology. This will enable FCC to prioritize work related to existing older systems.
- In 2025, FCC will have improved and increased accessibility with prioritized web tools.

2.5 Communication, other than ICT

Sharing information with our customers and others in the agriculture industry is part of how we support a vibrant and strong Canadian agriculture industry, and our ability to share information and knowledge with our employees is key to helping them do their best work in

support of our customers. We want to make sure everyone has access to the information we share so they can grow and thrive. The following goals ensure that everyone can access and understand information communicated at FCC:

- Continuing in 2023, all new FCC internal website/intranet content will be developed to be accessible.
- In 2023, FCC will continue to migrate our internal policy and permanent communications content to our new SharePoint site. FCC will make sure that content is posted with a focus on clear, concise and plain language.
- In 2023, FCC will investigate how and where described video can be used to enhance the accessibility of FCC video content.
- FCC will investigate options to improve accuracy of captions on all external videos by the end of 2024.
- Starting in 2023, FCC will add alt-text to images in all new social media posts.
- By 2024, FCC will complete an update of our brand and communication standards. These standards will ensure current accessibility guidelines and future considerations are considered and applied in the creation and production of FCC resources and materials.

2.6 The design and delivery of programs and services

Our customers are diverse and so are their needs. Our services need to be accessible so that anyone who needs our help can access it.

The following goals will help FCC provide more accessible services over the next three years:

- By the end of 2023, surveys and questionnaires looking for feedback about FCC will include a question or questions about accessibility.
- In 2023, FCC will investigate how to further advance accessibility through the expansion of FCC's digital offering (for example, chat for service functions, digital portals) for our small business offering.
- In 2024, FCC will begin implementation to advance FCC's digital offerings for our small business offering to improve access for all customers and their varied accessibility needs based on results of the previous investigation.
- By 2025, FCC has increased accessibility of our services through expansion of our digital offering and channels.

2.7 The procurement of goods, services and facilities

When accessibility is considered at the start of any process, barriers are reduced. Accessibility standards in procurement processes ensure that goods, services and facilities are ready to use by anyone who needs them.

The following goals have been created to ensure accessibility is a priority in procurement:

- FCC will continue to work as part of a Crown corporations procurement practices group focused on improving accessibility. The group aims to ensure that third-party vendors increase their accessibility offering, and to enable equal access to companies who are led by or employ persons with disabilities.
- Starting in 2023, FCC will consider accessibility as part of our end-to-end procurement review and assessment. The review will result in a re-write of the procurement directive, policies and procedures. New accessibility standards will be included in these directives, policies and procedures.
- By 2024, FCC will establish a Source List for required accessibility services (for example, Braille, digital audio, captioning, descriptive video, sign language interpretation).

- By 2025, procurement officers will receive training on how to incorporate accessibility into procurement.
- From 2025 onwards, accessibility will be explicitly considered in all procurements by either including accessibility requirements or by documenting the decision to not incorporate accessibility requirements.

2.8 Transportation

FCC does not provide transportation services to employees or customers. No goals have been created under the heading of transportation.

3. Consultations

People with disabilities were an important part of our accessibility planning. We consulted with people with disabilities throughout the process. We asked our employees with disabilities about barriers they have faced while working at FCC, and we asked their perspectives on how we can make things more accessible. Employee feedback was important to help us focus our goals. We also worked with an independent accessibility advisory group made up of Canadians with different disabilities. They helped to bring a customer perspective to our planning.

3.1 Consultations with employees who have disabilities


A survey about accessibility at FCC was made available to all employees. We heard from 40 employees who identified as having a disability. We also heard from 48 people close to someone with a disability, and we heard from other employees who felt they had feedback to share on accessibility at FCC. Overall, employees

reported positive experiences working for FCC and they appreciate our efforts towards accessibility. They also helped us see areas for improvement. Reducing stigma and increasing knowledge about disabilities was important to them. Solutions to these and other barriers identified by employees are included in our accessibility goals throughout this plan.

3.2 Consultations with stakeholders who have disabilities

A second survey was also sent to industry groups to share with their membership so that we could get customer and/or industry feedback. We didn't receive many responses, but we are committed to building a stronger approach to gathering customer and industry feedback.

We also requested and received feedback from an independent accessibility advisory group. The group is made up of 10 Canadians with different kinds of

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disabilities. We asked the group to provide feedback on things like our website, our services, our job postings and job application process, and about general barriers they have encountered when working with and using the services of similar organizations. They provided feedback through a virtual roundtable discussion as well as through written notes.

Their suggestions were mostly about communications at FCC. They thought that some information on our website was not written in an easy-to-understand and accessible way. They also wanted to see more specific language about disability in our diversity and inclusion commitments, as well as in our job postings. Their feedback is included in the goals throughout our accessibility plan.

4. Conclusion

Canadians rely on our customers for their food, and our customers rely on us. We need to be accessible to our customers, the industry we serve and our employees so they can all do their very best work. Inclusion is part of our vision for a brighter future. This plan and taking meaningful action on the goals within are part of our commitment to building a more inclusive tomorrow.



DREAM. GROW. THRIVE.

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français au fac.ca