



Accessibility principles and pillars

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Prepared by ICBC's Accessibility Committee





ICBC's accessibility principles and pillars

Statement of Commitment from David Wong, President and CEO

At ICBC, we are committed to ensuring we are as representative and diverse as the province we serve. Our Accessibility Principles & Pillars work to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with visible and invisible disabilities. These principles and pillars will guide our continued journey in providing equitable access, service, and opportunity for all.

We believe in the importance of different perspectives. We support our people in speaking up about issues important to them – by doing so, we're able to provide services and products that better reflect the unique experiences and needs of our customers. We'll continue to shape the future of our company by developing diverse teams, providing educational opportunities about the significance of equity, inclusion, and accessibility in and out of the workplace, and by listening to our employees about what we do well – and where we can do better.

It is our responsibility to ensure customers maintain their dignity and independence through every interaction with ICBC – in-person, over-the-phone, virtual, or otherwise. With an emphasis on support and adaptability, we'll work to remove barriers to our products and services for our disabled customers, and take action on improving accessibility at our locations and on how we communicate and share information.

We all deserve to feel included, respected, and heard. We ask you join us on this journey in better serving the needs, now and in the future, of those living with disabilities.

Sincerely,

David Wong (he/him)
President & CEO

Context of legislation and standards

Following the federal government's lead, British Columbia introduced the Accessible B.C. Act to the legislature in April 2021. While the B.C. Human Rights Code already protected disabled people from discrimination in employment and services, the new legislation seeks to reduce barriers to access and focuses on promotion and equal participation. The Accessible B.C. Act was passed in June 2021 and the associated regulations applied the Act's accessibility requirements to some organizations, including ICBC.

Under the Act, ICBC established an Accessibility Committee that includes individuals from a variety of backgrounds and lived experiences. The Accessibility Committee was tasked to develop an accessibility workplan that would identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers for employees and customers. The plan itself must be made available to the public and must include a mechanism for feedback on those barriers by September 1, 2023.

While B.C. will release additional accessibility standards over the next few years, committees have been formed to support the development of the first two standards listed in the Act: the standard for accessible employment and the standard for accessible delivery of services.

Definitions

For the purposes of the Accessibility Principles and Pillars, the following definitions align with the ones provided in Part 1 of the Accessible British Columbia Act:

- "Disability" means an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.
- "Impairment" includes a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary or episodic.
- "Barrier" is anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment; barriers can be caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies. They can also be affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.

Process to create the plan

The ICBC Accessibility Committee began meeting and reviewing relevant material in June 2022, including:

- The results of the Employee Opinion Survey.
- The results of the Disability Equality Index audit.
- The relevant suggestions arising from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan consultation.
- The resources provided by organizations such as the Presidents Group.

An initial draft of the plan was shared with the Accessibility Committee in December 2022, and opportunities for feedback were provided in December 2022, January 2023 and February 2023. A revised draft was brought to the Executive Leadership Team in April 2023, and was then shared with ICBC's Employee Resource Groups and the Disability Advisory and Advocacy Group. The draft plan was posted on icbc.com and social media posts requested feedback from customers and the general public. A final draft of the plan was approved by the Executive Leadership Team on August 14, 2023.



Accessibility principles

Core to the principle of accessibility for ICBC are strategies or conditions that enable the full and equitable participation of all community members. ICBC's accessibility work is guided by the following principles:

Inclusion

We will strive to create a sense of belonging by ensuring equitable access for all employees and customers.

Adaptability

We will encourage flexibility and resilience in a change process that creates a more inclusive and accessible culture at ICBC.

Diversity

We recognize that ability and disability come in many different forms, and that conflicting accessibility needs may require multiple options to be present for each kind of accommodation.

Collaboration

We will work collaboratively to build inclusion across departments and divisions with subject-matter experts and those with lived experience.

Self-determination

We recognize that self-determination is fundamental for disabled people.

Universal Design

We will encourage universal design principles for all our facilities so that our space can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all.

Accessibility pillars

Accessible and inclusive culture

Through capacity-building, policy review, resource development and ongoing monitoring and accountability, ICBC will create a culture of accessibility and inclusion. Actions may include:

Capacity-building

- Build awareness and understanding through cultural-safety and disability-inclusion education and resources.
- Develop bystander awareness training to empower employees to challenge instances of bullying and harassment.
- Raise awareness of disabilities and their prevalence to better support staff and customers.
- Provide education on disability, accessibility and accommodations during onboarding of new leaders to align with inclusion expectations.

Policy review

- Review policies on flexible work, work from home, return to work, accommodation and others of relevance to ensure that disabled employees are supported to be successful.

Resource development

- Develop just-in-time tools and resources for managers and teams to promote the inclusion of disabled staff members.

Monitoring and accountability

- Make ICBC's work on accessibility visible by adding "accessibility" to the name of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team, for it to become the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Team.

- Reform the Accessibility Committee to the Accessibility Advisory Committee, with an appropriate terms of reference to reflect its work going forward.
- Undertake an annual Disability Equality Index audit to track progress, and report on that progress to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Executive Leadership Team.
- Provide annual reports on actions related to the Accessible B.C. Act and to this document to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Executive Leadership Team.
- Engage company leadership with the Disability and Accessibility Employee Resource Group on a regular basis to build an inclusive culture for disabled staff.

Enterprise systems, procurement and communication

Accessible information and communications are essential for employees and customers. Incorporating universal design into our enterprise systems ensures broad accessibility.

Communication

- Align all communication materials, including digital, print and video with applicable accessibility standards such as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AAA.
- Ensure all content creator staff receive training on inclusion and digital accessibility.
- Designate digital accessibility experts in the customer experience, digital and user experience teams.
- Develop processes to ensure employee and customer access to accessible formats upon request.

Enterprise systems and procurement

- Integrate accessibility standards and universal design principles into the social procurement process.

- Track metrics on disability-owned vendors and partner businesses.

Infrastructure and built environment

Our ability to meet the requirements of our jobs is shaped and contained by the infrastructure and built environment that surrounds us.

- Follow local building code accessibility requirements for all new renovations and incorporate universal design principles as much as possible to provide a more inclusive space for staff and customers.
- Add an accessibility checklist to the annual facility audit to ensure, where possible, that our older buildings are upgraded to meet current accessibility standards.
- Add accessibility standards to facility design guidelines for all future renovation references.
- Provide adaptable and flexible work environments to meet individual needs and make workplaces inclusive, such as by including prayer rooms and quiet space.

Recruitment, accommodations and employment

ICBC is committed to reflecting B.C.'s diversity by creating a culture of self-identification and supporting the success of our disabled employees.

Recruitment

- Conduct an end-to-end review of recruitment processes and develop interventions to enhance inclusion.
- Provide education on disability and accessibility during onboarding of all new staff.
- Add information on accommodation principles to job advertisements and icbc.com.
- Develop alternative methods of assessment beyond traditional interviews and screening tests.

- Continue to expand the network of recruitment organizations that support disabled candidates and employees, and gather data to assess recruitment and retention of candidates hired through these organizations.

Accommodation

- Ensure accommodation practices remain consistent with best practices, and regularly consider promising practices emerging in the field.
- Develop accommodation metrics to track the success of our inclusion initiatives.

Employment

- Develop alternative ways to collect demographic information to provide a range of ways for people to self-identify.

Customers and community engagement

ICBC is here to serve British Columbians and has a responsibility to ensure accessibility for all.

Customers

- Undertake research to understand the experiences of disabled customers.
- Assess all products for accessibility and take steps to remedy issues where possible.

Community engagement

- Focus on the development of relationships with disability stakeholders, advocacy organizations and other external community partners.
- Develop partnerships and sponsorships with organizations supporting disabled people, such as in adaptive sports.
- Ensure that all in-person and virtual events are fully accessible.



Cooperation and compliance

As per the Accessible B.C. Act, the Lieutenant Governor in Counsel may make regulations for the identification, removal or prevention of barriers, which may require updates to ICBC's accessibility principles and pillars. The Provincial Accessibility Committee may also release standards that require updates to ICBC's accessibility principles and pillars.