Accessibility Act Update: Government Of SK Releases Accessibility Plan



On December 3, 2024, the Government of Saskatchewan published its accessibility plan, which provides helpful insights for public employers who are required in implement their own plans in 2025.

Background

The Accessibility Saskatchewan Act (the "Act") was passed by the Government of Saskatchewan in 2023 to help make workplaces more accessible for persons with disabilities. Public sector bodies and other prescribed persons are required to share their accessibility plan by December 3, 2025.

Who is required to implement an accessibility plan?

The Act requires the Government of Saskatchewan, public sector bodies and other prescribed persons to implement an accessibility plan and share it publicly. The entities considered public sector bodies include Saskatchewan municipalities, school divisions, post-secondary education institutions and several other public bodies. *The Accessibility Saskatchewan Regulations* list each entity that is required to implement an accessibility plan.

What is an accessibility plan? What are the steps necessary to prepare one?

The purpose of accessibility plans is to prevent and remove barriers that people with disabilities experience with respect to employment, the built environment, information and communications, transportation, service animals, procurement, service delivery and any other prescribed activities or undertakings.

When developing and updating accessibility plans, organizations must consult with persons with disabilities and consider the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination and universal design. Any organization subject to the requirements under the Act must establish processes for receiving comments from the public with respect to their accessibility plans. This means the plans must be posted publicly to allow for public feedback.

Overview of the Government's Accessibility Plan

The Government of Saskatchewan's accessibility plan outlines the consultation process, identified barriers, and goals to remove those barriers. The Government's accessibility plan provides helpful insights into the following:

- The consultation process, including the obligation to consult internally and externally;
- Identifying different types of barriers, including physical barriers, information and communication barriers and attitudinal barriers; and
- Examples of action items to be taken to remove or reduce barriers, such as making digital content more accessible, improving the accessibility of buildings, and supporting a diverse and inclusive provincial government workforce.

Developing an accessibility plan

Employers subject to the requirements of the Act should begin developing their accessibility plans in early 2025 as the consultation process could take several months.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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