



**Heritage Foundation  
of Newfoundland and Labrador  
(Heritage NL)**

**Accessibility Plan 2024-2026**

Available in alternate format. Please contact:

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## Welcome Message / Introduction

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Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (Heritage NL) was established in 1984 to stimulate an understanding of and an appreciation for the historic places and living heritage of the province. In addition to its designation and granting programs, Heritage NL also has an educational role and coordinates events, publications and other projects designed to promote the value of Newfoundland and Labrador heritage. Heritage NL works to safeguard and sustain the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future generations everywhere, as a vital part of the identities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and as a valuable collection of unique knowledge and customs. This is achieved through initiatives that celebrate, record, disseminate, and promote our living heritage and help to build bridges between diverse cultural groups within and outside Newfoundland and Labrador.

As part of that work, Heritage NL is committed to doing what is possible to make programs, events, meetings, newsletter, and presentations accessible. Accessibility is often a challenge when working with built heritage, but that does not mean that Heritage NL cannot do what is necessary to ensure that, where the tools are available, accommodations are made so that everyone can participate. Heritage NL will continue to strive and work with the public to continue to help protect, preserve, and enjoy the built and intangible cultural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Dr. Lisa Daly, Chair  
Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador  
March 2024

### Advancements to Date

- Incorporating usage of plain language in documents to ensure documents are easy to read and understand.
- Investigating visual standards and guidelines for the development of public heritage plaques.

- Providing application forms in both PDF and Word format to make documents more accessible on electronic devices.

### **Accessibility Goals**

- To improve accessibility by preventing, identifying, and removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from equitable access to services and opportunities.
- To improve services and communication with the aim of greater accessibility.

### **Promoting Accessibility Awareness**

- Promoting and raising awareness of this Accessibility Plan is crucial to ensuring actionable items within this plan are undertaken. In particular, promotion of this plan to Heritage NL employees will be essential, as employees will be responsible for contributing to the accessibility goals set out within this plan.
- The Accessibility Plan will be made publicly available on the Heritage NL website.

## **Glossary of Terms**

### **Accessibility Act**

The provincial law enacted to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities. The Accessibility Act defines the role and responsibilities of the Disability Policy Office and the Accessibility Standards Advisory Board, and addresses standards, compliance, and enforcement.

### **Accessibility Plan**

A plan developed to address the prevention, identification and removal of barriers in the policies, programs, practices, and services of a public body.

### **Accessibility Standard**

Accessibility standards establish clear, specific, and achievable goals to identify, prevent and remove barriers. Each standard will be introduced in stages with a timeline for implementation. The timelines and standards would consider all sectors such as government, business, municipalities, and community organizations.

### Accommodation

Any technical aid or device, personal support or disability-related support or other accommodation a person may require. This can include, but is not limited to: accessible meeting rooms, accessible formats such as Braille and plain language; mobility support to attend a meeting; and, sign language interpreters, captioning or ensuring space has sensory sensitive features.

### Advocacy

Public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

### Alternative Text

A line or a paragraph which is attached to an image or video and narrated upon request. Alternative text is primarily used to remove accessibility barriers assist visually impaired individuals in receiving information related to images.

### Audit

An official inspection of an individual's or organization's accounts, typically by an independent body.

### Barrier

Something that makes it harder for people to participate. The Accessibility Act defines a barrier as "anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in society, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a barrier established or perpetrated by an Act, regulations, a policy, or a practice."

### Disability

As defined in Accessibility Act: "disability includes a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation that is permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, that, in interaction with a barrier, prevents a person from fully participating in society".

### Newsletter

A periodically sent out email or message that informs the audience of the latest news, tips, or updates related to products or services.

### Plain language

Clear, conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they need, and use the information.

### Public Body

As defined in the Accessibility Act, public bodies include all provincial government agencies, boards, commissions and committees, municipalities, public educational institutions and private educational institutions. Part I (o.) of the Accessibility Act includes the full list.

### Tactile Indicators

Textured plates installed into the ground to assist vision impaired pedestrians with orientation and navigation of public spaces.

### Telecommuting

The practice of working from home, making use of the internet, email, and telephone.

### Webinar

An online event where a group of participants listen to a speaker who delivers a presentation or similar by sharing their remote screen.

## Statement of Commitment

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The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's Accessibility Act became law on December 3, 2021. This enabling legislation allows the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to outline the principles and goals for an accessible province.

Under the Accessibility Act, Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (Heritage NL) is required to develop an accessibility plan and make it public within two years and every three years thereafter. As accessibility standards are developed and approved by the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities, these standards will be incorporated into the Accessibility Plan.

Through the development of the Accessibility Plan, HeritageNL is committed to improving accessibility by preventing, identifying, and removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from equitable access to services and opportunities. The goals outlined in this plan promote and foster inclusion for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. This Accessibility Plan is a dynamic process and a living document that will continue to evolve as the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador progresses toward full inclusion and accessibility.

## Focus Areas

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- Services and Communication – ensure everyone receives and understands information provided by Heritage NL;

- Accommodations for staff - ensure a secure, healthy workspace for staff of all abilities;
- Increase Accessibility/Disability Training Opportunities for Heritage NL staff and volunteers.

### **Services and Communication**

- Using explicit and descriptive labels for links and buttons to make it easier for people with intellectual disabilities to navigate the Heritage NL website.
- Employing colour contrast in texts and headings to ensure that the content is readable and understandable for all people, regardless of their visual abilities.
- Setting up multiple methods of communication and information transfer.
- Create captions for online videos and ALT descriptions on images for social media/blogs/publications ,where screen readers can be used to help the auditory or visually impaired.

### **Accommodations**

- Heritage NL will endeavour to provide flexible work schedules for people of all abilities.
- Heritage NL will create workspaces suited to needs of people such as adjustable desks, chairs and workstations to remove any inconveniences, as required.
- Where possible, Heritage NL will strive to use accessible spaces for meetings and workshops, or make such gatherings available through a hybrid in-person/online model.
- If Heritage NL's current office space is not accessible, the organization will strive to use accessible spaces where possible to meet the needs of clients.

### **Increase Accessibility/Disability Training Opportunities**

- Heritage NL will work to provide employees with accessibility awareness training to increase awareness and understanding of accessibility, challenge unconscious bias, and educate on how to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Heritage NL will work to provide mental health training opportunities for staff and volunteers.



## **Actions / Outcomes**

### **Responsibilities**

- Developing and implementing an accessibility policy that outlines Heritage NL's commitment to accessibility.
- Set clear goals and timelines for improvement of accessibility features.
- Educating and training staff of accessibility best practices.
- Collaborating with community organizations and individuals with disabilities to gather feedback and input on accessibility issues and solutions.

### **Timeline**

Heritage NL will design a work schedule that aligns with compliance deadlines.

### **Questions and Complaints**

- Questions and complaints received by Heritage NL regarding accessibility will be taken seriously to ensure all individuals have equal access to facilities and services.
- Feedback from individuals with disabilities or their advocates is welcomed and encouraged by Heritage NL.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

Using a continuous quality improvement approach, the outcomes of this Accessibility Plan will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. Any barriers identified to achieving accessibility goals will be addressed during these annual reviews. In addition, the plan will be updated as required, such as when a new standard and subsequent regulations are developed.

Heritage NL will:

- Establish a system for monitoring compliance with accessibility laws and regulations.
- Implement mechanisms for reporting and addressing accessibility concerns or issues in a timely manner.
- Engage in continuous improvement efforts to enhance accessibility and ensure a welcoming environment for all individuals.

- Solicit feedback from employees, customers, and other stakeholders to gauge the impacts of accessibility efforts.

## **Conclusion**

Heritage NL will work to operationalize this plan to create impactful change and progress by identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to accessibility.

Heritage NL is committed to collaborating with stakeholders, such as persons with disabilities, and organizations of and for persons with disabilities during the development, implementation and evaluation of this Accessibility Plan and future plans.

Heritage NL will update this plan every 3 years with ongoing feedback from stakeholders, and check compliance when standards become regulations, and update the plan accordingly.