

CHALLENGER MOTOR FREIGHT INC.

Year 1 Accessibility Progress Report

INTRODUCTION

In our ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive and barrier-free environment, Challenger Motor Freight is proud to present the Year 1 Accessibility Progress Report. This document outlines the significant strides we have made since the publication of our 2023-2025 Accessibility Plan on June 1st, 2023. As we advance towards our goal of creating a fully accessible workplace and service environment, it is crucial to reflect on the actions taken and the milestones achieved.

This past year, driven by our dedication to the principles set forth by the *Accessible Canada Act*, we have focused intensely on identifying, addressing, and dismantling barriers within our operations.

GENERAL

Challenger Motor Freight is committed to promoting a culture of inclusivity and accessibility as an integral part of our company values. We believe that providing access to all is crucial not only for the growth and competitiveness of our organization in the transportation sector but also for contributing to a barrier-free Canada for everyone. To achieve this, we have developed an accessibility framework that will improve the experience of both our employees and the public with our services, products, and facilities.

We acknowledge that creating a barrier-free environment takes time, and therefore, we are dedicated to ongoing efforts to identify, remove, and prevent barriers. Our initial Accessibility Plan, developed in compliance with the *Accessible Canada Act*, will serve as a guide to meet our accessibility commitments and build an accessibility-confident culture.

We recognize the importance of understanding the needs of those with disabilities. Therefore, we have resurveyed all employees and provided the progress report to employees who identify as having a disability to gather their feedback. In line with the principles of 'Nothing Without Us' from the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*, we ensure that their insights and experiences are central to our accessibility initiatives.

This progress report is offered in any of the following formats upon request:

- Print;
- Large print;
- Braille;
- Audio; and
- Electronic.

Challenger Motor Freight values the input of the public, stakeholders, and employees regarding our Accessibility Plan and/or our Progress Report(s). Your feedback is crucial to our efforts in promoting accessibility and inclusivity. Please utilize one of the contact methods below to provide your inquiry or feedback. We will promptly respond to all feedback received. If you require assistance while submitting your feedback, please inform us, and we will strive to accommodate your requirements.

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DEFINITIONS

Accessibility: Refers to the needs of persons with disabilities being intentionally and thoughtfully considered when products, services and facilities are built or modified so they can be used and enjoyed by all.

Barrier: The *Accessible Canada Act* defines a barrier as “anything—including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice—that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.”

Disability: The *Accessible Canada Act* defines a disability as “any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment—or a functional limitation— whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.”

ADDRESSING AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE *ACCESSIBLE CANADA ACT*

In line with the *Accessible Canada Act*, we had diligently identified barriers within our organization that hinder accessibility in the 7 key areas outlined in Section 5 of the ACA. With a firm belief in the importance of equal access and participation, we are determined to take proactive measures to address these barriers and ensure an inclusive experience for everyone.

1. Employment

Barrier 1: Underrepresentation of employees with disabilities in our workforce.
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Actions:

- Educate hiring managers on accessible and barrier-free recruitment.
- Use language that encourages and welcomes individuals with disabilities to apply to our jobs - this statement of commitment will be listed at the top of all job postings.
- Provide a clear point of contact within our organization, ensuring that applicants with disabilities can easily request accommodations during the application and interview stages. This contact person will be knowledgeable about accessibility and prepared to address individual needs.
- Encourage hiring managers to conduct remote interviews as a standard practice.

Progress Update:

- We have provided comprehensive accessibility training to all managers, covering barrier-free recruitment practices. This training has increased awareness and understanding of the barriers faced by individuals with disabilities and equipped managers with the tools to create a more inclusive hiring process.
- During the training, we emphasized the benefits and necessities of offering different interview formats, such as remote interviews.
- All job postings now include a statement of inclusivity at the very top, highlighting our commitment to equal opportunities. This change has made our dedication to inclusivity more visible.
- Each job posting includes the contact information for candidates to reach out if they need accommodations during the application process.

These efforts have resulted in a noticeable increase in the number of applications from individuals with disabilities, improved the overall candidate experience, and reinforced our commitment to building a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Barrier 2: Lack of transparent and clear communication about available accommodations.

Actions:

- Conduct a thorough assessment of our current accommodation process, examining each step to identify areas for improvement.
- Develop comprehensive guidelines and documentation that clearly outline the accommodation process.
- Revamp our welcome packages to incorporate a dedicated section on accommodation.

Progress Update:

- We partnered with Sun Life's Integrated Health Solutions to conduct a Disability Management Systems Assessment of our practices. They provided us with opportunities to ensure our communication strategies remain effective concerning the understanding of and support for the disability management and accommodation process. We are currently reviewing the results and implementing as many of their suggestions as possible to enhance our communication and accommodation strategies.
- We have created a concise one-pager on accommodations that is now included in our onboarding packages for new hires. This document provides essential information about accommodation processes and resources, making it easily accessible for all new hires.
- The accessibility training for managers now includes a detailed overview of our company's accommodation process. This ensures that managers are well-informed and prepared to support their employees should there be a need for accommodations.

These initiatives have significantly improved our communication practices, ensuring that employees are well-informed about the accommodation process and the resources available to them. Feedback from employees has been positive, highlighting the increased transparency and accessibility of information.

2. Built Environment

Barrier 3: Limited accessibility to the elevator.

Actions:

- Grant access to the elevator to those who wish to utilize it.
- Communicate to all employees the availability of elevator access and the accommodation process.

Progress Update:

- We are now able to grant elevator and door access to non-office employees (drivers) through our badge system. This enhancement ensures that all employees, regardless of their position, can navigate the building with ease.
- We sent out a communication to our drivers and other non-office employees, informing them that they now have access to elevators if needed. This message included clear instructions on who to contact for access and was also featured in our employee newsletter. We now have drivers who are utilizing this access, and we will continue to communicate this to employees.

These improvements have made our facilities more accessible, ensuring that all employees can move around the building without barriers. The proactive communication has raised awareness and made it easier for employees to request and receive the accommodations they need.

Barrier 4: No automatic doors in our accessibility washrooms.

Actions:

- Conduct a comprehensive accessibility review of our washroom facilities.
- Install automatic doors in our accessibility washrooms.
- Display clear signage indicating the presence of automatic doors in the accessibility washrooms.
- Implement a regular maintenance and accessibility check program once the automatic doors are installed.

Progress Update:

- Throughout 2023 and 2024, we have been obtaining numerous quotes for the installation of automatic doors for the washrooms and other entrances in our head office.
- Implementation will depend on availability of resources, financial spending and will need to be pitched to the senior leadership team for approval.
- We are currently in the process of reviewing contractors and their quotes to ensure we select the best option for our needs.
- Once senior leadership has approved, the contractors are selected and the installation process begins, we will implement a comprehensive communication strategy to inform all employees about the new automatic doors, ensuring they are aware of the improved accessibility features and how to utilize them effectively.

The installation of automatic doors in our washrooms and other entrances will further enhance accessibility throughout our facilities. We will conduct a review of the inside of our washroom facilities to ensure we are meeting accessibility standards.

3. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Barrier 5: Limited accessibility expertise within our IT team.

Actions:

- Provide comprehensive accessibility training and education sessions to our IT team members.

Progress Update:

- We are currently looking into providing comprehensive accessibility training and education sessions for our IT team. This includes researching various training providers and curricula to ensure our IT team gains the necessary expertise in accessibility technology and best practices.

Barrier 6: Underutilization of accessibility capabilities in the tools and software we employ.

Actions:

- Establish a set of accessibility evaluation criteria that every potential technology purchase must meet.
- Require prospective vendors to provide detailed accessibility documentation for their products.
- Conduct thorough accessibility testing and verification of potential technology purchases.

- Implement a system for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the accessibility of the technology we acquire.

Progress Update:

- Going forward, the HR team will work closely with the IT department to establish and implement the accessibility evaluation criteria. This collaboration ensures that we are aligned in our efforts to maximize the accessibility potential of our tools and software.

4. Communication Other Than ICT

Barrier 7: No standardized process to ensure timely availability of alternate communication formats for employees and stakeholders.

Actions:

- Identify suitable service providers and establish contracts or agreements with them.
- Develop thorough procedures to standardize the process of providing alternate formats of communication.
- Continuously evaluate and improve our alternate format communication processes.

Progress Update:

- We have met with disability organizations, such as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and the Canadian Hearing Services, to obtain quotes on workplace assessments for accessibility, communication devices, alternate formats, and communication strategies and workshops. These meetings are a critical step in identifying suitable service providers and establishing the necessary contracts or agreements to ensure we can provide timely and effective alternate communication formats.

Barrier 8: Little to no plain language within communications.

Actions:

- Conduct thorough research and analysis to gain a deep understanding of plain language principles and best practices.
- Develop plain language guidelines tailored to our organization's communication needs.
- Provide training and education to our communication teams and relevant stakeholders.
- Conduct a review of our existing communications to identify opportunities for incorporating plain language.

Progress Update:

- We have included sections on plain language in our accessibility training for leaders. This covers what plain language means, why it's important, and the do's and don'ts of plain language communication. This will encourage leaders to use plain language in communications within their own teams.
- We are now utilizing AI software to ensure that all communications going forward are in plain language. This helps maintain consistency and clarity in our messaging.

- Going forward, we will be conducting a comprehensive review of our current policies and procedures to ensure they are written in plain language, making them more accessible and easier to understand for all employees.

These steps have significantly improved the clarity and accessibility of our communications. Leaders who have completed the training are already seeing positive feedback from their teams, and the use of AI software has streamlined the process of simplifying language. The upcoming review of policies and procedures will further enhance our commitment to clear and accessible communication across the organization.

5. Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

We have not identified any barriers in our procurement practices that hinder accessibility.

We will continue to review and refine our procurement policies to reinforce the requirement that accessibility must be considered when procuring goods and services. By proactively integrating accessibility requirements into our procurement policies and guidelines, we further strengthen our commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible environment.

6. Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Barrier 9: Lack of a standardized measure to assess the accessibility of our internal and external programs, events, and engagements.

Actions:

- We will develop an accessibility checklist. This will serve as a practical tool to guide our evaluation process, ensuring that we consistently assess key accessibility considerations.
- We will regularly review and revise the accessibility checklist.
- We will train those who develop programs, processes, and procedures on the *Accessible Canada Act* and its regulations to promote inclusivity and compliance.

Progress Update:

- We have created a standardized accessibility checklist, which has been distributed to our social and corporate events committees, as well as to leaders at terminals in different locations who are responsible for organizing such events. This checklist is to be sent to vendors to be filled out accurately, ensuring that all events are assessed for accessibility considerations.
- Going forward, we will develop training on the *Accessible Canada Act* and assign it to those who are responsible for organizing events. This training will ensure that they are well-versed in the Act's regulations and are equipped to promote inclusivity and compliance in all programs and services.

These steps have established a more structured approach to evaluate and ensure the accessibility of our programs and events. The standardized checklist has already been instrumental in highlighting key accessibility considerations, and the training will further empower our teams to create inclusive experiences for all participants.

7. Transportation

Barrier 10: Difficulty for drivers in entering transport trucks due to repetitive and high steps.

Actions:

- We will provide and install extended tractor steps/folding steps, where applicable, to reduce the climbing distance when getting into truck cabs.
- We will install swivel seats, where applicable, to improve access to truck cabs.

Progress Update:

- We have identified and vetted a vendor for both the extended tractor steps and swivel seats, with approval from our Director of Maintenance. We now have a reliable source for procurement and installation, ensuring that the necessary modifications can be made promptly and efficiently.
- Should any driver require these accommodations, they will need to follow our accommodation process to gain approval for this request.

CONSULTATIONS

In line with Challenger's dedication to creating an inclusive workplace, we have implemented changes based on extensive feedback from our employees, including those with disabilities and allies. This progress report has been reviewed by these employees to ensure it accurately reflects their insights and addresses their needs effectively.

We gathered feedback and input from our team members in 2 different ways:

- **Anonymous Company-Wide Survey:** We re-distributed an extensive survey to all employees, encouraging individuals with disabilities and allies to participate. The survey covered various aspects of accessibility and received responses from more than 60 participants. This allowed us to gather diverse perspectives and valuable insights on accessibility barriers and potential solutions within our organization.
- **Employees with Disabilities Revision:** We provided employees who have self-identified as having a disability(s) with the draft of the accessibility plan and progress report. We encouraged and welcomed any feedback, revisions, identification of any barriers we may have missed, and suggestions for additional goals they would like to see included.

To track our progress and ensure the successful implementation of the changes outlined in our Accessibility Plan, we will maintain this ongoing survey initiative. This initiative will encompass all employees, regardless of disability status. In addition, to promote accessibility awareness and encourage feedback, members of our HR and leadership team have included a link to the Accessibility Plan and the feedback form in their email signatures since June 2023 and have continued to do so. This ensures that all employees have convenient access to the plan and can easily provide input and suggestions to further enhance accessibility within our organization. The HR team continues to monitor and respond to any emails that come through to the designated accessibility inbox, ensuring that all feedback is addressed promptly and effectively.

FEEDBACK

The feedback received provided valuable insights into the current state of accessibility within our organization. We received feedback from employees, including those with disabilities and their allies, which has been crucial for identifying existing barriers and areas for improvement. The most common responses are as follows:

Physical Obstacles at Work

- Lack of automatic doors
- Uncomfortable chairs and desks
- Small font on in-cab tablets of trucks
- No women's washroom on first floor of maintenance shop
- No elevator at Dorval terminal

We are currently working on finding a suitable contractor for the installation of automatic doors to improve accessibility.

Additionally, we have a disability management specialist who conducts ergonomic assessments and can provide accommodations, such as standing desks and better chairs. This indicates the need to better communicate this process to our employees, which we will assess in 2024.

While we cannot enlarge the font on the current system, we are seeking quotes for attachable magnifying glasses (and other options) for tablets to assist those with visual impairments.

Our Dorval terminal has moved to a different building where everything is on one floor, effectively eliminating the need for an elevator.

Lastly, we have converted the men's washroom on the first floor of the maintenance shop to an "all-gender" bathroom with appropriate signage.

Barriers in Rules and Policies

- Lack of flexible working hours

We are committed to continuous accessibility training for our managers and are encouraging them to provide more flexible working hours to accommodate employees' needs, such as attending medical appointments.

Barriers on Company Website & Other Online Resources

- Difficulty comprehending vocal instructions in training videos

We will ensure that our employees are aware they can request alternate formats for training materials to better suit their needs by developing new communications in 2024 for all existing and new employees.

Other Feedback:

- Training for leaders needed
- Improvement of IT accessibility (equipment and software)

We have provided leaders with accessibility training and are continuing to develop more comprehensive training programs.

Additionally, we are working with our IT team to provide accessibility training for IT team members, ensuring they are equipped to support accessible technology and software within our organization.