



The Westport Telephone Company, Limited

o/a

WTC Communications

2024-2026 Accessibility Plan

May 31, 2024



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1. General

1.1 Statement of Commitment

WTC Communications is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all individuals, including those with disabilities, have access to our services and employment opportunities. We strive to continually improve accessibility in compliance with the Accessible Canada Act (ACA).

We are pleased to present our Accessibility Plan for 2023-2026, marking a renewed commitment to enhancing accessibility for our employees, customers, and community members. This plan is the result of consultations with our employees and the valuable insights of our stakeholders. To ensure our plan is dynamic and responsive to the needs of those we serve, we will conduct annual reviews, adjusting our course to meet evolving challenges, regulatory updates, and best practices.

We recognize the importance of constant improvement across all areas of our operations: the built environment where we work and serve our customers; employment practices that foster diversity and inclusion; information and communication technologies (ICT) that connect us; communication methods that engage us; procurement procedures that reflect our values; and the programs and services we proudly offer.

WTC Communications pledges to maintain open lines of communication with those facing barriers and to actively seek out and incorporate their feedback. Our thanks go out to all individuals who have shared their accessibility challenges. We appreciate the honesty and courage it takes to share these experiences with us. These insights are instrumental in guiding WTC Communications toward a more inclusive and barrier-free future.

1.2 Contact Information & Feedback Process

To request a copy of this Accessibility Plan, provide feedback, or request information in an alternate format, please contact:

Accessibility Coordinator

WTC Communications
28 Main Street
Westport, ON
K0G 1X0

Phone: 1-888-547-6939

Email: accessibility@wtccommunications.ca



More information is available on how to submit feedback on our website at the following link:

<https://www.wtccommunications.ca/accessibility>.

1.3 Alternative Formats

This plan is available on our website in electronic form at:

<https://www.wtccommunications.ca/accessibility/accessibility-plan>

We will provide the following formats of this plan upon request through email at accessibility@wtccommunications.ca or by phone at 1-866-547-6939:

- Print or Large Print – provided within 15 days of request
- Braille – provided within 45 days of request
- Audio – provided within 45 days of request

1.4 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 ACA

2.1 The Built Environment

At WTC Communications, we understand that the foundation of accessibility begins with our physical spaces—where connections are made, services are delivered, and daily operations unfold. Recognizing this, we have evaluated all of our current facilities with the lens of accessibility.

Identified Barriers: We will review and evaluate feedback from the survey and implement improvements to the built environment to remove and prevent barriers.

Actions and Timelines: We will take the following steps:

Ongoing Review: We remain dedicated to continuous improvement. NRTC will routinely review the built environment to identify and integrate accessibility best practices. This proactive approach ensures that our facilities not only comply with current standards but also anticipate future needs and enhancements.

Accessibility Signage Improvements: One area for potential enhancement is our accessibility signage. We aim to improve the visibility and clarity of signage across all our facilities, making it easier for all individuals to navigate our spaces effectively.

Future Renovations: As part of our long-term strategy, NRTC Communications will incorporate accessibility considerations into the planning and execution of any future renovations or new constructions. This commitment ensures that our developments will continue to meet the evolving standards of accessibility and provide inclusive spaces for everyone.

2.2 Employment

WTC Communications acknowledges that a diverse workforce is one of our greatest assets and ensuring accessibility in employment is a cornerstone of our organizational values. WTC always works to address employee's accessibility needs and accommodate any employees who request accommodations.

Identified Barriers: Clearer pathways and processes regarding workplace accommodations. Training related to implementing accessibility accommodations needs to be addressed.

Actions and Timelines: Addressing these challenges, we have set out a multi-tiered approach with detailed actions and target dates:



Enhanced Training and Awareness (Q4 2024 - Q2 2025): Develop training modules on disability awareness and workplace accommodation processes for all employees, with specialized in-depth training for management and supervisors.

Policy Review and SOP Development (Q1-Q2 2025): Revise our current policies to include explicit guidelines on workplace accommodations. Develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document, detailing the steps for requesting, reviewing, and implementing accommodations. This document will be made available company-wide and incorporated into our onboarding and continuous training programs.

Recruitment and Hiring Review (Q3 2025): WTC will review its recruitment and hiring process to find and remove accessibility barriers for applicants. We will include information in job postings about how applicants can request and receive accommodation during the hiring process.

Continuous Feedback Loop (2025 Onwards): Implement an ongoing feedback mechanism to collect insights from employees regarding the effectiveness of the accommodation process. This feedback will inform regular policy updates and training revisions to ensure our practices remain relevant and effective.

By enacting these strategies, WTC Communications aims to cultivate a work environment that not only complies with the ACA but also embodies our dedication to an inclusive culture where every employee is valued and empowered.

2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

We recognize that our information and communication technologies are vital tools that bridge the gap between our services and our users. In today's digital age, ensuring that our ICT resources are fully accessible is important for creating equitable customer experiences and enabling our employees to perform at their best.

Identified Barriers: Ensuring compliance for our website with WCAG requirements.

Actions and Timelines: To address this issue WTC will complete the following:

Website Accessibility Review (Q3-Q4 2024): Conduct an evaluation of our public website to identify non-compliance issues with WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards. This will include working with our third-party website developer to ensure we are increasing our compliance with WCAG.

ICT Accessibility Enhancement (Q1-Q2 2025): Based on the review findings, implement necessary modifications to our website.



2.4 Communication, other than ICT

WTC understands that clear and effective communication is the cornerstone of excellent customer service and employee engagement. We are committed to ensuring our communication methods are accessible to all, allowing for seamless interaction with our services and within our organization.

Identified Barriers: Our internal review has identified inconsistencies in visual and written communication standards across various non-digital platforms. Furthermore, there is an evident need for awareness and guidance in creating materials that are considerate of individuals with disabilities, ensuring that all written communications are inclusive and accessible.

Actions and Timelines: To address these findings, we are implementing the following steps:

Plain Language Policy Implementation (Q4 2024): Introduce a plain language policy for all written communications. Provide training for staff responsible for creating internal and external documents, ensuring that all messaging is straightforward and easy to understand.

Alternative Format Processes (Q3 2025): Establish a protocol for providing our documents in alternative formats upon request, such as large print, Braille, or audio formats, with clear instructions for customers and employees on how to request these formats.

Employee Communication Channels Review (Q4 2025): Evaluate all current internal communication channels (e.g., memos, newsletters, bulletin boards) to ensure they are accessible and meet the diverse needs of our staff.

Through these actions, WTC will enhance the inclusivity of our communication practices, enabling better engagement and understanding across our entire community, both internally among our staff and externally with our customers.

2.5 The Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

WTC uses third party vendors for the procurement of goods and services. We will review our procurement policies to ensure all purchased goods and services meet accessibility standards.

Identified Barriers: Current procurement practices may not always meet accessibility requirements.

Actions and Timelines: WTC will review procurement processes to determine how to better include accessibility requirements.



2.6 The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

WTC is dedicated to delivering programs and services that are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, including those with disabilities. We understand that the design and delivery of these programs and services are key to empowering our customers and ensuring their satisfaction.

Identified Barriers: We have identified that additional measures can be taken to accommodate the needs of all customers, including those with disabilities, in the design and delivery of our programs and services. We have the opportunity for more accessible installation and repair services within customers' homes and businesses, and the ability to provide clear instructions for equipment use and troubleshooting.

Actions and Timelines: Our commitment to resolving these challenges is outlined in the following action plan:

Accessibility Training for Field Technicians (Q4 2024): Provide specialized training for our installation and repair technicians to ensure they are equipped to offer an inclusive service experience. This includes learning to engage with customers about the best and most accessible locations for equipment installation.

Enhanced Customer Feedback Processes (Q2 2025): Implement an improved customer feedback process to gather detailed insights on the accessibility of our programs and services, ensuring that customers with disabilities can easily provide their input.

By following this plan, WTC pledges to maintain an environment where our services are designed and delivered with accessibility at the forefront.

2.7 Transportation

Not applicable as WTC does not provide transportation services.

3. Consultations

In developing an effective and responsive Accessibility Plan, WTC recognizes that meaningful consultations are vital. We have engaged both our internal team and the broader community to gather diverse perspectives and insights that directly influence our accessibility initiatives.



3.1 Internal Consultations

To gather internal insights, WTC conducted an anonymous and confidential survey among our staff. The survey was developed with guidelines recommended by our external accessibility consultants. The survey received 22 responses which represented 40% of our staff. Within this group, 7 individuals self-identified as having a disability. Employees were asked what type of disability they have with several noting more than one. The survey asked questions regarding barriers they have faced, or observed others encounter (including customers). All feedback was incorporated into the development of this plan.

3.2 External Consultations

With the assistance of our external consultants, WTC developed an accessibility survey for customers and members of the communities we serve. Only one external survey response was received, indicating no experienced barriers. This suggests good external accessibility but also highlights the need for broader engagement.

WTC will continue to consult people with disabilities to determine areas where accessibility improvements can be made.

4. Conclusion

WTC Communications remains dedicated to improving accessibility and inclusivity across all aspects of our operations. We welcome ongoing feedback and are committed to continuous improvement and compliance with the ACA.