

The Accessibility Act was proclaimed in 2017, demonstrating the Nova Scotia government's commitment to a more equitable and barrier free province. The Act recognizes accessibility as a human right, and sets a goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030.

Since the Act was proclaimed, the Accessibility Directorate has been working closely with the municipal sector, including through the Provincial/Municipal Accessibility Working Group, to keep you informed of your obligations under the Act.

On December 3rd, the Nova Scotia Government announced that municipalities will be prescribed as public sector bodies under the Act as of April 1st, 2020. This means that municipalities must form an accessibility advisory committee and have an accessibility plan in place by April 1st, 2021. Note that you are permitted to form a joint accessibility advisory committee and develop a joint accessibility plan with prescribed public sector bodies that share similar interests, such as other municipalities in your region.

The Accessibility Directorate has developed resources to assist prescribed public sector bodies to meet your obligations under the Act. The Accessibility Planning Toolkit for Municipalities is now available at novascotia.ca/accessibility. Interim Accessibility Guidelines for Indoor and Outdoor Spaces, a resource that will assist municipalities and others in auditing the built environment for accessibility, will soon be available on our website. In addition, workshops to help municipalities in meeting the accessibility needs of your residents were recently delivered throughout the province. The Directorate will continue to work with you to provide you with the support you need throughout this process.

We will need to work together to achieve our ambitious goal of an accessible province by 2030. The Accessibility Directorate is here to help. For further information, please contact Joshua Bates, Senior Policy Analyst at 902-424-5311 or joshua.bates@novascotia.ca.