

Section	Policy
20	20.30

Section Title: Board and Corporate Administration - Board Administration  
Subject: Accessible Information and Communication  
Effective Date: May 1, 2024

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## **A. POLICY PURPOSE**

The Workers Compensation Board (WCB) recognizes that individuals with disabilities may face barriers to communication that hinder their ability to access information or communicate with us freely and effectively.

The WCB is committed to identifying, removing and preventing these barriers so that all individuals who seek to obtain information or communicate with the WCB can do so in a manner that maintains and reinforces their dignity and independence.

This policy outlines the steps the WCB is taking to remove and prevent barriers to communicating with the WCB and accessing its information, including:

- Making WCB websites and web applications more accessible.
- Facilitating requests to access WCB information using communication supports or accessible formats.
- Providing a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the accessibility of our information and communication.
- Training staff on how to provide accessible information and communication.

## **B. POLICY**

The policy is designed to comply with the WCB's obligations under the *Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation* made under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)*.

### **I. Definitions**

**Accessible Communication** - means communication of information in a manner that is free from barriers that prevent or hinder a person from obtaining, using or benefiting from the information.

**Accessible Format** - includes large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

**Communication Support** - includes captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communication.

**WCAG 2.1 Level AA** - means the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA.

**Web Application** - means a WCB software application that is run on a web server and accessed through a web browser.

**Web Content** - means information published on the WCB internet and intranet websites.

## II. Obligations

The *Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation* directs organizations to improve the accessibility of their information and communication by removing barriers for people with disabilities who use their websites. It also requires the WCB to:

- Inform people that communication supports or accessible formats are available on request.
- Provide information using the appropriate support or format.
- Implement a process to receive and respond to feedback about accessible information and communication.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained on:
  - the requirements of the regulation and the legislation that underpins it; and
  - how to provide accessible information and communication when it has been requested.

The WCB is taking the following steps to make sure our practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of barrier-free communication and access to information:

### 1. Accessible Web Content and Applications

The *Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation* requires that all WCB web content published on or after May 1, 2024, and any older web content necessary to access the WCB's goods and services, meet or exceed the globally followed web accessibility standard set out in WCAG 2.1 Level AA, subject to certain narrow exceptions outlined in the regulation.

The regulation similarly requires that all WCB web applications published on or after May 1, 2024, and any older web applications that receive significant upgrades after that date meet or exceed the WCAG 2.1 Level AA standard, subject to the same narrow exceptions. The exceptions include:

- Where it is not technologically feasible to publish the web content or application in accordance with the standard.
- Where the technology required to publish the web content or application in accordance with the standard is not readily available.
- Where publishing the web content or application in accordance with the standard would cause undue hardship to the WCB.
- Where the WCB does not have direct control over the web content or application.
- Where the web application relates to product labels or other product information.

The WCB will maintain compliance with this standard by upgrading its existing web content, prioritizing content required to access WCB goods and services, taking reasonable steps to ensure that new content or web applications are implemented at the required standard, and taking reasonable steps to ensure that any existing web applications that receive significant upgrades after May 1, 2024 similarly meet this standard.

To ensure ongoing compliance with the regulation as it pertains to web content, the WCB will limit staff authorized to add web content to those who have received appropriate training, and establish a process to verify that new published content conforms to WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Corporate templates will reduce inadvertent non-conformance.

### 2. Requests for Accessible Information/Communication

The WCB will take steps to inform the public and staff that its information is available in accessible formats and through communication supports on request.

Staff will consult with the person requesting the information to identify a communication support or alternate format that removes the barrier, take all reasonable steps to remove the barrier, and provide them with the requested information in a timely manner.

The WCB will not impose a cost or fee on individuals who request WCB information be provided through a communication support or accessible format that is greater than the costs or fees imposed on those who request WCB information and do not require accommodation.

### **3. Staff Awareness and Training**

The WCB will train new and existing employees on the obligations imposed by the *Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation*, *The Human Rights Code* and the AMA.

Staff are also trained on how to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessible information and communication. This involves training on how to provide accessible information through communication supports or alternative formats.

Training of employees is provided as soon as reasonably possible after that person is assigned applicable duties, which include dealing directly with the public or other organizations on behalf of the WCB, maintaining or develop WCB web content, purchasing or procuring information technology or communication tools for the WCB, and developing WCB policies and practices on accessible communication.

Ongoing training is provided when the WCB updates or changes their accessible information and communication policies, measures or practices.

### **4. Feedback and Response**

The WCB will maintain a process that allows it to receive and respond to feedback from the public about its accessible information and communication. We will make sure that:

- Feedback is accepted by phone and email, with communication supports and alternative formats available on request.
- Responses are provided in a timely manner.
- Responses are accessible to the individual who submitted the feedback.
- Actions taken in response to the feedback are documented and available on request.

**To request information in alternate formats, communication support, or to provide feedback please contact the WCB at 204-954-4321 or email [WCBAccessibility@wcb.mb.ca](mailto:WCBAccessibility@wcb.mb.ca)**

## **C. REFERENCES**

*The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, CCSM c A1.7*

*Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation, MR 47/2022*

### **History:**

- 1 New policy created by Board Order 20/24 on April 25, 2024, effective May 1, 2024 to meet WCB's obligations under the *Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation*, made under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA). This policy documents the WCB's approach to providing accessible information and communication and outlines the WCB's specific commitments.