



The Accessible Canada Act (ACA)

Thompson Emergency Freight Systems (TEMF) Accessibility Action Plan 2024 – 2027

National AccessAbility Week

National AccessAbility Week is an annual event to celebrate the contributions of people with disabilities. It also promotes inclusion and accessibility in communities and workplaces across Canada. The Act states that National AccessAbility Week will be celebrated each year starting on the last Sunday in May.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE TEAM	3
GENERAL	4
CONSULTATIONS	5
AREAS DESCRIBED UNDER THE ACT	5
EMPLOYMENT	6
THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT	8
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)	9
COMMUNICATIONS OTHER THAN (ICT)	10
THE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES	11
THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES	12
TRANSPORTATION	12
REPORTING AND IMPLEMENTATION	13
DEFINITIONS/KEY TERMINOLOGY	13
ACCESSIBILITY FEEDBACK PROCESS	14
ACCESSIBILITY FEEDBACK FORM	15

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE TEAM

Thompson Emergency Freight Systems (TEMF) 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 contributing to a barrier free Canada for everyone. To achieve this, we are developing an accessibility framework that will improve the experience of both our employees and the public with our services, products, and facilities.

While creating a barrier free environment takes time, we are dedicating our 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, and for this reason, we have involved employees who identify as having a disability in the development of our plan through an anonymous company wide survey designed for employees with disabilities and allies alike. We have also engaged with BDO Canada LLP, to provide consulting services.

We encourage you to read TEMF's first Accessibility Plan below. We look forward to embarking on this journey together.

Sincerely,



Michael Ouellette
President



Patrick Kennedy
Vice President

Contact Info

The accessibility contact for TEMF is our General Manager, Tina Carlini. TEMF values the input of the public stakeholders and employees regarding our accessibility plan. 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.

Accessibility Contact: Tina Carlini

Email: tcarlini@thompson-emergency.com

Telephone number: 519-727-9999 Ext. 248

Head Office Address:

Attention: Tina Carlini – General Manager
278 Patillo Road
Tecumseh, ON N8N 2L9
Canada

Please contact Tina Carlini to request this accessibility plan in any of the following formats:

Print: will be provided as soon as possible, *within 20 days of request.*

Large print: will be provided as soon as possible, *within 20 days of request.*

Braille: will be provided as soon as possible, *within 45 days of request.*

Audio: will be provided as soon as possible, *within 20 days of request.*

Electronic: will be provided as soon as possible, *within 20 days of request.*

About Thompson Emergency Freight (TEMF)

For forty years, shippers have trusted Thompson Emergency Freight Systems to provide award-winning, time-critical ground-air transportation. Our operations team acts as a 'Control Tower,' responding to unique transportation needs. After quickly assessing specific shipping requirements, we provide the quickest and most cost-effective solutions. We have the global capacity and in-house expertise required to deliver on time and on budget, which earns the continued trust of our customers.

We excel in the delivery of time-critical Ground and Air transportation services. Our specialized expertise includes precise scheduling, seamless border crossing, global reach, advanced technology, and environmentally sustainable practices.

TEMF's Commitment to Accessibility

As we embark on this journey of learning, we have determined the principles of the Accessible Canada Act align very closely with our own values. We are committed to helping create a barrier-free Canada for all. TEMF's vision is to be a fully accessible and inclusive organisation. We will work towards being inclusive by design and accessible by default. This is Accessibility Plan outlines steps for us to champion accessibility for our employees and our customers.

Accessibility Plan Development Process

To prepare in the development of our Accessibility Plan, we secured the support of BDO Canada LLP to conduct a fulsome accessibility assessment of TEMF. BDO has extensive knowledge of accessibility. Their team also has practical experience of disability.

Purpose

TEMF recognizes the importance of engaging with their employees to identify barriers to accessibility. To this end, Thompson engaged BDO Canada LLP to conduct a comprehensive and anonymous employee survey to receive feedback using Microsoft Forms. The survey was conducted from October 11, 2024, to October 31, 2024. The survey period provided respondents with time to participate and share their feedback. A copy of the survey and a summary report was provided by BDO Canada LLP and represents a synthesis of the data collected through the Microsoft forms survey.

Findings

The overall feedback reflects positive perceptions of the organization's approach to accessibility. Employees acknowledge the practical measures in place and feel supported, with flexibility and consideration given to their needs.

The summary report of accessibility provided by BDO Canada LLP, gave us a clear understanding of current barriers to accessibility at TEMF. It helped us shape the actions outlined in this Accessibility Plan to remove or reduce those barriers.

CONSULTATIONS

The Accessible Canada Act is clear that people with disabilities must be consulted, included, and informed during the creation of accessibility plans. Their experiences and perceptions are vital in creating meaningful accessibility plans. BDO Canada LLP, conducted interview sessions with managers and leaders who contribute to accessibility at TEMF. TEMF is committed to conducting additional consultations with employees and customers.

AREAS DESCRIBED UNDER THE ACT

There are seven priority areas described under Section 5 of the Accessible Canada Act.

These areas include:

- Employment
- The Built Environment

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Communication other than ICT
- The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services
- The Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities
- Transportation

No concerns or barriers were identified in the following priority area: Transportation. We will conduct further work to raise more awareness about how this area impacts people with disabilities and the potential barriers that could exist.

Each priority area section will include:

- A short summary
- What we are doing well
- Barriers to accessibility
- Actions to reduce and remove barriers to accessibility

EMPLOYMENT

Summary

The Employment priority area covers an employee’s entire experience at TEMF. It starts from the recruitment and onboarding process and ends when the individual leaves the organisation. It also includes accommodations and short- and long-term absenteeism from work due to disability.

What Are We Doing Well

Workplace Accommodations: Respondents shared that they feel the organization is open-minded and flexible, accommodating health-related needs (e.g., time off) and other requests.

Commitment to Inclusion: Respondents feel a strong sense of equality and inclusion at Thompson and shared that they appreciate the organization’s efforts to receive their thoughts and feedback, such as conducting this survey.

Culture Regarding Persons with Disabilities: Demonstrated in a word cloud below.



Barriers and Actions - Employment

To be noted: respondents identified minimal barriers or areas of opportunity.

Barrier 1 - Employment

Identified that a lack of a formalized Accessibility Plan is a barrier for the organization.

Action

Our Accessibility Plan is currently being developed. Expected implementation date is end of year 2024.

Barrier 2 – Employment

Identified there may be more barriers faced by employees with learning or hearing disabilities.

Action

We will work with employees who identify as having a hearing impairment to assess their workspace, their duties, and their needs.

Barrier 3 - Employment

Identified further education, training and awareness is needed regarding visible and non-visible disabilities.

Action

Our Accessibility Plan is currently being developed. Expected implementation date is end of year 2024. We will work on Accessibility training for all employees in the near future.

Barrier 4 - Employment

Identified the workplace would be more accessible with increased flexibility in terms of remote work opportunities.

Action

Due to the nature of our business, we can not offer remote positions for every position or department. We will assess the workplace to determine whether additional remote work positions are viable. There are a host of challenges that come with working remote (i.e. working too much, prioritizing work, interruptions: you have a family, pets, and/or a doorbell rings, loneliness and lack of human interaction, communication issues and being out of the loop, time zone differences, technology hiccups and bad health habits).

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Summary

The Built Environment priority area includes all physical spaces where employees and customers interact such as offices. The Built Environment considers things like automatic door openers, accessible washrooms, lighting, signage, and noise. It also includes work-from-home spaces.

What Are We Doing Well

Many respondents highlighted that the building is well designed for accessibility, mentioning features like level floors, flat sidewalks, accessible bathrooms, ramps in the parking lot, and doors with push buttons for easy access.

Barriers and Actions – Built Environment

Barrier 1- Built Environment

One respondent indicated that the second stall in the ladies' bathroom requires a higher toilet for easier use.

Action

Our ladies' restroom contains two stalls. One stall is an "accessible stall" with a "right height toilet" and meets the local building code bylaws for accessibility. The second stall is a "regular stall" with a "standard toilet" and meets the local building code bylaws. Both stalls are in proper working order and are available to all employees. We can remove the barrier by providing education and signage. The employee who wishes to use the ladies' restroom will have a choice and will select the stall that best suits their accessibility needs.

Barrier 2 – Built Environment

Identified barriers faced with the lack of automated doors.

Action

Our main entrance contains a properly functioning automated door. We will work with our Building Manager to inspect and test the functionality of the automated door mechanism.

Barrier 3 – Built Environment

Identified the front door is only accessible during specific work hours (8 am to 4 pm), limiting access outside of these times.

Action

Our enrollment in the CTPAT and PIP Supply Chain Security Programs mandates security practices involving access controls in the workplace. An employee's access to the workplace is only permitted

during their scheduled working hours, this is by design. We will re-assess employee working hours and access levels granted. Our building is very secure and employees who do not belong in the building are not permitted access to the building. Refer to Unauthorized Access Security Policy for Visitors, Service Providers, Employees and Drivers for clarification regarding access.

Barrier 4 – Built Environment

One respondent identified that there should be more than one accessible parking spot.

Action

We will bring this to the attention of the Building Manager and Building Owner. An assessment will be conducted to determine whether additional accessible parking spots can be added without violating local building codes.

Barrier 5 – Built Environment

One respondent indicated that proper maintenance must be completed on the accessible front doors to the office.

Action

Our enrollment in the CTPAT and PIP Supply Chain Security Programs mandates security practices involving access controls in the workplace. We will bring this to the attention of the Building Manager and Building Owner. An assessment will be conducted to determine whether maintenance is required.

Barrier 6 – Built Environment

One respondent indicated that the steps outside of the dispatch office may be a barrier for persons with physical disabilities.

Action

We will bring this to the attention of the Building Manager and Building Owner. An assessment will be conducted to determine what measures can be taken to remove this barrier.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

Summary

The ICT priority area relates to all aspects of the technologies TEMF utilizes in the virtual environment. This includes hardware, software, systems, assistive devices, and all other aspects of technology.

What Are We Doing Well

Providing necessary equipment and technology promptly. Ergonomic accommodations such as chairs, keyboard trays, ergonomic keyboards, ergonomic mouse, standing desks, speech-to-text software etc. It is always important to be clear about the end users' accessibility requirements.

Barriers and Actions - ICT

Barrier 1 - ICT

Identified we do not meet level AA requirements of version 2.1 of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Action

We are committed to fully assessing and understanding barriers within ICT at TEMF over the course of the next three (3) years. In the meantime, we will consult with our third-party IT Service Provider to follow Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). TEMF will continue to work with our IT Service Provider and reach out to our Website Administrator if necessary to ensure we meet these guidelines.

COMMUNICATION OTHER THAN (ICT)

Summary

The Communication priority area relates to all methods of communication used by TEMF to communicate with employees and customers. This includes the way people give, receive, and understand information. People communicate in different ways, including through speech, writing, sign language, pictures, body language and communication assistants. Consider items such as print materials and publications, websites, digital materials, e-newsletters, presentations, and other methods of communication.

What Are We Doing Well

Simple, clear, and concise language ("plain language") is used to communicate with employees, customers, and our fleet. Font sizes and styles are considered and reviewed when developing communications. Colours with good contrast are utilized and taken into consideration when developing communications.

Barriers and Actions – Communication

Barrier 1 - Communication

Identified complex or technical language is used and that it is hard to understand sometimes.

Action

We will work to translate complex or technical language communications to be in "plain language" format for employees, customers, and our fleet.

THE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Summary

This Design and Delivery of Programs and Services priority area ensures that TEMF's programs and services are accessible to all employees and customers. It includes proactively considering accessibility while programs and services are being designed and developed. It also holds us accountable for continually reviewing and updating our programs and services based on feedback from people with disabilities.

What Are We Doing Well

Simple, clear, and concise language ("plain language") is used to communicate with employees, customer, and our fleet.

Barriers and Actions – Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Barrier 1 - Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Identified documents are not available in alternate formats such as braille.

Action

We will work to source local service providers that can convert our existing documents to meet the Alternate Formats requirements of the Accessible Canada Act.

Barrier 2 - Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Not having a policy on assisting people with disabilities who need help with things like filling out forms.

Action

We will work to develop internal policies to address assisting people with disabilities who need help such as filling out forms.

Barrier 3 - Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Customers currently do not have the option to complete an accessibility feedback form.

Action

We are in the process of creating a customer feedback form with an Accessibility Lens. This will provide them with the opportunity to let us know of any accessibility issues or concerns.

THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Summary

The Procurement priority area relates to all goods, services and facilities obtained the TEMF. It considers how accessibility is built into the processes, policies, and practices at TEMF while purchasing goods, services, and facilities.

What Are We Doing Well

We always consider accessibility requirements for all procurements from the start rather than seeking accommodations after the fact. We include accessibility criteria as part of the specifications, unless not applicable. Including accessibility from the beginning can cost less than adapting, modifying, or replacing a product or service later. We never assume accessibility does not apply.

Barriers and Actions – Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Barrier 1 – Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Identified documentation is not on file for goods, services, and facilities.

Action

We will work to ensure documentation is on file confirming accessibility has been considered.

Sample of Accessibility Consideration:

Applicable

Not Applicable

Not Available

Other justification (clear justification on file)

TRANSPORTATION

Summary

This area considers the accessibility of travel policies and procedures. This includes travel between provinces or outside of Canada by plane, train, bus, or ferry. It also includes vehicles used by organizations that are regulated by the federal government.

What Are We Doing Well

Barriers and Actions - Transportation

No concerns or barriers were identified in this priority area. We will conduct further work to raise more awareness about how these areas impact people with disabilities and the potential barriers that could exist.

REPORTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Accessibility Plan is an important step for TEMF to create a more accessible workplace. But our work should not end here. Throughout this Plan we have stated the actions we will take to address barriers and accessibility within our organization. We are dedicated to acting on these commitments.

TEMF will publish annual progress reports in the coming years as mandated by the Accessible Canada Act. These progress reports will track the work we are doing to remove and reduce barriers for our employees and customers with disabilities. Our accessibility plan will be published on the home screen of our website: [Home - Thompson Emergency](#).

As we publish progress reports and updated accessibility plans, TEMF will continually refresh its commitment to being a fully inclusive and accessible organisation.

A copy of our Accessibility Plan will be kept on our digital platform (website) for seven years.

DEFINITIONS/KEY TERMINOLOGY

Accessibility

Accessibility refers to how services, technology, locations, devices, environments, and products are designed to accommodate people with disabilities. Accessibility means giving people of all abilities equal opportunities to take part in life activities. The term implies conscious planning, design, and/or effort to make sure something is barrier-free to people with disabilities. Accessibility also benefits the general population by making everything more usable and practical for all people.

Barrier

According to the *Accessible Canada Act* a barrier is ‘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 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

According to the *Accessible Canada Act*, disability is: “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.”

Anyone can identify as a person with disability (PWD) if they experience one or more of these impairments or functional limitations that, in reaction with a barrier, hinders their full and equal participation in society.

FEEDBACK PROCESS

Accessibility Feedback at TEMF

Your feedback will help TEMF identify and break down accessibility barriers. Provide feedback on the TEMF's [Accessibility Action Plan](#), your experience of our accessibility, or any other matter related to accessibility. Find out how we'll use your feedback.

How to provide feedback

- Accessibility feedback form

You can also contact our Accessibility Contact:

- Accessibility Contact: Tina Carlini, General Manager
Email: tcarlini@thompson-emergency.com
Telephone number: 519-727-9999 Ext. 248
Mail: 278 Patillo Road, Tecumseh, ON N8N 2L9

Submit anonymous feedback

If you want to provide anonymous feedback:

- Do not state your name or provide any other identifying information (for example, your email address or phone number)
- Do not include your return address on the envelope if you send feedback by mail

If you want a response

If you've asked for a response, we will respond in the same way that you communicated with us.

Finding answers to more complex issues might take time. If that's the case for your feedback, we'll still follow up to let you know what we're doing.

Online form or email feedback

We will respond by email within 5 business days.

Phone feedback

We will respond by phone within 5 business days.

Mail-in feedback

We will respond by mail within 5 business days plus mailing time.

What we do with your feedback

We analyze your feedback. We don't identify individuals in our reports.

The only time your feedback will be connected to you is when you request a personal response from our Accessibility contact.

We will publish annual progress reports in the years between Accessibility Action Plans. In these progress reports, we report on the feedback we receive and how we are taking it into consideration.

Request and an alternate format

You can request an alternate version of our feedback process, Accessibility Action Plans, or progress reports by email at tcarlini@thompson-emergency.com or telephone at 519-727-9999 Extension 248.

Formats:

Print: within 20 days of request.

Large print: larger and clearer font, within 20 days of request.

Braille: a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers), within 45 days of request.

Audio: a recording of someone reading the text out loud, within 20 days of request.

Electronic: formats that are compatible with adaptive technology, within 20 days of request.

Accessibility Feedback Form QR Code – Microsoft Office Forms



Accessibility Feedback Form Link – Microsoft Office Forms

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=wt8Gz1j3C0qI0NjZ9Ey5kGVfGNGEiBJKkXOjWu3FTUVUMTVEMFk2VjNQSThDRU1OU1c4QjhJM0ICOC4u>