

# ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2025 - 2028







We acknowledge and respect the many First Nations, each with unique cultures, languages, legal traditions and relationships to the land and water, on whose territories the BC Energy Regulator's work spans.

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# Introduction

It is a pleasure to share the British Columbia Energy Regulator's (BCER's) Accessibility Plan. This Plan marks a significant step forward in our ongoing commitment to accessibility and inclusion. At BCER, we believe that accessibility is not about accommodating individuals after barriers arise, but about proactively creating environments that work for everyone. By emphasizing the principles of universal design, we aim to build a workplace that is equitable, inclusive, and free of barriers—regardless of ability or lived experience.

Our methodology in developing this Plan includes meaningful consultation with employees, alignment with applicable legislation, and a review of best practices in accessibility across Canada. Where needed, we also engaged external subject matter experts to help inform our direction.

Accessibility is a continuous journey. This Plan is our foundation, and we are committed to evolving it by regularly engaging with staff, subject matter experts, and stakeholders. Our goal is not just to consult with people with disabilities, but to actively involve them in shaping and improving accessibility across the organization.

## **Our Accessibility Commitments (2025–2028)**

To help guide this work, we've identified three key priority areas, each informed by staff input, accessibility standards, and our commitment to inclusive leadership:

1. **Practices, Physical Needs and Environment**  
Improving physical spaces, systems, and environments so they are accessible to everyone.
2. **Communications**  
Ensuring accessibility in how we communicate internally and externally, and expanding awareness of available supports.
3. **Attitudes and Awareness**  
Shifting workplace culture through education, training, and open dialogue.

Together, these commitments reflect our vision of an inclusive BCER where accessibility is embedded in everything we do.

→ For specific actions under each theme, see page 8.

## About the Organization

The British Columbia Energy Regulator oversees the full life cycle of energy resource activities in B.C., from site planning to restoration. We ensure activities are undertaken in a manner that protects public safety and the environment, supports reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, conserves energy resources and fosters a sound economy and social well-being. Our role includes the regulation of natural gas, oil, hydrogen, ammonia, methanol and renewable energy sources such as geothermal, solar and wind power.

We regulate energy resources through the *Energy Resource Activities Act* (ERAA) and other associated laws related to heritage conservation, roads, land and water use, forestry, and other natural resources. We work closely with landowners, rights holders, local government, industry, academia and other regulators to gather skills, knowledge and multiple perspectives to evolve our regulatory model.

We respect Indigenous values and seek learning opportunities as we co-develop new processes that we put into practice in all facets of our business and decision-making. We are focused on advancing reconciliation and building trust and apply this in our work with First Nations and Indigenous communities as partners in building B.C.'s energy resource future.

## Our Accessibility Story

At the BCER, we are committed to creating an inclusive and accessible organization where everyone can participate fully and equitably. For our organization, accessibility is an ongoing journey and responsibility.

Our accessibility journey begins with the recognition that many British Columbian's live with both visible and invisible disabilities, and that meaningful support begins with understanding and respecting diverse experiences and individual needs. For our organization, this means having clear accommodation processes in place to ensure that we meet our duty to accommodate, while strengthening our commitment to equity and respect.

Our accessibility story is closely connected to our equity, diversity and inclusion efforts. We have established an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) with a mandate to guide and strengthen these initiatives, fostering collaboration.

To support our efforts, the BCER offers a range of internal training opportunities and resources to build awareness and capability. Our commitment to training reflects our belief that by learning, we can better work together to remove barriers to accessibility.



## Message from Leadership

Michelle Carr, CEO and Commissioner

I'm proud to present the BCER's Accessibility Plan and recognize the work of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, its Accessibility Sub-Committee, Human Resources members, plus all the staff who helped make this Plan a reality. When I started with this incredible organization three-and-a-half years ago, I said then I wanted it to be a workplace of choice – and this Plan helps fulfill that goal.

Increasing accessibility, eliminating barriers and becoming more inclusive benefits everyone in the organization, our contractors and our workspaces. As this Plan notes, often barriers are unintentional, and education and awareness can be the first step to overcome those. The findings are instructional in themselves, with themes including physical space, attitudes and practices – and the examples cited help show us how we can all make a difference.

I hope everyone takes a few minutes to read through this Plan. By taking a thoughtful approach, each of us can increase our understanding and contribute in our own ways to ensure we have a healthy, inclusive and modern workforce.



## Message from Our Key Contributors

### BCER Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The BCER's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) welcomes the opportunity to foster accessibility. We strongly believe everyone will see themselves within the plan – as a supporter or being supported.

The EDIC acknowledges everyone is on their own path in learning and practicing equity, diversity and inclusion. As a committee, we are still learning and embrace the fact that education and development is on-going.

We recognize the diverse regions across British Columbia where BCER staff live and work. The challenges faced by people across the organization vary from north to south and urban to rural. We are united in our belief everyone stands to benefit from increased accessibility.

Fundamentally, we believe everyone is on their own journey, and we look forward to supporting our colleagues in advancing their journeys and increasing accessibility across the BCER through the implementation of this Plan.

### BCER Accessibility Sub-Committee

Our Accessibility Sub-Committee was a key contributor to this Plan. The Accessibility Sub-Committee is a sub-group of the EDIC at the BCER. It is made up of four members who met weekly to provide feedback and consultation concerning accessibility concerns within their workplace.

Further support and input was provided by the EDIC, members of the Executive Leadership team, departments across the BCER and Human Resources.



# Our 3 Year Accessibility Plan (2025-2028)

The BCER's Accessibility Plan focuses on three key priorities derived from consultation themes. These priorities will be addressed simultaneously over the next three years, guided by the barriers previously identified. Our priorities are:

1. Practices, physical needs and environment
2. Communications
3. Attitudinal & Awareness (culture and education)

Priority	Description	Actions / Focus Areas
<b>1:</b> <b>Practices, Physical Needs and Environment</b>	Commitment to reducing barriers to accessibility for all employees and visitors by evaluating and improving practices, systems, physical spaces, and environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct an organizational accessibility assessment using a third-party contractor.</li><li>• Secure and dedicate capital expenditure funding to support improvements based on assessment findings.</li><li>• Engage internal teams to address accessibility barriers.</li><li>• Develop an accessibility checklist to guide event planning and physical workspace modifications.</li><li>• Identify and segment key audiences such as the public, industry, and internal staff to tailor accessibility planning, communications, and accommodation.</li><li>• Continue engaging with individuals who interact with the BCER to gather feedback on accessibility barriers and opportunities for improvement.</li><li>• Apply the principle of reasonable accommodation and alternatives across all accessibility initiatives.</li></ul>
<b>2:</b> <b>Communications</b>	Communicate the BCER's Accessibility Plan internally and externally sharing available resources and celebrating successes. Increase awareness and understanding of disability experiences and accessibility resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use internal and external communication channels to increase awareness of accessibility.</li><li>• Integrate accessibility tools, such as closed captioning, into online meetings and events.</li><li>• Apply best practices for accessible digital content (consider implementation of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0).</li><li>• Expand promotion of inclusive culture across all BCER public platforms.</li><li>• Explore dedicated feedback channels for receiving feedback.</li><li>• Maintain regular communication with the Accessibility Sub-Committee and review feedback from both employees and external stakeholders.</li></ul>



<b>3:</b> <b>Attitudinal &amp; Awareness (Culture and Education)</b>	Advance accessibility awareness and shift attitudes through robust training and education. Continue developing a visible commitment to an inclusive workplace culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide staff with training opportunities to build awareness of accessibility and barrier removal.</li> <li>• Apply a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) and EDI lens to policy updates to support culture change and learning.</li> <li>• Host events, guest speakers, and lived experience panels to recognize National AccessAbility Week.</li> <li>• Celebrate and amplify the voices of people with disabilities by fostering a culture where lived experiences are shared and valued.</li> </ul>
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## Our Guiding Framework

The *Accessible British Columbia Act* (ABCA) and supporting documents provide a strong framework through which this Plan was created. While not defined within the legislation, the principles listed in the ABCA align with existing values of the BCER.

### Our Vision, Mission and Values

At the BCER, accessibility is supported by our mission, vision, and values which shape how we engage with the communities we work in, and how we support one another across the organization.

#### Vision

A resilient energy future where B.C.'s energy resource activities are safe, environmentally leading and socially responsible.

#### Mission

We regulate the life cycle of energy resource activities in B.C., from site planning to restoration, ensuring activities are undertaken in a manner that:

- Protects public safety and the environment.
- Supports reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and the transition to low-carbon energy.
- Conserves energy resources.
- Fosters a sound economy and social well-being.

#### Values

##### RESPECT

is our commitment to listen, accept and value diverse perspectives

##### INTEGRITY

is our commitment to the principles of fairness, trust and accountability

## TRANSPARENCY

is our commitment to be open and provide clear information on decisions, operations and actions

## INNOVATION

is our commitment to learn, adapt, act and grow

## RESPONSIVENESS

is our commitment to listening and timely and meaningful action

## Guiding Principles

The *Accessible British Columbia Act* outlines six principles that form the foundation of accessibility work in the province:

- **Inclusion:** Providing an environment that is inclusive of everyone, regardless of ability, to feel empowered to participate in all aspects of the BCER.
- **Adaptability:** Being proactive in identifying and responding to the diverse and evolving accessibility needs of those within the BCER as well as those that the organization works alongside.
- **Diversity:** Recognition and respect for everyone's differences, lived experiences, and accessibility needs.
- **Collaboration:** Fostering a culture where departments across the BCER work together and alongside stakeholders and communities to uphold open communication to continuously improve accessibility.
- **Self-Determination:** The right to an individual's autonomy and empowerment to engage, participate in decisions that affect them, and have independent access to services within the organization.
- **Universal Design:** Proactive and strategic implementation of accessible design for the BCER's spaces, systems and services to be accessible to all individuals.

Although the ABCA does not provide definitions for these principles. The meaning and application of these principles has been informed by:

- Existing Internal/External BCER policies
- Our vision, mission, and values
- The EDIC and the Accessibility Sub-Committee
- The Disability Alliance's [\*Developing Your First Accessibility Plan: A Guide for BC Prescribed Organizations\*](#)
- Accessibility plans from other jurisdictions across Canada

## Related Legislation and Policy

Throughout the development of the BCER's Accessibility Plan, a range of legislative and policy frameworks were considered, including the *Accessible Canada Act*, the *Accessible*

*British Columbia Act*, the B.C. Human Rights Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## BCER Policies

The following policies informed the BCER's Accessibility Plan:

- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Respectful Workplace Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy

In addition, our ongoing policy framework review, which includes the application of a GBA+ analysis and an equity, diversity and inclusion lens, has informed the creation of this Plan.

## About our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

The BCER is committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible organization. An internal EDIC, made up of employees from across the organization, provides ongoing advice to leadership on removing barriers and building a respectful workplace culture.

## Accessibility Sub-Committee

In 2024, we established an Accessibility Sub-Committee to support the development of this Plan and advise on accessibility-related priorities. The Sub-Committee includes individuals with lived experiences of disability, as well as allies and representatives from equity-deserving communities. Its composition reflects our intent to include a diversity of perspectives:

- At least half of its members are persons with disabilities or individuals who support, or are from organizations that support, persons with disabilities.
- Membership reflects the diversity of persons with disabilities in British Columbia.
- At least one Indigenous person is included.
- The group reflects the broader diversity of British Columbia's population.



# Consultation

## Consultations to Date

In alignment with the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, the BCER undertook an internal consultation process from spring 2024 to spring 2025 to inform the development of this Accessibility Plan. The BCER sought meaningful input to ensure the plan reflects a wide range of perspectives and priorities.

Consultation activities focused on identifying systemic, attitudinal, and physical barriers that may impact accessibility at the BCER. While internal staff engagement formed a key part of the process, the overarching goal was to develop a plan that better serves everyone who interacts with the organization.

## Method of Consultation

The consultation process prioritized inclusive, respectful dialogue with individuals and groups well-positioned to speak to accessibility issues. The Accessibility Sub-Committee played a central advisory role throughout, helping to identify barriers and co-develop recommendations for improvement.

Primary engagement took place through structured focus group sessions with the Accessibility Sub-Committee and targeted discussions with the EDIC. Key internal departments that work closely with First Nations partners, landowners, and stakeholders, will continue to inform future planned external consultation.

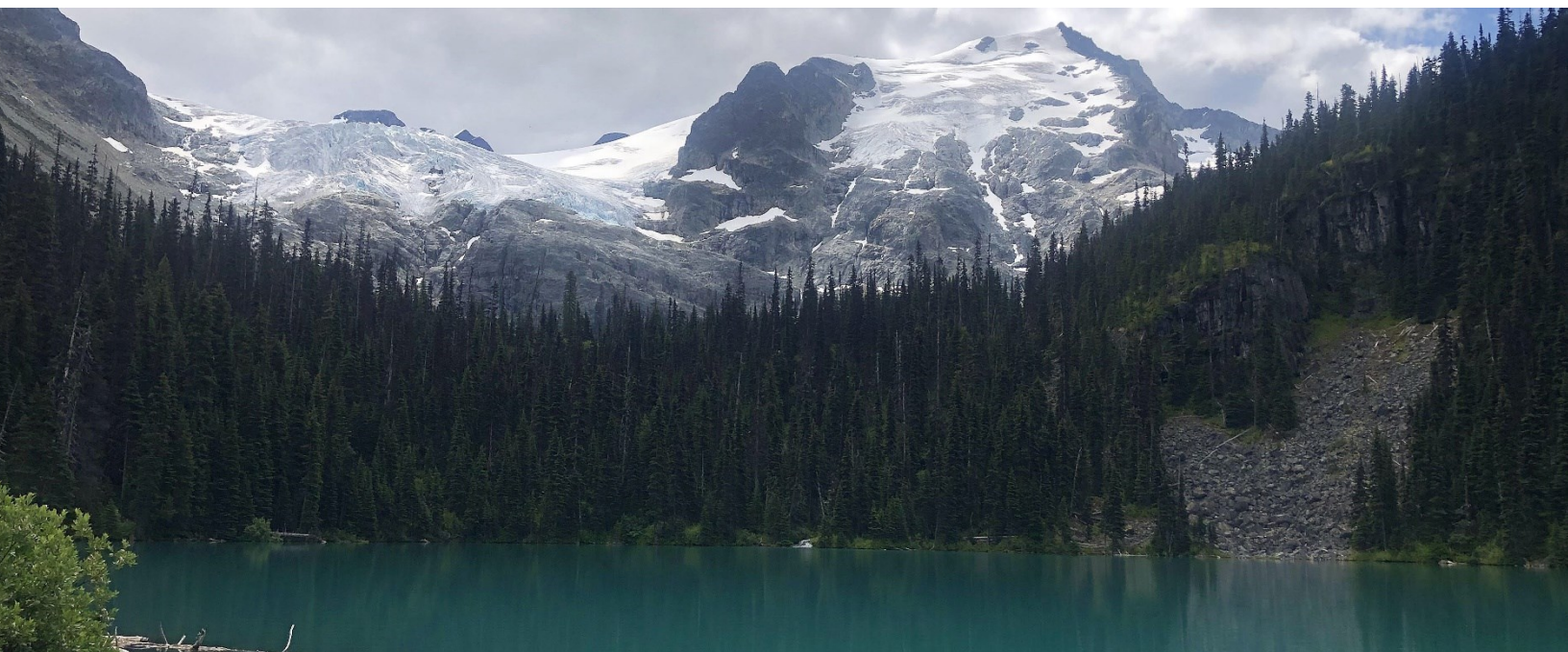
## Key Discussion Themes

Through the consultation process, several themes emerged that shaped the development of this Plan, including communications, environment, practices, physical needs, attitudinal factors, and awareness. A key priority identified was the importance of ensuring accessibility for all individuals, recognizing that people may engage with our services in diverse ways and may have a wide range of accessibility needs and expectations.

# Feedback Mechanism

## Feedback Mechanism Development

A dedicated internal channel is available for employees to share feedback on accessibility and inclusion in the workplace. Accessibility-related inquiries from outside the organization are currently received through a general contact method; however, we recognize the importance of a more direct approach and are actively exploring dedicated feedback options to strengthen engagement as part of our Accessibility Action Plan.



# Barriers Identified

## What We Found

Feedback gathered through the consultation process recognized that the BCER has taken important steps toward fostering a more inclusive and accessible organizational culture. Participants noted meaningful progress in creating a workplace that considers the needs of persons with disabilities.

Many of the barriers identified were described as unintentional and often the result of limited awareness rather than deliberate exclusion. This underscores the critical role that education and ongoing dialogue play in identifying and addressing accessibility challenges.

Consultation with the EDIC's Accessibility Sub-Committee, along with broader engagement efforts, provided practical and detailed examples of barriers to accessibility at the BCER.

### 1. Practices, Physical Needs & Environment

- Physical workspace and environmental accessibility were identified as important areas for consideration, particularly in remote locations or settings where infrastructure such as internet connectivity may present barriers.

### 2. Communications

- All participants in the consultation process identified opportunities to reduce barriers to accessibility within existing practices at the BCER. There are several internal channels of communication that can support the increased awareness and understanding of the barriers employees may be experiencing (both internally and externally).

### 3. Attitudinal & Awareness

- A lack of understanding—especially of invisible or non-physical disabilities—was recognized.
- There may be a variation in awareness and attitudes across BCER locations. This suggests the need for a tailored approach to address regional or contextual differences in understanding.

## Actions Taken

The principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are reflected in the organization's key governance and strategic documents, including the BCER's:

- Three-Year Strategy
- Strategic Plan
- Workforce Plan
- Management Accountability Program



These frameworks position EDI as a foundational element of organizational culture and operations.

## Targeted Actions

The BCER has taken several foundational steps to embed EDI across the organization. These actions support a more inclusive internal culture and directly contribute to improving accessibility for employees, stakeholders, and the public.

### Clearer, More Inclusive Communication

The development of tools such as the internal Accessible Language Guide helps staff use inclusive and respectful communication in both internal and public-facing documents. This contributes to clearer, more accessible interactions.

### Barrier-Free Policies and Programs

All new and revised policies at the BCER go through a process that applies a GBA+ analysis and EDI lens. This ensures our policies are inclusive by design and identifies potential systemic barriers.

### Lived Experience

The BCER engages with individuals with lived experiences of disability and subject-matter expertise to inform policy, shape educational programming, and help identify gaps that affect both internal operations and public service delivery.

### Skills to Support Inclusion

Targeted training initiatives—such as Allyship, Bystander Awareness, and Accessibility presentations better equip staff with the skills to recognize and address barriers in everyday interactions.

### Promoting a Culture of Accessibility

Organization-wide initiatives like staff learning sessions for National AccessAbility Week 2025 and an Accessibility Book Club help keep accessibility top of mind and encourage shared responsibility for inclusive practices.

### Embedding EDI to Advance Accessibility

EDI goals are embedded in Individual Development Plans and management accountabilities across BCER. This strengthens our capacity to identify and remove barriers, improve inclusive leadership, and enhance accessibility in service delivery, virtual meetings, public engagement, and client communications.

These foundational actions are shaping an organizational culture that places accessibility at the forefront. Through investment in education, governance, and inclusive policy design, the BCER is creating more equitable and accessible experiences for all who engage with our work, services, or spaces.

# Monitoring and Evaluating

This Accessibility Plan will be evaluated every three years from date of adoption.

## Conclusion

At the BCER, we are guided by our values, as we advance equity, diversity, and inclusion across our organization. This Accessibility Plan marks a meaningful step in our ongoing journey to remove barriers and create an environment where every person feels valued, supported, and empowered to contribute fully.

We recognize that accessibility is not a destination, but a continuous commitment to listen, learn, and evolve. By taking purposeful action on our priority areas and drawing on the strength of our people, we are building a workplace—and a culture—that reflects the diverse communities we serve. Together, we aspire to create a future where accessibility is embedded in everything we do, and where everyone can thrive.



# Resources and References

## Resources

- Dignii Accessibility Guide, Dignii Technologies Inc., 2024
- [Disability Alliance BC, 2023, Developing Your First Accessibility Plan: A Guide for BC Prescribed Organizations, 2023](#)
- [Government of British Columbia, 2024, Plain Language Checklist](#)
- [WebAIM, Contrast Checker](#)

## References

- [Contrast and Colour Accessibility, WebAIM](#)
- [Resort Municipality of Whistler, Whistler Accessibility Plan, 2022](#)
- [BC Accessibility Hub](#)

## Legislation

- *Accessible British Columbia Act 2021* [SBC 2021] Chapter 19
- *Accessible Canada Act* (S.C. 2019, c. 10).
- BC Human Rights Code [RSBC 1996] Chapter 210.
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, s 7, Part 1 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, being Schedule B to the *Canada Act 1982* (UK), 1982, c 11.
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), Treaty Series, 2515, 3.