



 **VSA**
VEHICLE SALES AUTHORITY OF BC

Accessibility Plan

2024 - 2026



The Vehicle Sales Authority of British Columbia acknowledges the traditional territories of the many diverse Indigenous Peoples in the geographic areas we serve.

The offices of the Vehicle Sales Authority of British Columbia are situated on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the **Á,LEÑENEØ ŁTE (WSÁNEĆ)**; qicəy (Katzie); qʷɑ:nλən (Kwantlen); scəwaθenaʔł təməxʷ (Tsawwassen); Se'mya'me' (Semiahmoo); and S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō) people.

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By the Numbers

Accessibility

43%

Women are more likely than men (39%) to have a more severe disability.¹

21%

of British Columbians between the ages of 15 and 64 live with a disability.²

72%

of persons with disabilities reported that they experienced 1 or more of 27 types of barriers to accessibility because of their condition at least sometimes in the past year.¹

70%

of people with disabilities report more than one disability.²

15%

of British Columbians are reading at a literacy level 4 to 5 (the highest level).²

30%

Almost 30% of British Columbians immigrated to B.C. from another country.²

46%

of British Columbians are reading at a literacy level 2 or below.²

39%

of British Columbians are reading at a literacy level 3 or below.²

From 2017 to 2022, Canada experienced significant increases in mental health-related, pain-related, and vision disabilities, driving the rise in the national disability rate.³



Mental health-related

10% **+3.2**



Learning

6% **+1.6**



Flexibility

11% **+1.0**



Pain-related

17% **+2.2**



Memory

5% **+1.1**



Hearing

6% **+0.8**



Seeing

7% **+2.0**



Mobility

11% **+1.0**



Dexterity

5% **+0.4**



A Message from the President

The Vehicle Sales Authority of British Columbia (VSA) administers the Motor Dealer Act to regulate motor dealers during the sale or lease of personal use vehicles to consumers in British Columbia. Many of our licensees, the consumers we assist, and the people we may employ face barriers to accessing our services or fully participating in the work that we do. The BC Government created the Accessible British Columbia Act to break down these barriers, and provides for the following guiding principles: inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design.

We are pleased to share this, our inaugural accessibility plan, as our first step in breaking down barriers for those who access our services and for the people we employ. This plan, along with our feedback mechanism and our Accessibility Committee, is the framework and lens that will inform our future work and plans for identifying and removing barriers. In the coming year, we will work with our staff, our Accessibility Committee, and our Board of Directors to assess barriers in our systems, processes, policies, and facilities and devise a multi-year plan to remove those barriers. Importantly, we are committed to educating and training our staff that addressing barriers requires a change in mindset.

We are committed to serving all British Columbians to ensure a successful buying or leasing experience from a motor dealer. To ensure we reach and provide all British Columbians with meaningful service, we need your feedback on our service delivery. We welcome your input, which will form part of our future plans.



Ian Christman
President & CEO



44

ACCESSIBILITY ALLOWS US TO TAP INTO EVERYONE'S POTENTIAL.

- DEBRA RUH



Introduction

At the VSA, we are deeply committed to fostering a culture of accessibility that prioritizes fairness, equity, and inclusivity in every aspect of our operations. We believe that creating an environment where all individuals—regardless of background, ability, or experience—feel welcomed and valued is essential for building a thriving and diverse community.

Our approach to implementing practices that ensure equitable access to our services and resources is by:

- Actively engaging with underrepresented groups to address their unique needs, and continuously seeking feedback to improve our approaches.
- Proactively identifying and removing barriers to access, whether they are physical, informational, or systemic.
- By championing a culture of accessibility, we aim to empower every stakeholder and promote a level playing field that supports both personal and professional growth.
- Committed to incorporating diverse perspectives into our decision-making processes.

Our accessibility lens focuses on creating an environment where all individuals can equally participate and benefit from our services. We are committed to incorporating diverse perspectives in our decision-making processes, ensuring that our policies, procedures, and resources are inclusive and supportive of everyone.





VSA Purpose & Values

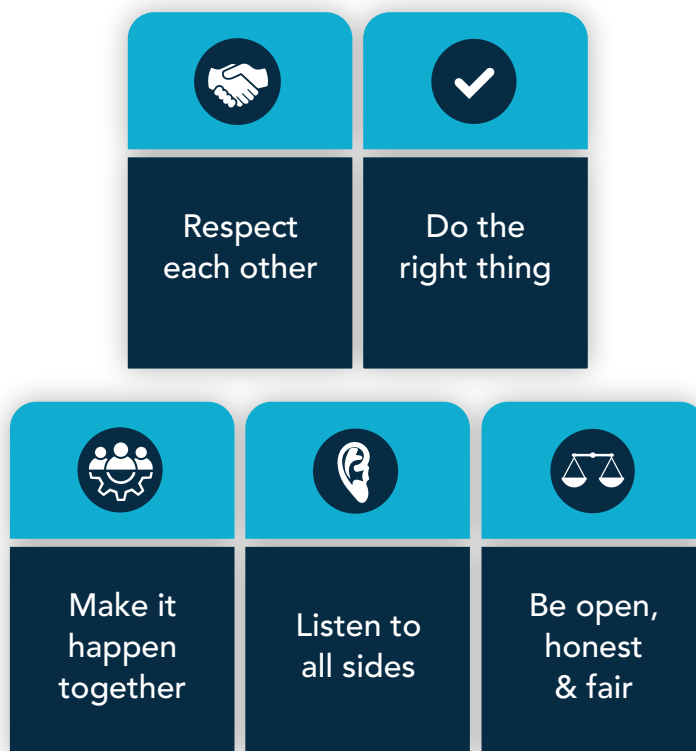
The essence of why the VSA exists, how we operate, and what we aspire to is reflected in our Purpose Statement. As we align our strategies with the challenges presented to us, we realize that our purpose and reason for being here is more relevant and needed than ever before.

Our focus of engaging and educating industry and consumers provides stability and safety during times of change and challenge. We are playing an increasingly larger role as a regulator and educator.

Purpose Statement

We build public confidence in the motor dealer industry in BC by engaging and educating industry and consumers, and by ensuring a safe and reliable motor vehicle buying experience.

Values





The Accessible British Columbia Act

The **Accessible British Columbia Act** aims to remove barriers to people with disabilities in accessing services and employment. It provides disabled people with an unprecedented level of agency and voice in our province. As an organization, we will benefit from new direct methods of hearing from people with disabilities about how we can be a more accessible and inclusive organization.

The Act requires prescribed organizations to do the following:

- Create an Accessibility Committee.
- Within the Accessibility Committee, include people with lived experience of diverse disabilities, and have Indigenous representation. This committee should also reflect the diversity of the population of British Columbia.
- Provide a feedback mechanism to receive reports of accessibility barriers experienced by people within and interacting with the organization.
- Publish an accessibility plan describing how the organization will identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers going forward.

Through our Accessibility Plan and the action items outlined within, we strive to make the shift from the medical model of disability to the social model, removing barriers so that all of our stakeholders with disabilities have equal access in all aspects of their involvement within in the VSA.



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MY DISABILITY IS THAT I CANNOT USE MY LEGS. MY HANDICAP IS YOUR NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF THAT DISABILITY, AND THUS OF ME.

- RICK HANSEN



VSA's Accessibility Commitment and Approach to Accessibility

Our commitment through a more accessible and supportive environment will enhance experiences with the consumers we serve. The VSA is dedicated to fostering a culture that is fair, and inclusive, where all members of our community feel engaged and connected. Our aim is to build a comprehensive environment where everyone can participate with utmost confidence and authenticity. We are dedicated to continually identifying and eliminating access barriers. The VSA is striving to surpass all relevant regulations, including full adherence to the standards set by the Accessible British Columbia Act (ABCA).

Accessibility Principals

VSA's dedication to accessibility is reflected in policies and provisions designed to ensure that all stakeholders can participate fully and fairly. The VSA will be supporting accessibility work through the following guiding principles:

Inclusion: We strive to create a welcoming environment where all employees and stakeholders have equal access and feel a sense of belonging.

Adaptability: We are committed to fostering adaptability and resilience as we work to build a more inclusive and accessible culture at the VSA.

Diversity: We recognize that abilities and disabilities vary greatly, and we are prepared to offer multiple accommodation options to address different accessibility needs.

Collaboration: We will work closely with experts and individuals with lived experience to enhance inclusion across all departments and divisions.

Universal Design: Access should be granted in a way that does not create or reinforce distinctions based on a person's disability.

Accessibility Committee

The Accessible British Columbia Act requires prescribed organizations to establish an accessibility committee. The purpose of the committee is to:

- Help identify accessibility barriers for individuals interacting with our organization
- Advise the organization on how to remove and prevent barriers

The VSA's Accessibility Committee will oversee the review and compliance of the standards set forth in the Accessible British Columbia Act, and for aiding in the development and evolution of the Accessibility Plan. Our committee is made up of six individuals who are passionate about accessibility at the VSA.



Accessibility Pillars

Accessibility pillars are fundamental components in the design and development of inclusive organizations. In creating an inclusive and functional organization, the VSA is committed to ensure that inclusivity and user-friendliness are integrated into every aspect of our initiatives.

We will be focusing on six accessibility pillars, which are aligned with Strategic Goal #5 -*Enhance employee experience through a culture of employee growth, engagement, wellness, diversity, and inclusion*. The VSA is also in the process of performing a gap analysis to evaluate our existing accessibility practices. After completing the gap analysis, we will share detailed updates on the specific actions and improvements based on its findings.

Our efforts are dedicated to the following six pillars:

1

Organizational Culture of Accessibility and Inclusion:

- Increase awareness and understanding through cultural-safety and disability-inclusion education and resources.
- Establish processes to provide accessible formats upon request for both employees and customers.
- Integrate an accessibility checklist into the annual facility audit to upgrade older buildings to current accessibility standards where feasible.
- Develop accessibility standards for facility design guidelines to be used in all future renovations.

2

Human Resources:

- Review policies on flexible work, remote work, return-to-work, accommodations, and other relevant areas to ensure support for disabled employees' success.
- Perform a comprehensive review of recruitment processes and implement strategies to improve inclusion.
- Create alternative assessment methods for interviewing candidates beyond conventional interviews.
- Develop a toolkit for hiring managers to guide them in inclusive and accessible recruitment practices.
- Revise our workplace employee survey to incorporate questions related to accessibility.
- Maintain accommodation practices aligned with best practices, and regularly explore new promising approaches in the field.
- Establish metrics for accommodations to measure the effectiveness of our inclusion initiatives.



3

Technology:

- Ensure all of our technology has capabilities of accessibility standards with various plug-in functionality to enhance accessibility for all users.
- Initiate a gap analysis of all technologies to identify discrepancies and barriers.

4

Communication:

- Ensure all communication materials—including digital, print, and video—comply with accessibility standards such as WCAG Level AAA.
- For staff to receive training on inclusion and digital accessibility.
- Designate digital accessibility communication for all stakeholders.
- Conduct a gap analysis on current communication practices and identify barriers.

5

Learning and Training:

- Educate our leaders on disability, accessibility, and accommodations during onboarding to align with inclusion expectations.
- Ensure our learning materials for our various audiences are accessible.
- Provide education on disability, accessibility, and how it relates to specific roles and responsibilities within the VSA.
- Initiate a gap analysis of current LMS systems to identify accessibility enhancements for all users.

6

Service Delivery:

- Train the Consumer Services team on best practices for accessibility and sensitivity to diverse needs.
- Train the Licensing and Industry Standards Teams to be inclusive of and address the needs of all licensees, ensuring clear, accessible communication for everyone.
- Ensure the Investigations process is accessible at every stage, from initial contact to final reporting, meeting the diverse needs of all participants.
- Conduct a gap analysis of our service delivery for our four operations teams, to best understand and identify existing and potential barriers.





Next Steps

As Phase I, during 2023-24 we reviewed the legislative requirements, conducted research on accessibility, and consulted with others in developing this Accessibility Plan framework, which will guide us through the next phases of our accessibility planning.

The next step is to conduct a gap analysis to pinpoint and enhance areas needing improvement and accessibility. Our main goal for the first year is to complete our consultancy engagements. This analysis will guide us in identifying opportunities for improvement and establishing a clear path for progressing to the next phases of the project. After completing the analysis, we will:

Phase 2: Planning (FY 2024-2025)

- a. Create the implementation plan based on the recommendations of the gap analysis.
- b. Create a structure for the project in our respective organizational departments.
- c. Estimate resources and budgets.
- d. Develop an updated schedule and set timelines.
- e. Assign roles and responsibilities.
- f. Develop an updated communication plan.
- g. Obtain the necessary approvals.

Phase 3: Execution (FY 2025-2026)

- a. Execute tasks as defined in our project plan.
- b. Communicate and provide updates for the annual update of the plan.
- c. Review and refine the implementation process.

Phase 4: Monitoring (FY 2025-2026)

- a. Progress on the plan's action items.
- b. Review and report specific tasks and deliverables to ensure alignment with our strategic goals.
- c. Gather feedback.



Monitoring & Assessment

Each year, an updated monitoring report will be posted on the accessibility webpage and presented at the first accessibility committee meeting. Additionally, the VSA will conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of the Accessibility Plan every three years, with the first evaluation set for September 2026. A monitoring report will be produced and shared on the accessibility webpage on an annual basis with amended updates and will be delivered at the first accessibility committee meeting of each year.

Feedback Mechanism

The VSA provides several ways for individuals to provide their feedback on accessibility. The methods ensure that people who communicate best in a variety of ways can offer comments in a way that matches their primary communication method. The primary feedback mechanism comes through a web form, which can be accessed through the link [here](#).

Please use this online form to provide feedback on this plan and on accessibility at the VSA. Alternatively, you can email our Training and Accessibility Specialist at accessibility@vsabc.ca.

You are welcome to include photos and videos with your feedback. All submissions will be compiled and shared with our Accessibility Committee and leadership to guide our future accessibility planning.





Key Definitions

Accessibility

People with disabilities encounter many situations where their ability to participate on an equal basis is impaired by the way our society has designed services, environments, and policies. Attitudes and assumptions also create barriers to equal access. Accessibility is the work we do to ensure people with disabilities can access all aspects of society, including education and employment, on an equal basis with others. It includes seeking ways to remove barriers to access, including physical barriers, attitudes, policies, technology, and how we convey information.

Disability

The Accessible BC Act defines a disability as “an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.” An impairment can be permanent, temporary, or episodic. It's important to understand that impairments—whether physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or cognitive—do not, by themselves, cause disability. Disability arises when a person with an impairment faces barriers that prevent them from fully participating in society.

Barrier

A barrier may arise from environments, attitudes, policies, practices, technology, or communications that do not adequately account for the inherent diversity and variation among people. Without this consideration, individuals with disabilities may be denied equal access compared to others in society.

References

1 Government of Canada, S. C. (2023, December 18). Canadian survey on disability, 2017 to 2022. The Daily - . <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231201/dq231201b-eng.htm>

2 Engagement, G. C. and P. (2024, January 26). Audience diversity. Province of British Columbia. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/home/accessible-government/toolkit/audience-diversity>

3 Rabinowitz, T., & Wallace, S. (2023, December 1). This infographic features the highlights of the Canadian survey on disability, 2022, using American Sign Language (ASL). Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2023063-eng.htm>



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