



Xplore Accessibility Plan 2023–2027

First Progress Report, 2024

Version 1.0.

Last Modified May 2024

Introduction

Founded in small-town Canada, Xplore is dedicated to bringing fast, reliable Internet to Canadians in rural communities. With our world-class fibre, wireless, and next-generation satellite infrastructure, combined with a network of local dealers and around-the-clock Canadian-based tech support, we strive to provide our customers with the Internet connection they need and the peace of mind knowing they are supported.

One of Xplore's core values is customer focus. We are driven to provide the best possible service for our customers in rural and remote communities including our customers with accessibility needs. Within our own workplace, Xplore recognizes that diversity and inclusion are a source of strength and innovation; embracing our team's diverse perspectives fosters an environment where innovation thrives and our collective potential knows no bounds.

Since the development of our Accessibility Plan, Xplore has taken strides to fulfill the actions and goals that we set for ourselves. Our progress is outlined in this Report. This Accessibility Plan Progress Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act* ("ACA", S.C. 2019, c. 10) and its regulations.

Accessibility Center

At Xplore, we are committed to ensuring our services are accessible to all of our customers. For customers requiring accessible methods of contact, to request documentation in alternate formats, or for information on our Accessibility Policy, please use one of the following options:

Email:	accessible@xplore.ca
Telephone:	1-866-841-6001
Mailing Address:	Manager, Human Resources 625 Cochrane Drive - Suite 1000 Markham, ON L3R 9R9

Web to Case

Using MyXplore, please [access our “Web to Case” feature located under the “Cases” tab](#). If you don’t have your MyXplore login information, please contact us by email or phone relay service for assistance.

The following alternative formats are available upon request:

- Print
- Large Print
- Braille
- Other electronic formats that are compatible with adaptive technologies

Consultations

Our consultation approach focused on identifying accessibility barriers experienced by persons living with many different types of disabilities.

Working with the Canadian Telecommunications Association (the “CTA”), we also engaged directly with persons with disabilities and organizations working within the disability community in Canada. Representatives from Xplore participated in two virtual consultation sessions that occurred on November 21 and 23, 2023. Six¹ (6) registered for the November 21 session, and 10² registered for the November 23 session. The consultations focused on wireless accessibility and the many of the points discussed were relevant to broadband offerings and services. Key topics areas discussed included:

- Wireless accessibility offerings, promotion, and customer service:
 - To assess whether wireless accessibility offerings are offered and promoted in a way that meets the needs of Canadians with various disabilities.
 - Promotion of wireless accessibility offerings and customer service.
- “Unfettered” access or use of specific services:
 - Unfettered access to VRS.
 - Beyond VRS – Use of other services or applications.
- Verification and Accessibility passport:
 - Verifying eligibility for wireless accessibility offerings.

¹ Accessibility Group participants included: Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBEC), Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB), Confédération des organismes de personnes handicapées du Québec (COPHAN), Disability Empowerment Equality Network (DEEN), Neil Squire Society, and Regroupement des aveugles et amblyopes du Montréal métropolitain (RAAMM).

² Accessibility Group participants included: Canada Deaf Grassroots Movement (CDGM), Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf, Canadian Hard of Hearing (CHHA), CNIB (Deafblind Community Services), Deaf Advocacy Nova Scotia (DAANS), Deaf Wireless Canada Committee (DWCC), Deaf-Blind Planning Committee (DBPC), Newfoundland Association of the Deaf, Ontario Association of the Deaf (OAD), and Wavefront Centre.

In parallel to the consultation planning, the CTA undertook the development of an honorarium policy applicable to work undertaken by the CTA on behalf of its members.

We also reviewed internal feedback provided to our Diversity and Inclusion Committee and will be taking this feedback into account as we implement our Accessibility Plan.

Progress in Priority Areas

Over the course of 2024, Xplore has taken meaningful steps to fulfilling many of the actions outlined in its Accessibility Plan.

1. Employment

- Xplore has established project teams that will work towards implementing Xplore's accessibility goals. These teams meet regularly to provide updates on the actions that have been taken towards meeting the actions outlined in our Accessibility Plan.
- Xplore has established an employee-led Diversity and Inclusion Committee sponsored by our Chief Executive Officer. Our new Diversity and Inclusion Committee reflects our commitment to creating a workplace where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to bring their authentic selves to work. We hold firm to the belief that every individual possesses equal value, and their unique perspectives have the power to enrich our workplace.

In 2024, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee conducted an internal survey of all employees to understand concerns related to accessibility, among other things. The Committee is currently reviewing the feedback provided and will pursue further action as needed.

2. The Built Environment

- Xplore performed an audit of each of its office locations to identify where accessibility could be improved, both in terms of the overall buildings and surrounding amenities, as well as in the office spaces themselves.

3. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

- Xplore does not use artificial intelligence or other chatbots for its sales or customer service support chats. We have updated the chat function available on our website to highlight when a real customer service agent is available for live chat.
- In August 2023, Xplore completed a project to ensure all of our support pages met WCAG 2.0. standards. The company will continue to monitor for compliance as the website is updated.

- With respect to our website more generally, Xplore has retained a third party to perform a WCAG compliance audit. Xplore has also performed an internal audit of alternative text associated with the pictures on our web site.
- Xplore is redesigning our 'Contact Us' page to create a more accessible and intuitive design. While the page currently includes information about our 24-hour customer service lines, we will be including links to our live chat functions as well.
- Xplore has conducted internal analyses to monitor our website for compliance with WCAG 2.0 standards.
- Xplore has monitored WCAG for the release of new standards, up to and including WCAG 2.3 standards.

4. The Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

- Xplore has developed and is implementing a Supplier Code of Conduct, to which all new and existing suppliers must adhere.
- Xplore's Supplier Code of Conduct strongly encourages suppliers to incorporate accessible design principles by avoiding and removing barriers that impede a person's ability to use products or services or to enjoy a seamless user experience.

5. The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

- Xplore has begun internal discussions regarding the adequacy of existing training and available accessibility features.

6. Communication, Other Than ICT

- Xplore has identified accessibility gaps in materials in the company's rebranded materials.
- The company is developing simplified branding materials that meets accessibility standards.
- Xplore has developed training materials for its neighbourhood marketing channel specific to engaging with vulnerable populations.
- Xplore is in the process of developing best practices for accessibility standards in written communications, including training materials for key employees who product written communications.

Feedback Process

Xplore has a process for receiving and responding to feedback, including feedback on how services are delivered to persons with disabilities. Xplore's feedback mechanism is available through the following methods:

- Email;
- Phone;
- Web to Case;
- Online Chat; and,
- Online Support Forum.

During the Reporting Period, Xplore did not receive any actionable feedback regarding the accessibility of its services.