



Accessibility Plan

2024 - 2027

Accessibility Plan 2024–2027

Table of Contents

GENERAL	3
About Pacific Northwest Transportation Services	3
Requirements	3
Executive Summary	4
Accessibility Statement	5
Accessibility Committee	5
Feedback	5
Alternative Formats	5
PRIORITY AREAS	7
Area 1: Employment	7
Area 2: Built Environment	8
Area 3: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	9
Area 4: Communication, other than ICT	10
Area 5: Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities	10
Area 6: Design and Delivery of Programs and Services	11
Area 7: Transportation	12
CONSULTATIONS	14
CONCLUSION	15

GENERAL

About Pacific Northwest Transportation Services

Pacific Northwest Transportation Services (PNWTS) provides shuttle services between the Victoria Cruise Terminal at Breakwater District and downtown Victoria as well as charter services for cruise passengers in and around the Victoria area. Victoria Cruise Terminal at Breakwater District is Canada's busiest destination port-of-call, with over 300 cruise ships visiting annually. PNWTS operates a modern fleet comprised of up to 45 vehicles of various sizes, including double-decker buses, full-size and mini coaches, and wheelchair lifts to support passengers with mobility impairments. PNWTS is owned by [Western Stevedoring Company Limited](#). Western Stevedoring is a [Western Group](#) enterprise.

Our parent company, Western Stevedoring, operates the Cruise Terminal and coordinates cruise services as Agent/Manager for the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA). Western Stevedoring and PNWTS are active members of the Victoria Cruise Industry Alliance (VCIA), working to convey the benefits of the cruise industry to the capital region.

PNWTS, along with Western Stevedoring, is dedicated to giving back to the communities where we live and work. Fostering a culture of community service, we seek out opportunities to engage and build strong relationships with residents, businesses, and local area groups alike.

Working closely with all levels of government and environmental groups we are committed to offering the best transportation services in a safe, sustainable, and seamless manner, lessening the impact on our environment and our neighbourhoods.

Requirements

As a federally regulated company in the transportation sector, PNWTS is governed by the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA).

The ACA is a federal law enacted by the Canadian government in 2019 to promote and ensure equal access and inclusion for persons with disabilities. The ACA applies to all federally regulated entities, including companies, organizations, and government agencies.

Per the Act, all federally regulated entities must:

- Prepare and publish an initial Accessibility Plan
- Establish an accessibility feedback process
- Report annually on the progress towards the plan and address any feedback received

Our Accessibility Plan must be reviewed in its entirety and published every three years.

Overall, the Accessible Canada Act represents a significant step towards creating a more inclusive and accessible society for all Canadians, including those with disabilities. By complying with these

Accessibility Plan

requirements, PNWTS can help ensure that we are providing equal access and opportunities to all members of society.

Executive Summary

Pacific Northwest Terminal Services (PNWTS) is committed to promoting accessibility and inclusion for our employees and customers. The Plan outlines how we will identify, remove and prevent barriers in the following priority areas:

- Employment
- The built environment
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Communication, other than ICT
- The procurement of goods, services, and facilities
- The design and delivery of programs and services
- Transportation

In the employment area, PNWTS has set two goals that focus on promoting employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and creating a safe, barrier-free work environment. Key activities in this area will focus on candidate attraction and recruitment strategy, examining existing policies and developing an anti-discrimination policy, providing unconscious bias training to all managers, and conducting an audit of human resource systems and tools.

For the built environment, PNWTS aims to create a barrier-free environment that provides safe access to all employees and members of the public. We have already begun working towards providing accessible facilities to our customers but will continue the work by conducting a formal inventory and list of upgrades for all common spaces.

In ICT and other Communications, PNWTS has set goals that focus on ensuring all employees have access to the tools and systems they need to perform their job duties and identifying existing barriers in the digital environment. Activities will focus on establishing a best practices manual for developing communication materials and providing regular training for managers and public-facing employees.

PNWTS has already incorporated accessibility as a key component in the procurement of goods, services, and facilities, by working with vendors that provide accessible designs and aids to remove barriers.

We are committed to providing facilities that limit barriers and support people with disabilities travelling to Victoria and the surrounding area. PNWTS is currently upgrading its facilities to include accessibility features such as signage.

We aim to replace all signage throughout its facilities with accessibly designed signs; provide accessibility training to all customer-facing staff; and provide clear guidance on our terms and conditions including our "One-Person-One-Fare" policy.

Overall, PNWTS has set specific and actionable goals in each priority area to ensure accessibility and inclusivity in the workplace.

Accessibility Plan

Accessibility Statement

As a member of Western Stevedoring Companies Limited, PNWTS is dedicated to identifying and addressing barriers and limits to full participation that impacts people with disabilities through the implementation of our Accessibility Plan.

We will continue to consult with members of the public, our employees, and subject matter experts to ensure that new barriers are not created as we continue on a path to greater accessibility.

Accessibility Committee

WSCL, on behalf of PNWTS, will establish an accessibility working group within a broader Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Our current Accessibility Plan working group is led by:

Jessie Rai

Director, Human Resources
Western Stevedoring

Feedback

PNWTS is committed to providing an open and transparent feedback process. For more information, to provide feedback, or to request alternative formats of this Plan, please contact PNWTS through one of the following methods:

- [Website](#)
- Email: DEI@westeve.com
- Phone: +1 884-940-4440
- [Anonymous feedback form](#)
- By regular mail:

189 Dallas Road
Victoria, British Columbia
CANADA V8V 1A1

Alternative Formats

PNWTS's Accessibility Plan is available in the following formats:

- Print
- Large Print
- Electronic
- Audio

Accessibility Plan

A Braille copy of PNWTS's Accessibility Plan may be requested by email:

- By email at DEI@westeve.com.
- By phone at +1 884-940-4440

PRIORITY AREAS

Area 1: Employment

Our Accessibility Goal

PNWTS values diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace and strives to create a welcoming and accessible environment for all employees.

Current Level of Accessibility

PNWTS has taken a proactive approach to diversity and inclusion for all underrepresented groups including individuals with disabilities. In 2021-2022, we performed a DEI audit to identify areas of improvement and have since:

- Established a DEI Committee dedicated to establishing best practices and promoting DEI at PNWTS and its affiliates.
- Published a DEI policy and job ad statement.
- Engaged a proactive recruitment strategy to attract underrepresented groups through engagement with immigration services, refugee services, Wounded Warriors Canada, and various First Nations communities.
- Rolled out DEI fundamentals training through the Blue Ocean Brain Platform in 2023.

Actions

Goal 1: PNWTS will implement additional candidate attraction and recruitment strategies that promote employment opportunities and growth for individuals with disabilities by:

- Reviewing policies to ensure that accessibility is fully incorporated into an Anti-Discrimination policy and have it clearly articulated on all job ads and associated job activities by December 2024.
- Including a statement that encourages applicants to request accommodations during the application process by December 2024.
- Expanding our candidate outreach program to include accessible job boards geared towards underrepresented groups, including people with disabilities, by December 2024.

PNWTS will participate in Western Stevedoring's initiatives to further promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Western Stevedoring is doing so by:

- Establishing at least three community partnerships, such as associations and post-secondary institutions to further promote employment opportunities within the disability community by 2026.

Goal 2: Provide a safe, welcoming, and barrier-free environment for employees with disabilities by:

Accessibility Plan

- Providing allyship and unconscious bias training to all managers through the Blue Ocean Brain Platform and other means (as deemed appropriate) starting in 2023.
- Collecting feedback from employees on Diversity & Inclusion, including accessibility, starting in 2023.
- Establishing a policy to provide employees with disabilities accommodations for training and development opportunities to ensure equal access to career advancement by December 2024.
- Assess the effectiveness and impact of all past manager trainings related to accessibility and inclusion training programs starting in 2024.
- Conducting an audit of all our employee-facing human resources systems and tools to identify barriers and develop a barrier removal plan by 2026.

Goal 3: Launch a comprehensive employee communication campaign starting in 2025 to inform them of new accessibility policies and services available to them. Communications will include awareness of disability definitions and common barriers to accessibility.

Area 2: Built Environment

Our Accessibility Goal

PNWTS wants to ensure that all our facilities are barrier-free for our customers, vendors, and members of the public. We need to understand the safety and security of our facilities and the jobs performed on-site to prioritize accessibility upgrades. Accommodations needed for employees will be thoughtfully assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure inclusivity and equal opportunities for all.

Current Level of Accessibility

The Cruise Terminal at Breakwater District is our one facility open to the public. PNWTS works with cruise carriers in the transportation of passengers from the cruise ship through the terminal. This facility will need upgrades to meet accessibility standards.

PNWTS provides accommodations for employees wherever possible per the safety standard of each job performed. We recognize that the common spaces available to employees have not all been designed with accessibility in mind.

Actions

Goal 1: Create a physical environment that is free from barriers and provides safe access to all employees by:

- Conducting a formal inventory and list of upgrades for all common spaces starting In 2024, including but not limited to washrooms, common areas, access points, and parking spaces that will need to be upgraded with accessibility features.
- Establishing a priority list, budget and approvals for all accessibility upgrades by June 2025.

Accessibility Plan

Goal 2: In partnership with Western Stevedoring, provide a barrier-free environment for members of the public travelling through the Cruise Terminal by:

- Establishing designated service animal relief areas outside the terminal, inside the terminal on the path of travel, and in restricted access areas beyond security checkpoints by 2024.
- Conducting a formal inventory and list of upgrades for all areas accessed by the public, including but not limited to washrooms, access points, and parking spaces that will need to be upgraded with accessibility features by 2024.
- Establishing a priority list and budget for all accessibility upgrades by June 2025.
- Obtaining approval and establishing a timeline for the implementation of all accessibility upgrades by June 2026.

Area 3: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Our Accessibility Goal

At PNWTS, our goal is to ensure that all digital platforms and content are accessible to everyone regardless of their ability. First and foremost, we are dedicated to establishing best practices and identifying existing barriers in our digital environment. We will continue to monitor and improve our online accessibility by implementing accessible design practices, providing alternative formats, and offering assistive technologies.

Current Level of Accessibility

PNWTS has not implemented accessible standards regarding ICT services. We rely on service providers such as Microsoft and ADP to provide accessibility features to our employees and, wherever possible, we have provided accessibility tools to accommodate employee access to ICT.

Actions

Goal 1: Ensure that all employees have access to the tools and systems they need to perform their job duties by:

- Consulting with professionals with lived experience of disability to develop a formal process for employees to request adaptive technology for interpretation and accessibility by December 31, 2024.
- Establishing an understanding of employees' need for adaptive technologies, then creating a budget for securing and implementing adaptive technologies requested by employees starting in 2024.
 - Identifying government programs that offer employers subsidies to provide adaptive technologies starting in 2024.
- Amending guidelines for fonts and colour schemes for all digitally published and broadcast communication materials by December 2024 and implementing the guidelines starting in 2025.

Goal 2: Further understand the barriers that exist in our ICT infrastructure and ensure plans are in place to remove barriers where possible and upgrade our standards to Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) 2.2 standards by:

Accessibility Plan

- Creating an internal ICT Accessibility Assessment tool by December 2024.
- Conducting an Accessibility Assessment of all ICT systems by December 2024.
- Establishing actionable goals to address any barriers identified during the assessment by December 2025.

Area 4: Communication, other than ICT

Our Accessibility Goal

Communication is crucial for the day-to-day interactions of our employees and our customers. At PNWTS, our goal is to ensure that all communication standards meet or exceed accessibility standards, allowing an individual with disabilities to access and communicate with our organization.

Current Level of Accessibility

PNWTS has been intentional in our communication to ensure that our communications are understood by the intended audience; however, accessibility has not been a priority for our communication strategies.

Actions

Goal 1: Develop and incorporate a communication standard within PNWTS that is designed to eliminate barriers and ensure accessibility from the outset:

- Establishing a best practices manual that incorporates accessible design principles and communication standards (e.g., plain language) for creating documents, presentations, memos, etc. for all published and broadcast communication materials by December 2024.
- Providing regular training for managers and public-facing employees on effective communication strategies for accessible communication starting in 2024.
- Include American/Quebec/Indigenous sign language as an asset when hiring for public-facing positions.
- Collecting feedback from employees, customers, and the public regarding our overall communication strategy and the level of accessibility starting in 2026.

Goal 2: Ensure that all employees have access to training opportunities and career advancement by:

- Establishing a process for employees to request accommodations in advance of training sessions to ensure that training platforms and materials are accessible by December 2024.

Area 5: Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Our Accessibility Goal

At PNWTS we aim to promote and support accessibility for all Canadians by holding ourselves and our vendors accountable for establishing accessible practices. We will work with vendors owned and operated by people with disabilities, that provide goods and services with accessible design, and/or

Accessibility Plan

have established accessibility goals to remove barriers for their employees, their customers, and the public.

Current Level of Accessibility

PNWTS has begun the process of including accessibility considerations in the procurement of goods, services, and facilities.

Actions

Goal 1: Incorporate accessibility as a key component in the procurement of goods, services, and facilities by:

- Including accessibility consideration in the development of a Responsible Procurement policy by December 2026.
- Establishing a formal process to re-evaluate agreements with existing vendors to address barriers that exist in the procurement process and delivery of those goods, services and facilities by December 2026.

Area 6: Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Our Accessibility Goal

PNWTS offers ground transportation services to our customers including cruise shuttles, coaches, and terminal services. Our goal is to provide customers with barrier-free access to our services through the design and delivery of those services.

Current Level of Accessibility

PNWTS has implemented various measures to ensure our transit services are accessible to people with disabilities. In addition to providing transportation with accessible lifts, PNWTS has:

- Established processes to ensure that dispatch services can guarantee that vehicles being dispatched meet the accessibility needs of the passengers.
- Trained staff on how to properly secure accessibility aids including wheelchairs and scooters aboard the buses.
- Implemented a feedback mechanism for passengers to indicate improvement to the accessibility of PNWTS' services.

Actions

Goal 1: PNWTS supports WS in providing directions to customers and passengers traveling through the Cruise Terminal to access the information about the services and facilities available to them by:

- Providing direction and instruction on our website to access below information in multiple formats by December 2024:
 - a. hours of operation
 - b. location of the designated parking area

Accessibility Plan

- c. location of designated drop-off and pick-up areas
- d. passenger assistance information, including telephone numbers for accessibility information
- e. wheelchair or electric cart services
- f. location of designated relief areas for service animals
- g. accessible inter-terminal transportation
- h. accessible ground transportation
- i. complaint resolution services
- j. escort passes; and
- k. any other relevant information.

Goal 2: Build on PNWTS' existing feedback methods to make sure all passengers are explicitly aware that they can inquire about accessible facilities, request assistance, and/or submit recommendations for improvements to accessibility by:

- Posting an Accessibility Statement on our website with details on requesting facilities and/or assistance and providing feedback by December 2024.
- Providing regular accessibility training for all public-facing employees starting in 2024.

Area 7: Transportation

Our Accessibility Goal

PNWTS operates under the jurisdiction of Transport Canada and is subject to the accessibility requirements outlined in the [Canada Transportation Act](#). PNWTS provides bus and coach services to members of the public arriving on cruise ships at the Cruise Terminal at Breakwater District. Our goal is to provide facilities that limit barriers and support people with disabilities arriving at the Cruise Terminal and travelling to Victoria and the surrounding area. It is our responsibility to provide training to our personnel, signage, communication, and policies that support the mobility of individuals with disabilities.

Current Level of Accessibility

PNWTS is working with Western Stevedoring to upgrade facilities with accessibility features. We are in the process of updating signage and providing on-site wheelchair-accessible vehicles services.

Additionally, PNWTS has designated personnel to address the concerns/needs of passengers with disabilities and provides training to all personnel on how to secure mobility aids such as wheelchairs and scooters aboard the coaches.

Area 7.1: Signage

Goal 1: Provide employees with barrier-free access to all PNWTS facilities:

- Replacing signage throughout our facilities with accessibly designed signs for meeting rooms, washrooms, , and accessible entry points and relief areas for service animals by June 2026.

Accessibility Plan

Area 7.2: Personnel Training

Goal 1: Ensure the passengers with disabilities have access to the services and support while travelling with PNWTS by:

- Expanding on our current training program to train all staff who may interact with people with disabilities from the public starting in 2024. The training will include best practices for communicating with travellers, psychological first aid, what services to offer people with disabilities, how to provide physical assistance, and how to handle mobility aids and other special equipment including service animals and creating buffer zones for people with allergies.
 - Establishing a timeline for when new employees will receive training and a regular schedule for refresher courses.
 - Keeping employees and management accountable for maintaining records of when employees have been trained.
- Working with Western Stevedoring to provide curbside assistance to passengers with disabilities including access to a wheelchair.

Area 7.3: Terms and Conditions

Goal 1: Remove barriers to transportation due to policy and cost constraints by:

- Publishing a public-facing “One-Person-One-Fare” policy on our website indicating the ability for people with disability to travel with their service animal or companion at no extra charge by December 2024.
 - The policy will include a process for passengers to inform PNWTS of the requirement and necessary accommodations.
- Guiding passengers for onshore excursions and activities in the Victoria region that provide accessible accommodations and facilities by June 2024.

CONSULTATIONS

Summary

Understanding the lived experience of people with disabilities is a key factor in the development of our Accessibility Plan. The Government of Canada’s Accessibility Strategy starts with the guiding principle, “Nothing without us”; these Plans and Strategies cannot meaningfully progress accessibility without input and guidance from people with disabilities. PNWTS worked with British Columbia Centre for Accessibility (BC CFA) in the review and development of our Accessibility Plan.

Consultation Process

We provided the BC CFA with a draft of our Plan as a Word document for their review. We followed this with a live session to discuss the impact and significance of our goals towards creating an accessible workplace and experience for our employees, customers and the public.

The session was hosted in person at #15 Mountain Hwy, North Vancouver on May 4, 2023, and we inquired about any accommodations that could be made to support the full engagement and participation of the BC CFA consulting team in advance of the meeting.

During the consultation session, each priority area of the Plan was discussed and was accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation visible to all participants.

Results

During the consultation session, each of PNWTS’s goals and corresponding commitments were reviewed in detail to gather feedback from the BC CFA. Overall, the BC CFA provided feedback that our Plan is well-written using concise and plain language. The BC CFA identified that the Plan follows a logical sequence of actions, and our commitments are realistically achievable in the specified time frames.

The BC CFA also identified several areas for improvement where our commitments would benefit from being more specific to help us achieve our goal. This feedback was incorporated into our Plan by:

- Integrating opportunities for audits to provide enhanced baseline data and enable strategic implementation of training.
- Broadening the scope of our commitments to include opportunities to engage subject matter experts, such as professionals with lived experiences of disabilities, to progress towards our accessibility goals.
- Enhancing the level of detail within our commitments to help us achieve our goal by including accessibility-specific language (e.g., from “job boards” to “accessible job boards”).

Future Consultations

To truly exemplify the notion of “Nothing Without Us”, PNWTS aims to conduct a more robust consultation process. Our goal is to work with additional organizations, collect testimonials and

Accessibility Plan

feedback from our employees and customers, and survey the public for future updates and republications of our Accessibility Plan.

CONCLUSION

Pacific Northwest Transportation Services (PNWTS) is committed to this Accessibility Plan and its ongoing efforts and improvements in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility in various priority areas. By implementing these measures, Western Stevedoring aims to create a barrier-free work environment that provides equal access to all employees and customers, regardless of their abilities. This will benefit the company's employees and customers and contribute to a more inclusive and diverse society.

DEI is important to our work, well-being and growth. It is our commitment to Canadians to continue working towards equity for all. Western Stevedoring recognizes that the work does not end with accessibility. We are dedicated to creating a safe and fair work environment for all groups, including Indigenous, racialized, and 2SLGBTQ+ people.