



ACCESSIBILITY PROGRESS REPORT 2025



Peoples Group



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Peoples Group & Accessibility

Peoples Group has been providing tailored financial services to the Canadian marketplace for more than **35** years. Since 1985, our focus has been on exceptional customer service, extensive product knowledge and experience. Over the years, we've expanded our product and service offerings based on customer needs and customization. We expect to continue our successful journey for years to come and will use our experience in *customization* to always strive and improve our workplace to be barrier-free and accessible.

Our proud, diverse employees are committed to acting with discipline and integrity to finding the right results for equal access and for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with limitations in a way that allows them to maintain dignity and independence. We believe in integration and plan to meet peoples' needs quickly and efficiently. To ensure we have clarity and understanding about the limits of our environment, we listen to feedback from our employees and stakeholders and continue work to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

General

At Peoples Group, we have put a team of individuals in charge of checking, receiving, acknowledging, and following up feedback about accessibility on behalf of our organization. Our team consists of those who we feel are closest connected to the organization's structure and pulse of our workplace; our Occupational Health and Safety Committee (OHSC) and Accessibility Committee. Our team is made up of senior managers, managers, and office ambassadors from our Corporate Operations team as well as representation from our People & Culture team with Human Resources Business Partners.

Here's how you can reach us:

- Email us at –
 - accessible@peoplesgroup.com
- Mail our head office at –
 - 888 Dunsmuir Street, Suite 1400
 - Vancouver, British Columbia
 - Canada, V6C3K4

- Contact Peoples Group by telephone –
 - 604-683-2881
- On social media, reach us at –
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/peoples-group-of-companies/>
 - <https://www.instagram.com/peoplesgroupfin/>
- Visit our website at –
 - www.PeoplesTrust.com
- You can also use the [contact form](#) from our website to reach to us.
 - If you like to remain anonymous, please use 'Accessibility Question' or 'Accessibility Feedback' in the name fields.

We can also provide you with a copy of our accessibility plan or our progress report. Please let us know if you prefer to receive an alternate format of any of our reports. We can provide large type versions or an audio recording, upon request. All feedback is recorded and reviewed by our Occupational Health and Safety Committee (OHSC). Responses can be expected in **3-5** business days.

Progress

In **2024**, Peoples Group published its first Accessibility Plan. We looked at our workplace through several difference lenses to establish a starting point and the direction we needed to go. Since then, accessibility has remained top-of-mind when thinking about our workplace and how it can be improved.

Below is a summary of the things we have accomplished in the last year:

- Results from our 2024 accessibility survey were posted to our Occupational Health and Safety (OHSC) portal.
- In 2025, our second annual accessibility survey was launched and was expanded to include all Ontario employees in our organization. Results from the survey are posted later in this progress report and are posted internally, on our OHSC portal.

- Internal training on a wide range of accessibility topics has been made available to our employees. The videos were reviewed and procured by members of our OHSC. Our OHSC team membership includes employees from a cross section of our lines of business such as People & Culture, Executive Operations and Corporate Operations.
- Improvements were made to our emergency plans, with specific updates designated for people with disabilities.
- Updates were made to our onboarding and recruitment processes to address accessibility.
- With respect to accessibility, further considerations are planned to be included in our new website design plan. This update expected to take place in 2026 and will be included in our next progress report.

Status of progress in key areas

The below information is taken from “Guidance on the Accessible Canada Regulations from the Government of Canada” website. These areas are described under Section 5 of the Accessibility Canada Act (ACA).

*The purpose of the ACA is to **benefit all persons, especially persons with disabilities**, through the realization, within the purview of matters coming within the legislative authority of Parliament, of a Canada without barriers, on or before the ACA target of **January 1, 2040**, particularly by the identification and removal of barriers, and the prevention of new barriers within the following areas:*

- 1. Employment*
- 2. The built environment*
- 3. Information and communication technologies (ICT)*
- 4. Communication (other than ICT)*

5. *The procurement of goods, services, and facilities*
6. *The design and delivery of programs and services*
7. *Transportation*

In our 2024 Accessibility Plan, Peoples Group looked at each of these **7** key areas. Now, in our 2025 progress report we revisited each area to see how we are doing.

Employment

Peoples Group does not collect information about employee disabilities, but the World Health Organization (WHO) tells us that disability is part of being human. The WHO estimate that 15% of the global population have some form of disability. This amounts to about **1.1 billion** people across the planet. If we apply the same math to our employee population that means about 1 in 6 people have a form of disability.

In 2025, our People and Culture talent acquisition team revised the way in which jobs were posted to ensure people with disabilities are accounted for and taken into consideration. With that, the below statement has been added to all job postings.

We value and celebrate individuality while fostering an inclusive workplace for everyone. If there's any way we can support or accommodate you during the selection process, please don't hesitate to let us know.

At the time that this progress report was written, no accommodations have yet been requested, however our talent acquisition team remains poised to act. We look forward to being able to report on this data in our next progress report.

In April of this year, our Occupational Health & Safety Committee (OHSC) launched its second annual Peoples Group Accessibility Survey on behalf of our workplace – this year, expanding our sample size. The change in targeting not only boosted our survey audience exponentially but also provided us with an increase in our respondent numbers of from only 6 in 2024 to **52** in 2025. We also doubled the number of

questions in survey from 5 in 2024 to **12** in 2025 allowing for a larger slice of information to be collected.

The questions and responses from this year's accessibility survey are included below over the next 2 sections. Our OHSC has taken all feedback that was collected from this survey into consideration and will help to enable change on suggestions that will improve accessibility and remove barriers called out in our workplace.

In future versions of our survey, Peoples Group will continue to expand our target audience to include not only employees but also external partners and service users.

Questions

1. Have you or anyone you know encountered PHYSICAL accessibility concerns at Peoples Group?
 - a. Yes or No.
2. If yes, please tell us about what you have encountered.
 - a. Enter your comments.
3. Have you or someone you know encountered barriers to an INVISIBLE disability (Ex., Hearing/visual impairment, ADHD, anxiety, depression etc.)
 - a. Yes or No
4. If yes, please tell us about what you have encountered.
 - a. Enter your comments.
5. What suggestions do you have to make our workplace more accessible?
 - a. Enter your comments.
6. What ideas have you seen at other workplaces/public spaces regarding accessibility?
 - a. Enter your comments.
7. Have you encountered an accessibility challenge with TECHNOLOGY at Peoples Group?
 - a. Yes or No.
8. If yes, please tell us what you have encountered.
 - a. Enter your comments
9. Would you be interested in learning more about accessibility in the workplace?

- a. Yes or No.
10. Do you have any further thoughts on accessibility at Peoples Group?
- a. Yes or no.
11. If so, please tell us.
- a. Enter your comments.
12. Overall, how would you rate Peoples Group in terms of accessibility?
- a. Choose 1-5 stars.

Responses

- Have you or anyone you know encountered PHYSICAL accessibility concerns at Peoples Group?

Total Responses	53
Yes	5
No	48

- If yes, please tell us about what you have encountered.

Response 1	It would be great if all doors could be accessed with a wave of hand.
Response 2	More automatic door openers would be appreciated.
Response 3	<p>Current seating options are not supportive for those with physical disability, back issues, etc. Standing desks, while available, are not a full substitute for properly ergonomic chairs. The current chairs in the office cause physical pain for some people and frequent adjustments, alternating between sitting/standing, taking frequent breaks to walk are needed. Perhaps better office chair options would improve wellbeing and productivity. Lack of desk availability also hinders productivity when there are sometimes no seats available at all in the office.</p> <p>The temperature in the office is often too cold. This makes in uncomfortable to work and even painful for those with</p>

	<p>circulation issues, chronic pain, or sensory sensitivities. This is another distraction that challenges productivity.</p> <p>Lack of spaces to reset or decompress throughout the day. Despite being essential to an inclusive workplace, the only space we had to reset has been turned to a storage area. This sends the message that wellbeing is not valued. That true inclusivity and a healthy work environment is second to making room for extra furniture?</p>
Response 4	My hand wrist got hurt and I went to the office. I am unable to open the front door.
Response 5	<p>Someone in our office is color blind, has mentioned that some colors in the background impair them from reading material. Someone in our office has a hearing impairment, but I do not know the severity of it.</p> <p>Someone in our office with a knee issue. She encountered an issue during an evacuation as she could not walk down the stairs.</p>

- Have you or someone you know encountered barriers to an INVISIBLE disability (Ex., Hearing/visual impairment, ADHD, anxiety, depression etc.)

Total Responses	53
Yes	7
No	46

- If yes, please tell us about what you have encountered.

Response 1	The lighting in the office can be difficult to work in - dimmer lighting or quiet spaces might be a good idea.
Response 2	Distraction from extensive noise from surroundings.
Response 3	Lighting and sound in the office - it would be nice to have a more dimly lit area, and maybe a quiet area for better focus.

Response 4	<p>The open office layout is a huge distraction overload for those who can easily get overstimulated. The lack of privacy and openness can be very stressful for those with anxiety or those who need quiet to focus or regulate emotions. There aren't many places to decompress which makes it hard for those who manage overstimulation, panic attacks, etc. Reliance on in-person communication and office attendance can be daunting for those who don't thrive in those situations.</p> <p>Harsh lighting can trigger headache or migraines at times.</p> <p>Commute fatigue is a major issue that is not visible. The physical and mental toll of commuting especially for those who live further away can impact energy levels, focus, and overall wellbeing before the workday even begins. Especially knowing that for some teams, 100% of the work can be done remotely, mandating in office attendance seems performative, harmful, and disruptive.</p> <p>Some managers literally do not allow employees to set their status to anything other than available, even when they are busy or focusing, they must be available. This culture of constant availability creates unnecessary pressure leading to demoralization and reduced productivity, especially for those who benefit from uninterrupted focus or those who are managing already stressful workloads. This creates a lack of trust and autonomy.</p> <p>There is often a lack of clarity in leadership communication, and when mistakes inevitably happen, they are often blamed on the team with little acknowledgement of the root cause. Employees are sometimes discouraged from expressing challenges, even being told that being human is not an excuse. This creates an environment where people feel unsafe to admit where they are struggling and need support.</p> <p>There is judgement and stigma tied to working from home, even when performance is not affected. The office environment creates many invisible challenges like commuting fatigue,</p>
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	overstimulation, managing symptoms quietly. Encouraging flexibility without judgement should be prioritized as it would foster a more productive, inclusive workplace.
Response 5	As mentioned above.

➤ What suggestions do you have to make our workplace more accessible?

Response 1	Remote work, flexible hours, and part time options for students. Ramps, wider doors...
Response 2	We may have installed a push button or a waive function to enter the main office premises.
Response 3	Our floor itself, there is no issue that I can point out. However, I'm not sure if there is Wheelchair accessibility from the ground level to access the elevators. I have only seen stairs and escalators. I think this is more a concern for the building itself.
Response 4	Programs visibility, easy to find information on long-term, short-term disability leave requirements, eligibility
Response 5	Private room to support nursing mothers.
Response 6	A wave to open automatic door opener for the main entrance door.
Response 7	Automatic door openers after swiping pass would help.
Response 8	Policy on software for visual or hearing-impaired users
Response 10	Invest in better seating options. Chairs that offer lumbar support and adjustability would improve comfort for those with physical conditions. Maintain access to wellness spaces. These are essential for managing stress, chronic fatigue, sensory overload, etc. and repurposing these spaces sends the wrong message. Desk availability. A reliable, accessible workspace should be a basic standard. The seats are booked out weeks in advance and for those who commute it's discouraging to go to the office on a risk that one may or may not find a seat.

	Promote flexibility without stigma. We should normalize different way of working as valid and not judge others as being not a team player, etc. Mandating in office attendance when record breaking results have been produced while working remotely is performative and sends a message that appearance matters more than outcomes or wellbeing. Leadership should be prioritizing real productivity over visibility so as not to dismiss valid accessibility needs.
Response 11	Host meetings to address the matter and make sure people who need access are heard.
Response 12	I'm not sure if the doors (into our office, inside the office, washroom, etc.) are capable of opening automatically.
Response 13	Overall, I think PG does an excellent job.
Response 14	Quiet spaces designed for employees who need a break from sensory overload or require a pleasant environment to focus.
Response 15	Dampening the noise levels between cubicles/desks.

- What ideas have you seen at other workplaces/public spaces regarding accessibility?

Response 1	Disability Awareness Training and Mental Health Resources available.
Response 2	Urinal booth in the washroom
Response 3	Nothing comes to mind, at this time.
Response 4	A telephone room for making private phone calls.
Response 5	Other office locations in my career had the benefit of much more space for all the employee, and they had more multi-purpose spaces that allowed people with accessibility needs to best supported.
Response 6	Ergonomic furniture. Dedicated quiet rooms. No meeting workdays. 100% remote workplaces. Flexible start/end times. Leadership that genuinely advocates for accessibility needs.
Response 7	Things I have seen in other places I have worked Barrier free bathrooms

	Countertop height can be a barrier to anyone in a wheelchair Automated door openers on all door
Response 8	Quiet spaces designed for employees who need a break from sensory overload or require a pleasant environment to focus.
Response 9	The company has a wellness room already.
Response 11	Same as ours.

- Have you encountered an accessibility challenge with TECHNOLOGY at Peoples Group?

Total Responses	53
Yes	1
No	52

- If yes, please tell us what you have encountered.

Response 1	Changes to wallpaper.
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- Would you be interested in learning more about accessibility in the workplace?

Total Responses	53
Yes	15
No	38

- Do you have any further thoughts on accessibility at Peoples Group?

Total Responses	53
Yes	4
No	49

- If so, tell us about it.

Response 1	I don't see PG talking about being an inclusive workplace, there are barely any employees with disabilities. We should focus on having a program to include them in the workplace.
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Response 2	True accessibility involves giving employees a choice. The choice to work in the way that best supports our health and productivity, the choice to learn in the ways we best absorb information, and the choice to show up without fear of being judged or limited. Ultimately, it's up to leadership to empower that kind of environment or to suppress it. Leadership holds the power to build a more productive, inclusive workforce, or to enforce more rigid structures that lead to burnout and disengagement. If the goal is true inclusion, we must protect the freedom to choose.
Response 3	To the best of my knowledge, I do not see anyone visibly disabled at Peoples so this survey may be of limited utility. It might be good to have a consultant come in and provide an assessment.
Response 4	This is the first time that accessibility has been addressed and put out the topic for people to ponder. Most places/establishments express that they have accessibility features in place, and it is 'accessible'.

➤ Overall, how would you rate Peoples Group in terms of accessibility?

1 star	0
2 stars	2
3 stars	1
4 stars	24
5 stars	19
Average Rating	4.3 stars

The Built Environment

2025 has been a year of change for Peoples Group. By the end of May of this year, our executive leadership team will have undergone an 100% change in its make-up all starting from a new President and CEO at the helm. This has been considered a year of transformation.

At the present, our Toronto office location takes up one full floor of our building with no steps or stairs to maneuver within the office space. At ground level, the entrance to our building provides ramps for ease of accommodation, as well as accessible entrance doors that open with a wave. Once inside, escalators and elevators are available to take employees and visitors alike to our office.

However, with the trickle down of change from the top of our organization, we have also seen our employee population increase enough to outgrow our current facilities. With that, some locations are undergoing a search for a new office space, while others are undergoing changes and upgrades in design.

As various forms of transformation take place, accessibility will be considered an important building block for our workplace and an important selling point for Peoples Group and its employees. We have learned through our 2025 accessibility survey that physical barriers, like being able to open all doors in our office space automatically is something that is seen as important to our employee population, but we also learned that invisible barriers are some of the greatest concerns mentioned.

From our accessibility survey, 2 of the top **4** concerns were about the built environment. Here's what we heard from employees:

➤ Sensory overload

Our accessibility survey counted **9** mentions for sensory overload in our office space. This 'invisible' disability is top of mind of our employees with the greatest number of mentions for any issue collected in our survey. Although the feelings around sensory overload may stem from invisible disabilities, the answers to those concerns are connected to the built environment, so we decided this information should be included in this section. These concerns will be top of mind when looking for and designing a new office location and new designs.

Some of the concerns mentioned by our employees include:

- Desire for dimmer lighting
- Lack of quiet space
- Cold temperatures
- Lack of privacy
- Prevalence of anxiety

- Inability to focus

➤ Automatic doors

Our employees noted the need for automatic doors **8** times in our short survey. Although Peoples Group does have an automatic door entry into our main office, and for our washrooms, employees expressed that they would like to see automatic entry available at all entry and exit points. Peoples Group will review the need for these updates to take place once a new office location is found, or a new design is established.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

As mentioned above, one of the learnings Peoples Group took from the 2025 accessibility survey was that sensory sensitivities were of greatest concern for employees. That said, through technology, Peoples Group has enabled all employees with the ability to work remotely and access the tools they need to do their jobs from home – but for the days when employees were working onsite, challenges remain.

The technology that gives our employees the ability to work from home was mentioned **5** times in our 2025 survey showing that it is an important concept. Opinions were voiced on concerns about fatigue from commuting to the office and the request for continued work-from-home flexibility. Employees noted the physical and mental toll of commuting, especially for those who live further away, and the impact commuting has on sapping energy levels. One respondent noted that encouraging flexibility without judgement should be prioritized as it would foster a more productive and inclusive workplace. Peoples Group appreciates that the ability and flexibility to be able to work from home remains important to our employee population.

In May 2025, Peoples Group will make further technological improvements by replacing laptop computers for all our employees to upgrade to the Microsoft Windows 11 operating system. In doing so, this technology will make available new and useful accessibility features to everyone in our organization. Here are some of the expected improvements that will combine new technology with communication advances:

- A narrator program with a more natural sounding voice, instead of the computer-generated voice that has been prevalent.

- Voice access that will allow the user to be completely hands-free when using the computer.
- Live captions will enable users with a small box interface, that can be moved anywhere onscreen, to be part of the conversation in virtual meetings.
- The upgrade to Windows 11 will also provide improved color blindness adjustments.

Also, the report you are now reading was checked by MS Word for accessibility. The feature noted that no accessibility issues were found and that people with disabilities should not have difficulty reading this document.

Communication (other than ICT)

In looking at our communication methods other than information and communication technology, Peoples Group is working on improvements and enhancements in the following areas:

- Establishing improved and alternative methods to contact us for feedback where respondents can remain anonymous.
- Continue to work to ensure that our website and other external communications are written in plain language.
- Define acronyms to make our information more easily understandable.
- Continue to build our training library within 'Peoples Learning Academy' with accessibility-based information. In 2025, our team selected the following topics to provide awareness to our employees about disabilities that can be considered "invisible". The below trainings are promoted internally and are available at no cost to all employees.
 1. Disability Inclusion: Choosing Your Words
 2. ADHD at Work
 3. Disability Inclusion: Understanding Disability in the Modern Day
 4. Neurodiversity at Work: Introducing Neurodiversity at Work

5. Communication Toolkit – Becoming a Master Communicator

The Procurement of goods, services, and facilities

The use of ergonomics was mentioned **3** times in our 2025 accessibility survey responses. During office upgrades in 2018, Peoples Group invested in ergonomic chairs from designer *Herman Miller*. The chairs provide comfort and ergonomic support with upholstered backs, seat height adjusters, synchronous tilt and tilt limiters, an adjustment for forward seat angle and fully adjustable arms. The ability for our desks to rise and lower to accommodate different preferences of height or allowing for the occupant to sit or stand is something Peoples Group has invested in and will continue to do. As we procure new office space and new furnishings, ergonomic design will be top of mind.

In our facilities, an accessibility room or a ‘defend in place’ room (along with a ‘buddy’ system) was implemented for those who cannot navigate the stairs in an emergency or drill. The process of communication starts with an employee notifying our People and Culture team of the need for the accessibility room – fire wardens and first aid attendants within our organization are made aware through training and in the event of an emergency or drill, and the building management and fire department are notified. All this information is included in our emergency response plan and is shared with our organization on our OHSC portal.

Further communication plans take place where fire wardens notify the building management and in turn the fire department is made aware when the room is in use. All fire wardens and first aid attendants within Peoples Group are made aware of the room.

Once again, in the next year as our plans to move offices or upgrade offices takes form, accessibility will be part of the conversation and integrated into our choices.

The Design and delivery of programs and services

Although in-office meetings had been the traditional way to get employees together, the continued use of our hybrid work environment has provided Peoples Group employees and partners the opportunity to meeting virtually to connect and share

ideas. The technical advances afforded through Microsoft Teams enabled sessions allows participants to record meetings as well as add transcription as an added benefit.

We remain open to suggestions to further improve the design of our training programs and services with accessibility in mind.

Transportation

On occasions where Peoples Group arranges transportation for employees for work related purposes, accessible transportation will also be arranged upon request. Otherwise, this section is not applicable.

Consultations

For the last 2 years, Peoples Group has not only consulted with our employees to find out what they think about accessibility at our workplace, but we also have looked outside our organization to [Excellence Canada](#) to help provide us with feedback on our plans and to help us improve our work.

Last year, Excellence Canada reviewed our accessibility plan to let us know what we did well and where we could do better. Their feedback from 2024 has been worked into our progress report, improving it, and we thank them for their support and direction.

In 2025, we looked to Excellence Canada once again, to review our progress report. Members of their review committee have disabilities including mental health, mobility, autism, and vision. In their review, they looked for various disabilities to be considered, if our report seemed adequate, if progress could be improved and if goals were achieved. A summary of their feedback is provided below and will be embedded into our goals for improvement in subsequent reports.

- The People & Culture statement on job postings was liked, but people may not ask for accommodation as they don't want to disclose disabilities until hired.
- Sensory overload was taken seriously - warmer lighting was suggested as less stimulating.
- The emergency plan, room, and buddy system were well liked.
- Consider alternate colors/ dark mode for all platforms – they are easier to read and cause less eyestrain.
- Consider additional disabilities to enhance the plan, such as –

- Guidelines for accommodating cognitive/ memory challenges.
- Chronic pain/ energy-limiting conditions.
- Speech related disabilities – options for non-verbal meetings or hiring processes.
- Vision impairment – magnifying tools, large print resources, high contrast designs across all platforms.
- Notable strengths of the report included –
 - Upgrading to Windows 11 with accessibility features.
 - Addressing the built and invisible environments.
 - Consulting external bodies, like Excellence Canada.
 - Internal training about neurodiversity and disability.
- Pace of change in physical areas could be quicker.
- Create a roadmap of what's in progress vs what's complete.
- Designate accessibility advocates and include people with disabilities in the planning process.
- Keep training alive by re-upping materials and awareness.

Overall, it was noted that Peoples Group has a plan for reaching their accessibility goals. More detail in certain areas is warranted, but overall, excellent progress has been made.

If you would like to see the full report from Excellence Canada, please let us know.

Feedback

Earlier in our progress report, we included the feedback received from our organization about accessibility that was collected through our second annual survey.

We asked employees what experiences they or someone they know had with barriers to accessibility in our workplace. Employees were also asked to think about our physical environment, technology at work and if they have encountered barriers to an 'invisible' disability.

To help us make improvements, we asked what suggestions our employees had for us– and in return, we opened the door to asking people to interpret the world around them in a non-mainstream way. Asking these questions allows people to have a thoughtful inner dialogue about our workplace, to look at it through a difference lens and allow us to use that information in a collaborative way.

If employees, partners, or stakeholders have further questions or feedback about our accessibility plan or progress report, we encourage them to reach out.

Additionally, if you have feedback about any barriers that you have encountered when dealing with our organization, please let us know.

As well, if you have feedback or advice about the way Peoples Group has implemented our accessibility plan, reach out and tell us. All collected feedback will be reviewed by our Occupational Health and Safety Committee and taken into consideration for implementation. All feedback is kept on record.

Peoples Group can receive feedback through our mailing address, our [email address](#), our telephone number, online webform and social media platforms – all these methods are included on pages 3 and 4 of this report. So far, none of the feedback we have received through these means has been related to accessibility.