

**BCFSA 2026-2029**

**Accessibility**

**Plan**

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# Introduction

## ABOUT BCFSA

BC Financial Services Authority (BCFSA) is the Crown agency responsible for regulating British Columbia's financial services sector. Established in 2019, BCFSA oversees credit unions, trusts, insurance companies, pension plans, mortgage services, real estate services, and real estate development marketing. BCFSA also administers the Credit Union Deposit Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. As an independent-self-funded regulator reporting to the Minister of Finance, BCFSA has a mandate to build and maintain confidence in the financial services sector by focusing on consumer protection and the safety, soundness, and resiliency of our regulated entities.

BCFSA's mandate is rooted in promoting fair, transparent, and resilient financial markets. Through supervision, licensing, enforcement, and public education, the organization helps ensure that regulated entities and professionals operate ethically, competently, and in compliance with provincial legislation.

Guided by its core values of integrity, innovation, collaboration, courage, growth and equity, diversity and inclusion, BCFSA takes a risk-based and forward-looking approach to regulation. Its work supports a financial services environment where British Columbians can make informed decisions with confidence and trust in the systems and professionals that serve them.

The Accessible British Columbia Act became law in June 2021, establishing a legal framework to help identify, remove and prevent barriers to full and equal participation of people with disabilities. Under the Act, BCFSA is required to develop an accessibility plan and update it every three years. The BCFSA Accessibility Plan, effective 2026 to 2029, builds on progress already made and focuses on strengthening our foundations for even greater accessibility, aligning with our core values of creating an inclusive work environment. This accessibility plan underscores our ongoing commitment to creating a barrier-free workplace and delivering accessible services to the B.C. public.

This accessibility plan has five priorities:

1. Creating a culture of accessibility and inclusion
2. Employment at BCFSA
3. Built environment
4. Information and communication technology
5. Delivery of services

Should you wish to provide feedback about BCFSA's 2026-2029 Accessibility Plan, or any barriers you have experienced when interacting with BCFSA, contact us using any of the methods noted below.

For more information on how to provide feedback to BCFSA and what BCFSA will use this feedback for, visit [Accessibility at BCFSA](#).

### Contact:

Telephone:

(604) 660-3555 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday except holidays)

Email:

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## RECONCILIATION IN OUR WORK

BCFSA is committed to reconciliation, reflecting the expectation that public sector organizations work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and communities and advance reconciliation as part of their mandate. As a financial services regulator, this commitment is expressed through both the design and delivery of certain strategies and initiatives, and through how we carry out our work. It informs how impacts are assessed, how engagement occurs, and how regulatory judgment is exercised, and will be reflected in the way the strategic priorities and initiatives in this plan are advanced.

## GUIDING FRAMEWORK

Our guiding framework fundamentally underlines our work in preparation of our accessibility plan, along with our equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives at BCFSA.

### Intersectionality

- People with disabilities come from different backgrounds including race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, socioeconomic status, and others. These overlapping identities can compound disadvantages and influence and shape individuals' experiences with barriers. BCFSA acknowledges that every person with a disability has unique and individualized experience. We work to identify, remove, and prevent barriers by recognizing that we need to apply an intersectional lens to help ensure inclusivity is met.

### Gender-based analysis plus

- A gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) lens helps to explain how intersecting systems of discrimination inform peoples' lived experiences. This intersectional element considers how sex (biological) and gender (social) intersect with disability, lived realities, and experiences. By incorporating diverse perspectives through a GBA+ lens, it helps us to make more informed and effective decisions that will better shape inclusivity and accessibility at BCFSA.

### Accessible British Columbia Act

- This legislation seeks to identify, prevent and remove any barriers and guides the work on accessibility standards based on the experiences of people with disabilities. BCFSA's Accessibility Plan uses the principles named in the Accessible B.C. Act as a framework to guide the development of our plan. The principles are: inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design.

### BCFSA's EDI Strategy guiding principles:

- **Adaptability:** Our accessibility plan can change and respond to needs as they arise in both the physical and social environment.

- **Accessibility:** BCFSA strives to remove barriers and create flexibility in policies, processes, and outcomes to accommodate a variety of needs and abilities.
- **Collaboration:** BCFSA operates in a way that allows for meaningful contribution, diversity of thought, and collective efforts to create inclusion.
- **Dignity:** BCFSA strives to ensure that dignity is respected in all interactions. Self-worth and independence are valued.
- **Diversity:** BCFSA appreciates that each person is unique and brings their own inherent, experiential, and thought diversity to our work. BCFSA recognizes the province it serves as a diverse and unique group.
- **Equity:** We structure our policies, processes, and environments to achieve parity and empower employees to achieve outcomes.
- **Inclusion:** BCFSA treats individuals fairly, values uniqueness, and promotes a sense of belonging for all. Inclusion means that our environment, technologies, and services promote belonging and equal participation for individuals with different abilities.
- **Self-determination:** BCFSA's policies, processes, and environment allow for flexibility so people can have control over their decisions and are active participants rather than passive recipients.
- **Universal design:** BCFSA is accessible to all. Our physical environment, technology, and services are designed with equitable accessibility in mind.

## ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPLES

Core to the principle of accessibility for BCFSA are strategies that help enable full and equitable participation of all community members. At BCFSA, our work is guided by the following:

### Strategic framework

BCFSA is evolving to better support a strong, trusted, and inclusive financial services sector in British Columbia. While building and maintaining consumer confidence remains central to our role, we are also focused on creating a financial system that is accessible, responsive, and able to meet the changing needs of the people and the communities we serve.

BCFSA's vision and purpose guides how we prioritize our work and make decisions. We focus on the areas that have the greatest impact on confidence, fairness, and accessibility across the financial sector. This means setting clear expectations, acting early to address risks and barriers, and improving how we deliver services and information, so they are easier to understand and access.

Our accessibility plan reflects one of our key focuses in our equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy. The four focus areas of the EDI strategy are: accessibility, sexual orientation and gender identity, Indigenous relations and reconciliation, and multiculturalism and anti-racism. These interconnected focus areas help guide our efforts to build a more inclusive workplace and deliver services that are responsive to the diverse needs of British Columbians.

We are committed to being proactive, transparent, and accountable in our work. By listening to diverse perspectives and understanding the needs of British Columbians, including people with disabilities, we aim to build unity within the financial services environment that is inclusive, resilient and trustworthy.

### Core values and vision

BCFSA's work is guided by our core values that support an inclusive, accessible and trusted financial services sector in British Columbia.

Our core values:

- **Integrity:** We act with honesty, openness, and transparency and we hold ourselves accountable.
- **Courage:** We think and act boldly to do the right thing.
- **Innovation:** We embrace change and act creatively to fulfill our mandate.
- **Growth:** We pursue opportunities to develop individually and as an organization
- **Collaboration:** We seek out and engage the best of what each of us has to offer, knowing we are stronger together.
- **Equity, diversity, and inclusion:** We embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion and view it as a source of strength.

Our vision is thriving financial services in British Columbia. Our purpose is to build and maintain public confidence. We work toward this by focusing on the most important risks and barriers, strengthening our regulatory practices, supporting innovation across the sector, preparing for emerging challenges, and improving how we use people, data and technology to better serve British Columbians.

### ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

BCFSA is committed to creating an inclusive, diverse, and accessible environment for all. At BCFSA, this means we are working on creating a barrier-free environment so that employees with disabilities are welcomed and can provide their expertise in their service to British Columbia, as well as working to create a barrier-free environment for our regulated entities and consumers in accessing the services we provide. At BCFSA, we understand the importance of creating an accessible and inclusive environment and are committed to creating a more accessible British Columbia.

### ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

BCFSA's Accessibility Committee was established in 2023 and includes employees who identify as people with disabilities or are allies of people with disabilities. The committee provides input and advice on our accessibility plan, along with various aspects of our services.

### EVALUATION

BCFSA will conduct a review and evaluation of the accessibility plan every three years from adoption. This plan will be made public on our website within one fiscal quarter.

# Accessibility plan priorities for 2026-2029

## 1. PRIORITY: CREATING A CULTURE OF ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

A culture of accessibility and inclusion is the key in meeting people where they are at. A supportive work culture respects the different needs, experiences, and identities of employees. By creating a workplace that values diversity, inclusion, and intersectionality, BCFSA aims to build an environment where all employees feel welcome, respected, supported, and empowered to succeed.

Stigma and attitudinal barriers are one of the challenges, along with the negative consequences for people who self-identify as a person with a disability. Lack of accessibility and inclusive competency, particularly at the management level, can create disadvantages and lack of insight faced by those facing accessibility issues.

### 1.1 GOAL

Our goal is to strengthen a culture of accessibility and inclusion through engagement with people with disabilities and allies to build an inclusive and accessible workplace where employees have a voice in shaping policies and initiatives. We will continue to foster a culture of accessibility and inclusion to challenge the barriers and remove stigma people from underrepresented groups face.

### 1.2 TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS, BCFSA WILL:

- Continue to work with internal and external disability awareness groups to promote awareness and foster an inclusive culture
- Continuing to engage with employees facing accessibility challenges through structured consultation opportunities to address systemic barriers
- Cultivate safe spaces for people with disabilities to help navigate through accessibility challenges
- Internal accessibility presentations and information sessions to further promote awareness of the full scope of visible and invisible disabilities
- Utilize BCFSA's Accessibility Committee as a consultation body to review and endorse any new or reformed BCFSA initiatives and policies related to accessibility to help ensure inclusivity
- Address systemic barriers by consulting with people with disabilities and sharing best practices to incorporate in procedures, policies, and guidelines
- Continue to use Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to assess how diverse groups may experience our services and programs
- Continue to have conversations with employees to identify barriers and keep accessibility considerations a top priority for all internal and external meetings (physical space, communications, and meeting formats)

### 1.3 ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

- Created a structured feedback mechanism for accessibility concerns
- All members of the EDI Committee receive training on unconscious bias to help ensure that employee's reflexivity is at the forefront of their decisions
- Keynote speakers have been invited to all-staff meetings to talk about topics related to equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Monthly internal publications of content on topics related to accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Internal information campaigns and events to promote awareness about accessibility

## 2. PRIORITY: EMPLOYMENT AT BCFSA

People with disabilities can face barriers to finding and keeping work, even when they have the right skills and qualifications. Accessible and inclusive human resource practices can help create conditions to support the full cycle of recruitment, onboarding, retention, career development, and accommodation of employees with disabilities. The goal of employment at BCFSA is to support equal access to job opportunities and create a workplace that is accessible and inclusive to support the skills and talents for all people.

### 2.1 GOAL:

Our goal is to continue building an inclusive and accessible workplace at BCFSA. By creating an inclusive and accessible workplace, we aim to create a workplace that promotes diversity.

### 2.2 TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS, BCFSA WILL:

- Continuing to spread awareness on accessibility through creating an internal campaign to promote the accessibility course, called *Create an Accessible Workplace*, for employees and in particular leaders (all levels).
- Foster an inclusive environment that supports people who identify as neurodivergent through conversations with employees.
- Review meeting protocols to help the structure of the meetings so that it can capture full accessibility needs, including the length of time, frequency of breaks, and communication formats so diverse needs are met.
- Provide focus tools to help employees regulate sensory processing during meetings.

### 2.3 ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

- Joined the [Presidents Group](#) (also known as Accessible Employers) in 2021.
- Participated in the Pledge to Measure, a Presidents Group initiative on measuring diversity inclusion in the workplace.
- Collaborated with the Presidents Group to curate a course on accessibility in the workforce, open to all employees at BCFSA
- Partnered with Canadian National Institute for the Blind Foundation (CNIB), Canadian Partners in Workforce Innovation (CAN WiN), and Inclusion BC, to strengthen our understanding of accessible employment and implement recognized best practices in recruitment.
- Used training programs such as *Sight Loss in the Workplace* and *The Four Pillars of Accessible and Inclusive Employment* to provide practical tools to hiring teams to support inclusive hiring practices, while formal Accommodation During the Recruitment Process guidelines are used to ensure candidates are informed of available support and can participate equitably throughout the hiring process.

## 3. PRIORITY: BUILT ENVIRONMENT

BCFSA works to identify and remove accessibility barriers in its workplace. BCFSA provides accessible, inclusive spaces for employees. The organization recognizes the importance of flexibility and support for employees with disabilities.

### 3.1 GOAL:

Our goal is to make emergency procedures within our office is more accessible. One of the barriers identified was the emergency alerts and their reach in accessibility to include all types of disabilities.

### 3.2 TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS, BCFSA WILL:

- Review and update emergency procedure plans to be inclusive of all disabilities.
- Review and update emergency notification systems to alert all employees of different disabilities through enhancement of alert systems.



### 3.3 ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

- Completed an audit with the Rick Hansen Foundation to identify ways to make our office more accessible for people with disabilities. BCFSA's office is Rick Hansen Accessibility Certified.
- Reviewed our emergency and evacuation procedures to help ensure that people with disabilities are included.
- Development of the floor warden assistance system to provide support to people with disabilities in the event of an emergency.

## 4. PRIORITY: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Accessible communication and technologies are fundamental to removing barriers and creating an inclusive environment where everyone can access information, services, and opportunities equitably. At BCFSA, we recognize that people have diverse accessibility needs, and that barriers can arise when information, digital tools, and systems are not designed with accessibility in mind. Technology products are often designed and built on different platforms even for the same device. While products may look and feel the same, the level of accessibility can vary.

Providing information in multiple formats and ensuring that the information is accessible across platforms helps employees and the public participate fully, independently, and with dignity. It is important that all employees have equal access to technology, services, and systems to maximize efficiency. When digital tools are accessible, employees can work effectively, use their skills and talents, and contribute fully to their work. By prioritizing accessibility in our communications, information services and technology, we enable people to use their skills and talents effectively, contribute meaningfully, and access information at BCFSA without unnecessary barriers.

### 4.1 GOAL:

Our goal is to continue to work towards providing information and communication in the most inclusive and accessible way possible. By creating information that is accessible, whether it be a presentation, meeting, reports, documents or online forms, we aim to incorporate a universal design to empower all employees, consumers and our regulated entities.

### 4.2 TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS, BCFSA WILL:

- Review and improve digital accessibility of our internal intranet platform to improve accessibility for employees.
- Review and improve online meeting formats so all types of communication forms including closed captioning, are being utilized for accessibility to diverse needs.
- Continue to regularly review BCFSA's external website to meet accessibility standards.
- Continue to use plain language in all our communications.
- Review and clarify our procedures and practices regarding assistive technology for people with disabilities.

### 4.3 ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

- Updated brand and digital guidelines to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
- Reviewing and revising our brand strategy and assets to better align elements and colours for accessibility, including enhancing readability
- Curated an inclusive language guide.

- Reviewed language used in BCFSA's editorial style guide so it reflects appropriate accessibility and inclusive language.
- Refreshed our internal templates to help team members to create accessible documents from the start.
- Incorporated a GBA+ review of our corporate policies.

## 5. PRIORITY: DELIVERY OF SERVICES

As the regulator of financial services in B.C., BCFSA provides a wide range of services to people in British Columbia. Making these programs and services accessible helps ensure that everyone, including people with disabilities, can use and benefit from them. Accessibility features often make the experience better for all users, not only those with disabilities.

### 5.1 GOAL:

We want the public to easily access our services, including our online services and resources. By streamlining these services and resources, we can help the public to better access services independently and equitably, improving the users' experience.

### 5.2 TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS, BCFSA WILL:

- Monitor and review resources and services available to consumers and regulated entities to ensure that accessibility needs are met.
- Continue to promote best practices and training for employees designing and delivering programs and services to meet accessibility.
- Review our online forms for our regulated entities for accessibility standards.

## CONCLUSION

At BCFSA, we understand the importance of accessibility and inclusivity. BCFSA will continue to work towards an inclusive work environment where the standards set out by the Accessible B.C. Act are met, so that all employees will have an equitable opportunity to build their careers. We recognize that creating an accessible environment is an ongoing learning process with feedback from our team members, consumers, and regulated entities to help guide us. By creating an inclusive, diverse, accessible environment, BCFSA stands to better serve consumers and regulated entities by proactively identifying, removing and preventing physical, digital and communication barriers.

## DEFINITIONS

In this plan, we use the following terms and their definitions from the [BC Accessibility Hub](#):

**Disability** – An inability to participate fully and equally in society because of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.

**Impairment** – Includes a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary or episodic.

**Barrier** – Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with a disability

- Caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies, and
- Affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.

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 **Confidence  
Starts Here**