

# The Accessible Information and Communication Standard

## Thursday, Jan. 16, 2025

00:15

**Jason Booth**

Hi, good afternoon. My name is Jason Booth with Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Division. Thank you for joining us for this afternoon's webinar.

The accessible information and communication standard. We'll begin today's webinar with a brief introduction from Cees de Vries, Director of Quality Enhancement and Program Development with Early Learning and Child Care. Our primary speaker today will be Monica Bonsor, Senior Compliance Officer with the Department of Families. Also on hand is Colleen Watters, Policy Analyst with the Department of Families, for questions on behalf of the Manitoba accessibility office.

00:50

**Jason Booth**

Following today's formal presentation, we'll have time for questions, which you are welcome to submit via the chat. Throughout the presentation, we will try to answer as many questions as we can, which will be read out by Melissa Shapiro, a policy analyst with ELCC. We will also be documenting all the questions that are sent to ensure that even questions that are not answered live today will be reviewed and considered.

As a reminder, please limit your questions to the matter at hand. And with that, I'll turn things over to Case for the land acknowledgement and to review today's agenda.

01:25

**Cees deVries**

All right. Thanks, Jason. So for the land acknowledgement, we recognize that Manitoba is on Treaties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 Territories and the ancestral lands of Anishinaabe, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininiwak and Nehethowuk Peoples. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.

02:12

**Cees deVries**

And for our agenda today, as Jason mentioned, Monica will be providing a presentation of the Information and Communication Standard. This will include an overview of the purpose of the legislation who is required to comply, areas required for compliance. Compliance monitoring resources and funding, and who to contact for more information. And then we'll close off, as Jason mentioned, with questions.

02:41

**Cees deVries**

And just a general reminder. Before we turn it over to our guest today, if you missed it, a copy of the circular FA and FAQs are available on the ELCC website. A copy of the webinar will also be available on the same webpage following the webinar's conclusion. General inquiries about early learning and childcare can be directed to our website. Additional contacts and resources will be provided at the close of the session.

And I'll now turn it over to Monica Bonsor from the Manitoba Accessibility Compliance Secretary.

03:18

**Monica Bonsor**

Hey everyone, it's great to be here today and lovely to see such an amazing turnout for this presentation. Just bear with me a moment while I share my screen. Just let me know if there's any issues. With... sharing the screen, but it should be popping up for people now.

03:43

**Monica Bonsor**

Okay, wonderful. So like Kay said, I'll be talking about the accessible information and communication standard regulation today. I work for the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat. And as part of the presentation, I'll also give a bit of an intro to what my office does and how we're able to assist organizations.

04:10

**Monica Bonsor**

We do a bit of a disclaimer at the beginning of our presentations. Accessibility requirements may change as accessibility standards are passed or amended. So the information that I'm providing today complements the application of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act and its standards, but it is not legal advice. So if there's ever a tricky legal question, please refer to the Act and the regulations directly.

04:41

**Monica Bonsor**

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act Its goal is to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to participation encountered by Manitobans And a barrier is anything that prevents somebody with a disability from participating in society on an equal basis.

05:01

**Monica Bonsor**

The Act provides a legislative framework to develop accessibility standards And it builds on the principles of the Manitoba Human Rights Code. Right now, there are five accessibility standard regulations that are currently in force or planned under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. The Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation was the first to be enacted in 2015. And it's been enforced for all sectors since 2018. The Accessible Employment Standard Regulation was enacted in 2019. And it is enforced for all sectors since 2022.

05:52

**Monica Bonsor**

The accessibility standard for information and communication is the one we're really going to be focusing on today. And it's been coming into force in the province over the last two years. And the private and nonprofit sectors are the last sectors to have to comply with this regulation and that deadline will be May 1st, 2025. We also recently enacted an accessibility standard for transportation, which became law on January 1st, 2024.

06:25

**Monica Bonsor**

And it will begin to become enforceable In January 2027. And I should just note because we have received a question about transportation from the sector that it will not apply to early learning and childcare. And finally, we will have an accessible outdoor spaces standard and that is currently in development.

06:53

**Monica Bonsor**

The role of the office I work for, the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat, is to promote compliance with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act and its regulations. We conduct reviews and inspections to monitor compliance in the private, nonprofit, and public sectors. We investigate accessibility complaints We enforce compliance through education, collaboration, and sanctions. And we have an accessibility compliance framework that describes the different steps in our compliance process.

07:32

**Monica Bonsor**

Our framework is a progressive approach to compliance that aims to reduce the use of punitive enforcement actions. If an organization is found to be in noncompliance, the first step is to educate into compliance. Which means providing support in ways that best encourage and promote compliance with accessibility legislation.

07:56

**Monica Bonsor**

Sanctions such as written orders to comply and financial penalties are a last resort of our framework. The accessible information and communication standard requires organizations in Manitoba to create and act on policies, practices and measures that identify, prevent, and remove barriers respecting accessible communication. And this may involve, but is not limited to the utilization of accessible formats and communication supports, which I'll define soon.

08:38

**Monica Bonsor**

Childcare facility staff. Board members and volunteers who undertake the following functions are required to meet these compliance requirements. Those who communicate with the public or stakeholders on behalf of your child care facility Those who maintain your website and web content. Those who purchase or procure information technology And those who develop and implement your facility's policies, practices, and procedures So this includes all staff and volunteers. And the upcoming compliance deadline for this sector for organizations in the sector with one or more employee, including casual staff. So I'll really highlight that. Must comply by May 1st, 2025. And this includes not-for-profit and for-profit childcare centers nursery schools, family and group homes.

09:45

**Monica Bonsor**

So a sector specific example for who would need to comply and who would be exempt. Let's take a home-based daycare that has no employees. Nobody is a paid employee on a full-time, part-time or casual basis. But there's a family member in the home who occasionally volunteers to help out That home-based daycare would not need to comply with the regulation because there's no employees.

10:17

**Monica Bonsor**

However, a home-based daycare that has one casual employee that works from time to time and a family member who occasionally volunteers is subject to this regulation and must comply with requirements including training. Accessible formats provide information in a way that is accessible to people disabled by barriers. They're also referred to as alternate formats. So you

may hear me using accessible and alternate format interchangeably throughout the presentation.

10:56

**Monica Bonsor**

Examples include documents in large print or braille. Plain language, recorded audio Accessible formats are usable with a screen reader. And can include text transcripts of audio or visual information. Communication supports help to facilitate communication between two or more people and help organizations to communicate effectively with a wide audience. Examples include sign language interpretation. Screen reader technology. Captioning, video relay services, and adaptive or assistive technologies.

11:46

**Monica Bonsor**

I'll outline general requirements of the accessible information and communication standard in the next couple slides. The first is to inform the public and employees that information is available in accessible formats and through communication supports on request. And a good way to meet this duty to inform the public and employees is to post a statement on your website and or include a statement on any documents that may be shared with the public and employees, just letting them know that they can make a request.

Then if your organization receives a request The first step is to consult with the person who made the request to identify the supporter format that would remove the barriers that they face. The person making the request is always the expert on their own communication needs and is the best source of information. On how to support them.

12:58

**Monica Bonsor**

Then, after you consult. Provide that information using the identified format or support in a timely manner. And the regulation specifies a timely manner because the provision of different accessible formats or communication supports can take a bit A bit more time. Or less time, depending on what is requested. For A document is requested in large print. It's usually pretty easy to go into like Microsoft Word or another word processing program.

13:37

**Monica Bonsor**

And make the content into a larger font. However, if information is requested in Braille, you may need to seek a third party organization that is able to print materials in Braille because generally speaking, we don't have braille printers in every office or every facility. So that can sometimes

take a little bit more time to provide. And importantly. Do not impose a cost or fee for providing information through communication support or alternate format that wouldn't be applied on a person who did not make a request.

14:24

**Monica Bonsor**

Organizations must have a process in place to receive and respond to feedback, including complaints about the accessibility of information and communication. Organizations must document the actions that they take to respond to feedback received and make that documentation available on request to the person that provided the feedback. There are some exceptions to providing information through an accessible format or communication support that are included in the regulation.

If it is not technically feasible to provide the information through the requested support or format. If the technology required is not readily available. If providing the information would result in demonstrable undue hardship. On the organization. If you do not have direct control over the information or if the information relates to product labels or other product information.

15:35

**Monica Bonsor**

For compliance purposes. If your organization has assessed that an exception is being met in response to a request for information and communication. It's important to be able to provide evidence of that and that, you know, the option was explored The accessible information and communication standard regulation has adopted international web accessibility guidelines.

16:17

**Monica Bonsor**

The World Wide Web Consortium, or W3C, is an international community that develops open standards to ensure the long-term growth of the web. Web content accessibility guidelines, or CAG, were developed by the W3C in cooperation with individuals and organizations around the world. The goal is to provide a single shared standard for web content accessibility that meets the needs of individuals, organizations, and governments internationally.

16:59

**Monica Bonsor**

Wcag guidelines have evolved over the years and continue to be updated by the W3C. Manitoba's accessibility legislation has adopted WCAG 2.1, Level AA guidelines as the requirement for obligated organizations in Manitoba. Lots of questions. We receive lots of questions about how to meet WCAG.

And the nice thing about these guidelines is there's a lot of tools and resources available for free on the W3 website to help organizations comply. I encourage you to look for the WCAG 2 quick ref rinse tool and that can be shared with web developers or designers to help them know where they need to find this information.

17:52

**Monica Bonsor**

It's important to note that organizations that do not have the in-house expertise to make updates are still required to comply with this legal requirement. And are professionals such as a web developer may be best situated to assist organizations to meet WCAG compliance. In the future, the Secretariat will conduct planned audits of specific sectors for compliance purposes. And if issues with compliance are noted, we'll work with organizations to correct any compliance issues.

18:29

**Monica Bonsor**

It's important to note, because we receive this request sometimes that we don't conduct website accessibility audits on request. But if that's something that your facility is interested in, there are organizations or perhaps a web developer can help you with a specific accessibility audit for your website. Accessible web content. This includes any information that is published on the internet website of an organization in Manitoba. And web content must meet WCAG 2.1 level AA if one or both of the following applies.

19:20

**Monica Bonsor**

If the web content is required to access the goods and services of your facility. Or if the web content is newly published after the compliance deadline of May 1st, 2025. It's important to note that historical web content that is not required to access your organization's goods and services does not need to comply with WCAG 2.1A. So you don't need to go back in time and update old newsletters, for example, or if you've got a blog on your website. You don't need to go back and update that information if it's not required to access your goods and services.

20:08

**Monica Bonsor**

And internal websites or intranet websites for early learning and child care organizations are not required to meet WCAG 2.1A under the regulation, although we would consider this a best practice. Accessible web applications are also included in the regulation. And a web application is defined as software that is run on a web server and accessed through a web browser. An example would be an online childcare registration portal. Web-based applications must meet WCAG 2.1a if the application is newly published on or after the compliance deadline.

21:03

**Monica Bonsor**

Or if the application receives a significant update on or after the compliance deadline. Significant updates are those that change the functionality user base or purpose of the application. And mobile applications that you'd access on, say, like your mobile phone or a tablet They're not included in this regulation and do not need to meet WCAG 2.1A. The standard also includes exceptions. For meeting WCAG 2.1A that are very similar to the exceptions for responding to requests for accessible information.

21:51

**Monica Bonsor**

So your organization isn't required to meet WCAG 2.1A if it's not technically feasible. If the technology required to meet the level is not readily available. If meeting WCAG 2.1A would result in demonstrable undue hardship on the organization. If the organization does not have direct control over the content or application. Or if the content or application relates to product labels or other product information.

22:29

**Monica Bonsor**

And again, it's important if an exception applies to maintain records of why the exception applies for compliance purposes. There are training requirements included in the regulation and obligated organizations in Manitoba are required to provide accessible communication trainee training to employees, agents, and volunteers who are responsible for the applicable duties. These duties include those who provide information to the public or other organizations in Manitoba on behalf of the organization.

23:16

**Monica Bonsor**

Those who develop or maintain web content. Those who purchase or procure information technology or communication tools. And those who develop or implement the organization's accessible information and communication policies and practices. So for the early learning and childcare sector, this would include board members and casual employees. The regulation specifies that accessible information and communication training must be provided to the applicable persons as soon as reasonably possible. And that ongoing training must be provided when there are changes to accessible information and communication policies practices or measures.



24:13

**Monica Bonsor**

To ensure that accessible information and communication is provided to new employees. Some organizations choose to put this training in as part of onboarding procedures so that new staff volunteers and board members receive it. Refresher training is considered a best practice but is not a regulatory requirement. Some organizations may choose to require staff to retake the training on a periodic basis one or like every two or three years. But again, this would just be a best practice and not a requirement.

25:00

**Monica Bonsor**

Free online training that meets the minimum training requirements of the regulation is available. Through the Accessibility for Manitobans Act online learning portal. So the Manitoba government has developed a training for each of the regulations that is currently in force. It's free to take. It can also be downloaded and put into internal learning management systems. And at the end of the training, participants can print or save a certificate of completion.

25:41

**Monica Bonsor**

Organizations may also choose to develop their own training that meets the minimum requirements of the regulation But... it is to easily and quickly get this done on an ongoing basis. I encourage you to access the online learning module.

26:03

**Monica Bonsor**

A question we've received relates to the retention of training certificates or records related to training. So if an organization utilizes the accessibility for Manitobans Act learning portal to meet training requirements. Participants are encouraged to, in addition to saving a copy for their own records to provide that to the director or designated administrator of their child care facility.

And an obligated individual is not required to retake the training if a certificate is obtained through another organization as long as They're able to document that with a new facility, for example, if they're getting a new job. And organize each organization is responsible for retaining its own training records and ensuring that all staff volunteers and board members. Are trained. The online learning portal, there's no database of games that is recorded or saved on the government end of things. So it's really important that each organization maintains these records.

27:21

**Monica Bonsor**

If your organization chooses to develop its own training. The regulation specifies that training contents must include How to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to accessible communication? How to provide information through a communication support. Or alternate format.

27:43

**Monica Bonsor**

A review of the accessibility for Manitobans Act. The Human Rights Code. And the accessible information and communication standard regulation. Some organizations are required to keep a documented record of accessible information and communication policies. So early learning and child care facilities with 50 or more employees, including full-time, part-time. And casual staff. Are required to keep this record.

This must include a summary of training materials offered. And when training is offered in addition to general policies about accessible information and communication. Organizations that are required to maintain documented policies must also inform the public that these accessibility policies are available on request.

28:53

**Monica Bonsor**

As a best practice, all organizations are encouraged to write down the policies, practices and measures related to the provision of accessible information and communication. However, it is a best practice for organizations with zero to 49 employees and only kicks in as a requirement if you have 50 or more staff.

Regulation also contains requirements that are specific to educational institutions or public libraries. And a question we've received from the early learning and childcare sector is if these organizations are defined As educational institutions or if the libraries they may have for children are considered libraries under the regulation And I can say nope.

29:54

**Monica Bonsor**

These sections of the regulation, you don't have to comply with. Because childcare centers are not included in the definition of a library or educational institution. In this regulation. My office is one of the resources that can support compliance. So you can contact the accessibility compliance secretariat if you have questions about compliance with the Act and the standards.

30:31

**Monica Bonsor**

If you're drafting an accessibility policy, we can review it before it's finalized and offer feedback related to compliance with the regulation. And we can also share tools and resources to assist

your organization to increase service accessibility and comply with legislated standards. The Manitoba Accessibility Office is another government resource. They maintain the accessibility mb.ca website, which includes many different tools and resources to support accessibility compliance. You can subscribe to Accessibility News, a monthly electronic newsletter to stay informed on accessibility.

And the Manitoba Accessibility Office also creates and updates the free online training that's available through the Accessibility for Manitobans Act online learning portal.

31:42

**Monica Bonsor**

The Manitoba government also offers the Manitoba Accessibility Fund Which is an annual grant program that provides one-time grants to help organizations in Manitoba remove barriers create awareness and support compliance with the accessibility for Manitobans Act. Right now, this is a great time to be having this presentation because applications for the Accessibility Fund are currently being accepted. For the 2025 and 26 fiscal year. If your facility is interested in applying for the Manitoba Accessibility Fund.

32:25

**Monica Bonsor**

You have until February 14th, 2025 to apply. And you can visit [accessibilitymb.ca](http://accessibilitymb.ca) for more information. It's important to note that accessibility funds, grants, they are limited. And organizations are required to comply with accessibility legislation Regardless of receiving funding from MAF. Or the Manitoba Accessibility Fund. Sorry, we shorten it to math

33:01

**Monica Bonsor**

So we'll allow some time for questions. Before we really get into questions, I want to just thank you for your commitment to accessibility in Manitoba. Again, it's really great to see such a good turnout today.

And I also have contact information that You don't have to worry too much about capturing it off the screen because the presentation will be shared. But my contact information is in here and then the general contact information for our offices as well.

And that's the end. So I'll turn it over to see if we have any questions.

33:47

**Jason Booth**

Thanks so much, Monica. We're going to open things up now. We have some great questions in the chat already. Which we will be reading out for Monica and for Colleen. Colleen, just give us a quick shout there if you can hear us.

34:03

**Colleen Watters**

Yes.

34:04

**Jason Booth**

Perfect. Okay. Just wanted to make sure. And we'll turn things over to Melissa for the first question.

34:12

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you, Jay. Our first question comes from Maria. If someone asks for Braille format, is there a grant or a funding the government will provide to offset this fee?

34:24

**Monica Bonsor**

No. I don't believe so. Colleen would math Kick in for Braille information.

34:32

**Colleen Watters**

Well, I guess if it was part of a like if it was part of a larger project It could, but not for providing braille on an ongoing basis because that's an alternate format requirement under the um information and communication standard

34:55

**Monica Bonsor**

So if somebody asks for braille. You would need to provide it.

We don't necessarily like sometimes I get a question about like, oh, do we need to have all these alternate formats on hand always? And the answer to that is So, you know, I wouldn't recommend panicking and going out and ordering all your documents in braille.

It's possible that you might never receive a request. A good practice is when you're creating documents to format them as accessibly as possible so that when you respond to requests.

It's easier to work with the document and convert it into different form.

35:45

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have similar questions from Corinne, Marilyn, and Sandra. Our facility does not have a website. Are we required to make one or is this for centers who already have a website?

35:58

**Monica Bonsor**

You are not required to make a website. But if you choose to make one in the future. Remember the WCAG 2.1 guidelines. Those will help your developer out.

36:11

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Sarah. We also have some unpaid practicum students that will be starting with us, will we be getting them to do the training as well?

36:24

**Monica Bonsor**

That's a good question. An unpaid student would likely be captured under volunteer. So if they haven't already taken this sort of training, I would encourage you to have them take it.

36:37

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Claris. What is the timeframe for new employees onboarding to complete the mandatory training?

36:47

**Monica Bonsor**

The regulation says as soon as reasonably practicable. So it really does depend on the individual organization. Some organizations or sectors may have more training requirements when somebody starts a new job than others. So the regulation really is open to as soon as reasonably possible for your facility.

37:19

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Diamond. Will there be... Another presentation available for schools. We are a child care facility but also an independent school.

37:33

**Monica Bonsor**

That's a very good question. Please feel free to reach out to me directly. Because... Honestly, I've done so many of these presentations in the last couple of years. I have some trouble keeping track but we may have I believe we already partnered.

With the area of government that oversees independent schools. What I'm not remembering is what I'm not remembering if a specific presentation has been conducted. But if that's something that you're interested in, please reach out. And we can look at options. Like that, I'll flag that today we do have a presentation at 3 o'clock, I believe it is 3.30, thank you. In terms of signing up. I'm not quite sure how you can access that.

Does anybody have that information handy? Yeah, the the Login information was sent out to the sector for both to school divisions as well yep

38:46

**Melissa Shapiro**

Does that answer the question? So we have another question from Natasha about funding. They ask, how is ELCC going to support this change within the sector? Will they also be offering any type of funding to assist in this cost?

Yes. How is ELCC going to support this change within the sector? Will they also be offering any type of funding to assist if there are costs?

39:19

**Colleen Watters**

There's no additional funding that we're going to be making available for this requirement. It applies to all nonprofit organizations and businesses in Manitoba. It's equitable across the board. We won't have anything, but there is the funding That Monica had mentioned in her presentation that is available through the Manitoba Accessibility Office.

39:44

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Samantha. I'm wondering if we are required to take all three modules or just the one mentioned today for information and communication.

39:56

**Monica Bonsor**

That's a good question. If And just want to extend an invitation if anyone on this call wasn't already aware of requirements under the customer service or employment regulation and you have questions, please feel free to reach out. But at this point, the accessible customer service standard regulation It's fully enforced for organizations in all sectors in Manitoba. And the training is required for organizations that are subject to and that's Generally speaking, in this call, I think.

All organizations would be subject to accessible customer service standards. Unless you're in that unique position of being a home-based provider with zero employees, including casual staff. An accessible employment training is required for all organizations in Manitoba with one or more employee and that training is required for anybody who holds a role that relates to human resources Or the supervision of other staff. So a long answer to a question that could have been summarized by yes, yes, training under all three standards is required.

41:33

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Bonnie. Is someone available that we can hire to write this policy?

41:40

**Monica Bonsor**

That's a good question. Probably. I can't think of any... organizations that that specifically write policies for other folks off the top of my head but there might I know Manitoba League has done it. Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities. They have done it for, I know they wrote Emily, one of our staff used to work on contract before she came to us.

And I think she wrote an accessibility plan for somebody so you know the it's possible. And the other thing I was just going to mention is that the Manitoba Accessibility Office Starting in February, we're going to be providing webinars on different aspects of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. The February one is an overview of the legislation.

And we're also going to be doing one on information and communication standard. And there'll be one on workplace accommodations as well.

42:59

**Colleen Watters**

So if you go, as Monica said, and subscribe to Accessibility News. You'll get information about all the things that are happening, including the awareness events we hold for key dates in the month like Disability Employment Awareness Month or Manitoba Access Awareness Week.

43:25

**Melissa Shapiro**

Awesome. Thank you. We have a question here from Megan, wondering about the Manitoba Accessibility Funding. Who can access this grant? Is it for nonprofits?

43:39

**Monica Bonsor**

Yes. Nonprofits among other organizations in Manitoba. So any organization that's subject to the act, those in the for-profit sector.

43:54

**Colleen Watters**

Yes, you're right. In the public sector like school divisions, post-secondary institutions, municipalities. It extends to organizations like businesses and nonprofits that are on reserve. So it does have a really wide reaching scope in terms of who can apply.

44:16

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Evelyn. If we take the training through another avenue and receive a certificate, is that acceptable?

44:25

**Monica Bonsor**

Yes. Yes. You're not bound to the free online training. It's just important for your facility to ensure that Training taken through another avenue meets the minimum requirements outlined in the regulation.

44:45

**Melissa Shapiro**

We have a question from Nicole. Wondering if they are required to create an accessibility policy.



44:55

**Monica Bonsor**

Well, it depends on how many staff you have under the regulation. So if you have 50 or more employees, you're legally obligated to create a policy Respecting accessible information and communication. And this requirement is the same across the three regulated accessibility standards that are currently in force in Manitoba. If you have less than 50 employees, you're not legally obligated. It's considered a best practice though.

And I can see secondary to that, we have no website so You don't need to create a website But if you have 50 or more employees, you'd need a policy regardless of if you have a website.

45:54

**Melissa Shapiro**

We have another question from Bonnie. Would we have to hire someone to provide this training?

46:01

**Monica Bonsor**

No. No, you don't. That could be an option. I'm sure there might be organizations in the private and nonprofit sectors that create trainings that meet the requirements in the regulation, but we also have the free online training And organizations are also free to develop in-house training that meets the minimum So there's flexibility for your organization and how to meet the requirements for training. And those modules take about 45 minutes to an hour each to complete.

So they're not very, I mean, it's not really a Really difficult task. I mean, it's not going to take you hours and hours

47:05

**Melissa Shapiro**

Okay, thank you. We have a question from Laura. Where can we access the training for staff and board members?

47:16

**Monica Bonsor**

The link for the training will be included in the PowerPoint presentation. You can also go to [accessibilitymb.ca](http://accessibilitymb.ca). And there's a page with a link to the training portal there as well. I'm sure you could probably Google it too. I haven't tried that myself though.

47:44

**Melissa Shapiro**

Okay, we have a question from Stephanie. Can you speak a bit more regarding web applications? Such as fastosh used for registration, waitlist, parent communication, etc.

47:58

**Monica Bonsor**

I'm not familiar. With that application to speak about a direct application. Um... I don't know if there's a more specific question that maybe the ELCC folks can respond to.

48:17

**Tanya Jakob**

Can everyone hear? So any third-party vendors, including Fastosh as a Manitoba organization, would be required to comply under this requirement. So Fastas should be very much aware of these requirements and already integrating them within the websites that they provide for you and any other child care facilities using Fastosh.

Sorry, it's Tanya Jakob. I'm with Continuous Improvement Engagement here at Early Learning and Child Care.

48:51

**Melissa Shapiro**

We have a question from Melanie. Will there be a guidebook that will outline what staff need to know?

48:59

**Monica Bonsor**

Yeah, we have several resources that have been developed, including a handbook. And I'll send over some of the recommended resources to the ELCC folks on the call here so Maybe those can be sent out to you after the training as well, but they're available on accessibility and be dot CA.

49:33

**Melissa Shapiro**

I know you answered this shortly, but just a question from Lori. Approximately how long does the training take to complete and will this qualify as something to use as an in-service PDD?

49:44

**Monica Bonsor**

Well, you could get together with your staff and hold a discussion. On the training, but each module takes about 45 minutes to an hour. And I think this would qualify as professional development.

50:30

**Melissa Shapiro**

Another specific application question from We use an upright wheel that we use for daily communication between parents and staff. Does this application have to meet the requirement?

50:41

**Monica Bonsor**

If it meets the definition of a web-based application. Then yes. But if it is an app that's operated just off like mobile phones. Then no.

51:00

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Marilyn. Will French centers have access to the information and communication webinar training in French?

51:08

**Monica Bonsor**

Yes, there are French versions of all the resources that I've brought up today the amount of accessibility.ca, the Manitoba Accessibility Office's website is available in French and English. As are the resources and training sessions.

51:29

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Jen. Is there a template that we can follow to write a policy?

51:36

**Monica Bonsor**

We don't have one at this time. It's a possibility for the future. But if you're drafting a policy and you're not really sure if it meets requirements. Please feel free to send it to my attention or to [accessibilitycompliance@gov.mb.ca](mailto:accessibilitycompliance@gov.mb.ca) And we can help guide you.

52:03

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. A question from Bonnie. Are public schools already compliant? And if we are located in that school, could we use their policy?

52:13

**Monica Bonsor**

So school divisions and their public schools were required to comply with the standard by May 1st, 2024. We haven't conducted intensive compliance activities related to this standard yet so I couldn't tell you, you know, a statistic for public school compliance I recommend that you avoid using the school's policy though because schools have more requirements than early learning and child care centers. So if, say, you get a copy of the school's policy, there's some requirements you know that that will be shared. But... your childcare center doesn't have to comply with the sections related to educational institutions and educational materials.

School libraries also have to comply with the library section. So just be careful if you're looking at being included in or duplicating the public school policy because Not all those requirements are going to apply to you.

53:30

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Lana. Is the accessibility policy to be displayed on our website or something we just keep on file?

53:39

**Monica Bonsor**

It needs to be made publicly available. So how most organizations choose to meet that requirement is posting a copy on their website. Or having a statement on their website that their accessibility policies are available on request.

If you don't have a website. In order to make it publicly available, we'd recommend posting a sign on your site that your accessibility policies are available on request.

54:09

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from Melanie. Can the link to the modules be shared again, please?

54:32

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. Diamond is wondering, can we watch the training online as a group and still get certificates for everyone or is it for individualized learning?

54:41

**Monica Bonsor**

The certificates are for individualized learning, but you definitely can run through the training as a group. I'd recommend that your child care facility keep a record of who was present.

To go through the training and the date and then if there's ever a compliance audit, you can let us know that you took it as a group and these are the people that attended.

55:07

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. We have a question from John.

55:09

**Monica Bonsor**

We're not allowed to track who took training either because of For privacy reasons so I mean, we're not, we can't give people certificates If they've taken the training.

55:26

**Melissa Shapiro**

Right, thank you. A question we have from Dawn. Is asking for clarification. So if we have less than 50 employees by regulation. Are you required to take...

55:39

**Monica Bonsor**

You are only required to take training and if you have more than 50 employees, you are required to create a policy and do the training.

Yes. 50 or more. So if you hit that 50 employee threshold. The only difference in requirement is that you need to have a documented policy. If you have one or more employees, you're subject to the regulation and all applicable persons need to receive training.

56:18

**Melissa Shapiro**

Kind of like a follow-up to that question. I'm curious about facilities that have less than 50 employees. We have two centers currently. And one is fully accessible for physical needs, but not the other location. We share all of the administration, website, and policies and communication. Would there be an additional funding for use at both locations or just individual funding for the organization?

56:46

**Monica Bonsor**

This is through the Manitoba Accessibility Fund, I'm assuming. I think depending on the project. Like you could apply under the organization, like the umbrella organization or if the funding application is specific to one location.

I don't see why you couldn't apply under that specific location but um There is a lot of information about the application process available at [accessibilitymb.ca](http://accessibilitymb.ca). That's where you're going to find the best information.

Colleen, do you have anything to add?

57:30

**Colleen Watters**

Well, the only thing is that that if If you were planning to use the fund for capital renovations, you can't. It doesn't cover you know accessibility changes to a facility or renovations or anything like that. The municipal relations yesterday just came out with The intake for 2025 for a program called from the ground up. And you can go to [Manitobago.ca](http://Manitobago.ca) for a list of grants online and then click on F And it's under there and they do cover some facility modification if it's a nonprofit.

58:31

**Monica Bonsor**

So more information about that would be found on the municipal relations website, Colleen.

58:32

**Colleen Watters**

Information about that. Yeah, or you go to [Manitobago.ca](http://Manitobago.ca), which is a government site for grants online. And they list all available grants in alphabetical order including the Manitoba Accessibility

Fund. And from the ground up. The deadline for that one is February 18th, I believe. If you're looking for funding for structural changes. I believe the federal government also has a program that can include that it's enabling accessibility, I believe. I'll see if I can find the link.

Correct, but I don't know if I haven't seen an open call for proposals right now. Like I'm not aware that applications are open Yeah, I think they open up closer to the summer.

59:46

**Monica Bonsor**

I'll put this in the chat as well, just for more information, but I don't, like Colleen said, we don't know if they're accepting applications right now.

59:57

**Melissa Shapiro**

Thank you. As we near the end of the presentation, we'll take one more question from Bonnie asking if there's a template available to use as a guideline.

01:00:06

**Monica Bonsor**

For a policy, no, there isn't right now. But if as you're drafting your policy, you want another set of eyes on it, please feel free to send it to myself directly Or [accessibilitycompliance@gov.mb.ca](mailto:accessibilitycompliance@gov.mb.ca)

I mean, you can also look in the handbook Because, I mean, even though it's not really a template, it gives you a... you know detailed guidance on what you have to do.

01:00:44

**Jason Booth**

Awesome. And just a reminder for everyone online that all the links for the online training and every material that you might need is in the circular and FAQ documents that you should have. Thanks so much, Melissa. Thank you very much, Monica. Thank you, Colleen. Thank you, Case, for joining us.

01:01:01

**Monika Bonsor**

Thanks for having me.

01:01:02

**Colleen Watters**

You're welcome.

01:01:03

**Jason Booth**

And thank you, the sector, for joining us this afternoon. Reminder, a recording of this presentation should be available on our website. Business day or two, along with the slide deck and a transcript to follow.

Any additional questions about this can go to monica Is that right, Monica?

01:01:24

**Monika Bonsor**

For sure.

01:01:25

**Jason Booth**

Super. And we'll try and address everything Again, we have another presentation today for the K-12 sector beginning at 3.30 and a second presentation for the child care sector at 6 p.m. Tonight. Thanks so much.