

— Cooptel —

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2024-2027



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GENERAL INFORMATION

1. General company information

Cooptel is a cooperative that was founded in 1944.

We offer telephony, Internet and television products and services using optical fiber to the home mainly in rural areas. We have two business offices in Valcourt and Louiseville.

2. Declaration of Commitment

Through our status as a cooperative and our mission, we are committed to meeting the needs of the community and our customers. We have also been able to stand out through our excellent customer service. We are therefore keen to meet the accessibility objectives of all of our customers who may experience functional limitations at different levels.

3. Contact person and feedback process

We invite you to share your observations with us about any accessibility barriers you may have encountered when dealing with us or how we are implementing our accessibility plan.

The person responsible for receiving observations at Cooptel is **Ms. Mélanie Fortier**, director of human resources.

Comments can be general or specific, but providing more details, such as the date, title of the relevant web page, application or activity, may help us better understand your concerns.

You can send your comments by:

The post office

Melanie Fortier
Human Resources Director
5521 chemin de l'Aéroport
Valcourt (Québec) J0E 2L0

E-mail

accessibility@cooptel.coop

Phone

450-532-5656 or 1-888-532-2667 ext. 1028
Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time)

Online form

<https://www.cooptel.ca/formulaire-de-retroaction-sur-laccessibilite/>

3.1. Anonymous observations

If you provide us with your feedback, you may provide your personal information and contact details, but you are not obligated to do so.

If you wish to submit your observations anonymously, the online form is the best method to do so. This way we will not see your contact details, such as a telephone number or email address.

3.2. Acknowledgment of receipt of comments received

An automatic acknowledgment of receipt will be sent for comments received by email and through our online form. Observations provided by telephone involve direct interaction with the person responsible for receiving observations at Cooptel and, therefore, the employee will acknowledge receipt of the observation. For comments received by mail, if contact information is provided, an acknowledgment of receipt will be sent to the address provided.

3.3. Using observations

Your observations will help Cooptel continually improve its accessibility efforts. Some observations may not require a direct response or immediate follow-up, while others may highlight issues that need to be addressed immediately. However, all comments received will be taken into consideration and will help Cooptel prepare its accessibility progress reports and let us know how we are progressing towards our accessibility goals.

4. Alternate formats

To obtain this plan in another format, as well as a description of our submission procedure, please contact Ms. Mélanie Fortier.

A maximum period of 15 days following the date of receipt of the initial request must be allowed for the production of the plan in the following formats:

- Paper in regular size font
- Paper in a large font

A maximum period of 45 days following the date of receipt of the initial request must be allowed for the production of the plan in the following formats:

- Braille (tactile writing system with salient points, for use by blind people or severely visually impaired)
- Audio (recording of the text read aloud by a person)

PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

1. Principles of the Accessible Canada Act

The Accessible Canada Act was adopted by the government in 2019 with the objective of “a country free of barriers no later than January 1, 2040, for the benefit of all, in particular people with disabilities, particularly through recognition and the removal of obstacles as well as the prevention of new obstacles.

This law recognizes the following principles:

- The right of everyone to be treated with dignity, regardless of their disabilities;
- The right of every person to equal opportunities for development, regardless of their disabilities;
- The right of everyone to barrier-free access and full and active participation equal in society, regardless of their disabilities;
- The right of every person to have the concrete possibility of making decisions for herself, with or without help, whatever her disabilities;
- The fact that laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account the people’s disabilities, the different ways in which they interact within their environment;
- The fact that people with disabilities must participate in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services and structures;
- The development and revision of accessibility standards and the adoption of regulations must be carried out with the aim of achieving the highest level of accessibility for people disabled.

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply to the entire plan:

Disability: *Physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive or learning disability or communication. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary or episodic.*

Obstacle: *Anything that interferes with a person’s full and equal participation because of their disability. An obstacle can be physical, architectural, technological, attitudinal, informational, communication or the result of policies or practices.*

Accessibility: *Quality in the design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies and rules that make them usable or applicable by everyone, including people with disabilities.*

PLAN SUMMARY

Canadian law aims at the recognition and elimination of obstacles, as well as the prevention of new obstacles, in the following areas:

1. The built environment

An evaluation of our facilities gives us the observation that several elements have already been put in place in the past to make our workplaces accessible to everyone:

Valcourt office

- Parking area reserved for disabled people and well identified;
- An access ramp to the exterior;
- An automatic entrance door;
- A freight elevator/elevator inspected on a regular basis;
- Disabled toilets (large spaces and grab bar on the wall);
- Wide and accessible aisles;
- Stairs with railings;
- Clearly identified emergency exits;
- Very present lighting.

Louiseville office

Although a very small number of visitors pass through this office, we are committed to:

Upcoming improvements	Date of completion within 3 years
Evaluate the necessary improvements to access and exterior indications in relation to accessibility difficulties (e.g. parking).	Year 1
Install a doorbell at the entrance to the building so that a customer can alert staff that they need help.	Year 1
Install a grab bar in the toilet.	Year 1

Any renovation/repair and/or new installation work in our buildings will take into account possible accessibility needs.

2. Employment

We note that we have job categories that cannot be adapted for certain classes of disabilities. Among others, all external jobs (installation service technicians, network construction technician, etc.). On the other hand, other positions offer opportunities to people with disabilities.

<i>Upcoming improvements</i>	<i>Date of completion within 3 years</i>
Our current job postings do not indicate that an applicant with a disability may request accommodation (to the extent possible). To ensure that everyone is aware of our opening, we will include this information in job postings and throughout the recruitment process.	Year 1 or 2

3. Information and communications technologies (ICT)

Upon analysis of this area and the comments received, we see that we need to make improvements, particularly with regard to:

<i>Upcoming improvements</i>	<i>Date of completion within 3 years</i>
Adapt our website to comply with WCAG standards and ensure we respect them in future developments.	Year 3
Evaluate the possibility of offering a video calling service for people hearing impaired.	Year 2

4. Communications other than ICT

In all our communications: advertisements in different forms, our company website, social media, we strive to ensure that the content is stated in simple and clear language in order to make the messages easier for everyone to understand.

We also offer, through a partner, a service for our hearing-impaired external customers.

<i>Upcoming improvements</i>	<i>Date of completion within 3 years</i>
Increase our range of free tutorials.	Year 2
Add subtitles to content set out in our current and future tutorials.	Year 2-3

5. Procurement of goods, services and facilities

At the Valcourt office, for several years we offered the services of an ergonomist who came to visit employees' workstations to adapt them to their realities. With the arrival of teleworking, remote jobs are now frequent (full-time or work-study), we offer a video on the ergonomics of workstations which allows employees to adapt it well for themselves. All our desks at the Valcourt office have a mechanism that offers the possibility of working in a standing or sitting position and thus allows the height to be adapted for each employee.

We offer equipment, when possible, adapted to certain needs (e.g.: backlit controller, controller with large buttons for better visibility, large format TV guide, etc.).

We remain open to all requests (internal or external) for adaptation based on limitations.

6. Design and delivery of programs and services

So that the entire company works towards the same objective of making accessibility possible for everyone, we will:

Upcoming improvements	Date of completion within 3 years
Provide awareness training to our employees so that they are aware of the presence of possible disabilities in the context of their work and in interactions with our customers (on the telephone or in person) and how to manage these situations.	Year 2

We will also continually monitor accessibility measures implemented by other companies in order to draw inspiration from them.

7. Transportation

Our products and services do not include user transportation.

If we consider this area for our employees, we can say that since 2020 we have had a teleworking policy which allows, for certain types of positions, to reduce obstacles to accessibility. Teleworking allows employees to work in a suitable environment. We are committed to maintaining this policy.

CONSULTATION OF PEOPLE

To be able to receive feedback from our customers, partners and employees, we sent an email survey accompanying our invoicing in fall 2023.

Nearly 3,000 people responded. Our survey included seven questions related to the areas that cover the requirements of the Accessible Canada Act which allowed us to find out their opinion of their experience with us.

Nearly 10% of respondents identified themselves as people with disabilities or as people close to a person with disabilities who use our services.

Their comments helped identify obstacles developed in our plan.