Assessment tool

**FIND OUT IF YOUR PROGRAM OR SERVICE IS ACCESSIBLE, WITHOUT LEAVING ANYONE BEHIND…**

# Designing for inclusion gives you ways to reach more people with a wider range of abilities.

The first step is to understand the way people live with a disability and the service barriers that create challenges for them, whether they are physical, technological, attitudinal, communicational, or policies and practices that are not enforced or should be modified.

The **assessment tool** is designed to help you evaluate, to a certain extent, whether or not your government program or service is accessible by people with any type(s) of disability or functional limitations.

**How was it built?**

A set of questions were developed to assess the accessibility of client service interactions (in-person, by phone, or online), and inclusive service design practices.

**How will you use it?**

To complete the exercise, simply answer all questions by selecting “Yes or No”.

**What will you discover?**

Based on the number of questions you answer “**Yes**”, this will generate a list of **existing practices** that are making your program or service more accessible to your clients.

Based on the number of questions you answer “**No**”, this will generate a list of considerations for **new projects or initiatives** that aim to improve accessibility of your client service.

# **CLIENT SERVICE INTERACTIONS (by channels)**

## **IN-PERSON CLIENT SERVICE**

### **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

| **Is your service centre or office located in a space that…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Follows all applicable building codes:   * International Organization for Standardization (ISO) building code of 2010 * National Building Code * Provincial Building Code * Municipal by-laws * And other interior design standards as appropriate |  |  |
| Has been assessed against the most recent accessibility standards and building codes (as of 2019) |  |  |
| Has parking close to the building |  |  |
| Is accessible by public transit |  |  |
| Includes a daily accessibility assessment of your service area (i.e., take notice of building or city renovations that are underway, test functionality of door openers, ensure that no object is obstructing, or snow has been cleared from cross-walks) |  |  |
| Ensures the installation of door handles, wall-mounted controls, and signage is at the appropriate height and reach |  |  |
| Has accessible washrooms |  |  |

| **In case of an emergency while clients visit your facility, do you...** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Have clearly marked exit signs |  |  |
| Have audio alarm systems |  |  |
| Have visual alarm systems |  |  |
| Provide a dedicated refuge area for those who may need assistance |  |  |
| Assist clients in the event of an emergency |  |  |

#### **SERVICE WAITING AREA**

| **To limit physical hazards or obstacles, do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Have doors with high contrast glass panels to ensure visibility of persons coming through |  |  |
| Have paths of travel that are designed for clients to be accompanied by someone or by a service animal |  |  |
| Have cane detectable features to make potential hazards noticeable |  |  |

| **To make people feel at ease, safe and secure, do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Have a combination of chairs with and without arms available at all times |  |  |
| Have high contrast visual queuing (e.g. black letters on a white screen) |  |  |
| Make private rooms available for immediate access |  |  |
| Have multi-level service counters to accommodate wheelchairs or utilize as a supported piece of equipment for someone with physical limitations (e.g. increase ability to stand) |  |  |
| Provide sufficient task lighting to increase clarity and decrease visual fatigue for someone who has low vision |  |  |

#### **CLIENT SERVICE TRANSACTION**

| **In order to adjust your service delivery in respect to someone’s personal circumstances, do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Offer private rooms to be booked in advance |  |  |
| Have counter loops available for someone who is hard of hearing |  |  |
| Have talk-thru microphones to ease verbal communication through Plexiglas |  |  |
| Offer on demand (i.e., in-person or video relay) sign language interpretation in ASL, LSQ, and ISL for someone who is deaf or hard of hearing |  |  |

| **Where computer workstations are made available for clients to use, do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Have Screen Readers |  |  |
| Allow for zoom capabilities |  |  |
| Offer touch and adjustable computer screens with “read to me” options |  |  |
| Have compatible software to support personal assistive devices (i.e., use of pointers/joystick instead of a computer mouse) |  |  |

## **PHONE CLIENT SERVICE**

| **For individuals to request special assistance, do you...** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Have live Text Telephone (TTY) capabilities |  |  |
| Have capabilities for automated call-backs |  |  |
| Have a call tree option to “Press “0” for immediate assistance |  |  |
| Offer Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) that enables to move quickly through the queuing process, tailoring available options for client support |  |  |

| **For individuals with a disability or functional limitations that prefer using the Web channel, does your website…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 and meet the AA standard, for example:   * Alternative text or alt-text for pictures * Audio and video do not play automatically * Visuals do not flash more than 3 times a second * Site can zoom up to 200% * No keyboard traps * Hover or focus does not disrupt use |  |  |
| Draft all web content in plain and simple language |  |  |
| Allow for compatibility with client assistive devices used at home (e.g. screen readers, communication devices or software) |  |  |
| Have adjustable features such as zoom capabilities to accommodate users with low vision |  |  |
| Support media players that display captions and provide audio options with adjustable size and colour for someone that is deaf or has low vision |  |  |
| Have videos with subtitles and captions, or written transcripts |  |  |
| Offer live chat option with video capabilities (e.g. personal greeter or a service agent operating in a secure environment) |  |  |
| Have icons or an image + words (not words only) so that it is quickly and easily detectible |  |  |

| **For someone who needs more time to process or remember information, do your online application forms…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Enable autofill responses to avoid retyping the same information |  |  |
| Have no time limits to allow for breaks, a longer pause, or recovery at a later date  (e.g. save for later option) |  |  |
| Have a progress bar to make it easy for clients to follow each step and understand where they are in the process |  |  |

# **INCLUSIVE SERVICE DESIGN PRACTICES**

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

| **For information to be published and available to the public, do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Offer services through multiple channels, creating more options and better reach |  |  |
| Draft all documents in an 8th grade reading level or below so all publications, reports, promotional and educational materials are easier to understand |  |  |
| Use inclusive images and language that focus on ability rather than disability to convey messages |  |  |
| Make information available in various accessible formats, using clear and concise language (e.g., braille, audio and video format, large print, high quality print, etc…) |  |  |
| Engage key stakeholder organizations in outreach and distribution strategies |  |  |
| Publicly post clear explanations about accessibility features |  |  |

| **For clients to easily find their way to your in-person service, do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Provide signage at every point of access and in alternative formats (i.e. the use of wayfinder beacons, content in braille or large print) to reduce anxiety and confusion |  |  |
| Install signage at a universal eye level so that people of all heights (including wheelchair users) can read it easily |  |  |

## **FEEDBACK AND ENGAGEMENT**

| **To include person with disabilities in the development of programs or services,** **do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Offer ways for clients to provide feedback, complaints, and suggestions across all of your channels |  |  |
| Work with advocacy groups (e.g. partners and stakeholders) to increase feedback and consultations with persons with disabilities |  |  |
| Co-design and conduct user experience testing directly with persons who have a disability or functional limitations |  |  |
| Maximize sources of client input, including collecting social media posts |  |  |
| Have a process to assess and address client feedback/input |  |  |
| Use client input to proactively propose and implement new or improved solutions |  |  |

## **POLICY DESIGN**

| **Where service agents are required to fully assist clients, do they have the ability to…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Take as much time as needed to properly address outstanding client concerns |  |  |
| Fill out forms and apply on behalf of the client |  |  |
| Authorize a delegated legal third party representative to sign, provide, or receive personal information on behalf of the client (e.g. apply or cancel benefits) |  |  |

## **TRAINING AND CULTURE**

| **To better support client needs, are service agents trained to proactively…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Use clear and simple language when communicating verbally or in writing |  |  |
| Recognize possible delay when someone is using a Video Relay Service (VRS) call that involves either an ASL or LSQ video interpreter |  |  |
| Request one piece of information at a time and ask for clarification if needed |  |  |
| Recognize client fatigue and offer breaks |  |  |
| Take steps to reduce background noise (e.g. ask visitors to turn down loud headphones, softer typing on keyboard or avoid moving papers when on the phone) |  |  |
| Identify and communicate other related programs and services that can be beneficial to the client |  |  |

| **To foster an accessibility-focused culture, do you…** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Use accessibility criteria for project funding and prioritization |  |  |
| Consult existing data sources that can be used to make informed decision |  |  |
| Examine and implement international best practices |  |  |
| Include mandatory training courses for all employees that goes beyond sensitivity, in all performance agreements |  |  |
| Provide dedicated client service training to all front-line staff and ensure maximum flexibility and efficiency to attain highest level of first contact resolution |  |  |