

2026 Bill 206

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Second Session, 31st Legislature, 4 Charles III

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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

# BILL 206

## ACCESSIBLE ALBERTA ACT

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MS RENAUD

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First Reading . . . . .

Second Reading . . . . .

Committee of the Whole . . . . .

Third Reading . . . . .

Royal Assent . . . . .

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## BILL 206

2026

### ACCESSIBLE ALBERTA ACT

(Assented to \_\_\_\_\_, 2026)

HIS MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, enacts as follows:

#### Definitions

**1** In this Act,

- (a) “accessibility standard” means an accessibility standard established under section 17;
- (b) “barrier” means anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with a disability and includes a physical, architectural or an information or communication barrier;
- (c) “disability” means any impairment that interacts with a barrier to hinder a person’s full and equal participation in society and includes a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or functional limitation that is permanent, temporary or episodic in nature;
- (d) “Indigenous Peoples” means First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples in Alberta;
- (e) “Minister” means the Minister determined under section 16 of the *Government Organization Act* as the Minister responsible for the *Premier’s Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Act*;

- (f) “ministry website” means the publicly accessible website of the department administered by the Minister;
- (g) “standards committee” means the Accessibility Standards Committee established under section 4;
- (h) “UN Convention” means the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations as General Assembly Resolution 61/106 on December 13, 2006.

## **Purposes**

**2** The purposes of this Act are to

- (a) recognize that
  - (i) barriers impact all persons in Alberta, particularly persons with disabilities,
  - (ii) persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services and structures that impact their full and effective participation and inclusion in society on an equal basis with others,
  - (iii) persons with disabilities have rights and freedoms, including those stated in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, including the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination on the basis of disability, and
  - (iv) under the UN Convention, ratified by Canada in 2010, Canada has committed to take appropriate measures to ensure accessibility, and Alberta supports that commitment,
- (b) create an accessible Alberta by 2040 by identifying, preventing and removing barriers through the establishment of accessibility standards, and
- (c) provide for the involvement of persons with disabilities, and individuals and organizations that serve or work on behalf of persons with disabilities, in the development of accessibility standards.

## **Interpretation**

**3** Nothing in this Act is to be construed as

- (a) diminishing in any way the legal obligations of the Government or any person or organization with respect to persons with disabilities that are otherwise imposed by another Act or law, or
- (b) requiring or authorizing any delay in the removal of barriers or the implementation of measures to prevent new barriers as soon as the circumstances permit.

## **Accessibility Standards Committee**

**4** The Accessibility Standards Committee is established consisting of

- (a) the individuals appointed under section 5, and
- (b) the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities appointed under the *Advocate for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

## **Appointment of members**

**5(1)** Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Lieutenant Governor in Council must appoint at least 6 but no more than 10 members to the standards committee for a term not exceeding 4 years.

**(2)** An individual is eligible to be appointed under subsection (1) only if the individual is, at the time of and for a period of at least 1 year prior to the appointment, a resident of Alberta.

**(3)** The appointed members of the standards committee must include at least the following:

- (a) one individual who is also a member of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities established under the *Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Act*;
- (b) at least one individual from each of the following groups:
  - (i) persons who work on behalf of persons with disabilities;
  - (ii) Indigenous persons with disabilities who, to the extent practicable, are also persons who provide services to Indigenous persons with disabilities;
  - (iii) persons who are experts in the area of disability or disability law.

(4) The majority of the members of the standards committee appointed under this section must be persons with disabilities and reflect, to the extent practicable, the diversity of disabilities of Albertans.

#### **Remuneration and expenses**

**6** The Lieutenant Governor in Council may set out each of the following in the appointment of a member of the standards committee:

- (a) the amount of remuneration that may be paid to the member;
- (b) each type of expense for which the member may be reimbursed.

#### **Purpose of standards committee**

**7** The purpose of the standards committee is to develop and propose accessibility standards as directed by the Minister.

#### **Powers of standards committee**

**8** In carrying out its duties under this Act, the standards committee may do any of the following:

- (a) request from any member of the Executive Council information on which to base its recommendations;
- (b) receive and hear submissions from individuals or groups relating to its purpose;
- (c) publish in a report to the Minister non-identifying information that is generated from the collection of information under this Act.

#### **Annual report**

**9(1)** No later than March 31 of each year, the standards committee must submit to the Minister an annual report on its activities undertaken in the preceding fiscal year.

(2) On receiving the report under subsection (1), the Minister must publish the report on the ministry website.

#### **Proposed accessibility standards**

**10(1)** For the purpose of recommending the establishment of an accessibility standard, the Minister may direct the standards committee to develop a proposed accessibility standard.

(2) The Minister must provide terms of reference to the standards committee that set out

- (a) the area to which the proposed accessibility standard would relate,
  - (b) the persons or organizations that would be subject to the proposed accessibility standard, and
  - (c) general or specific directions, including
    - (i) a time period within which the proposed accessibility standard must be developed,
    - (ii) any additional individuals or organizations to be consulted under section 13(f), and
    - (iii) any additional matters to be considered under section 14(h).
- (3) The Minister must publish the terms of reference on the ministry website.

#### **Technical committees**

**11(1)** The Minister may establish one or more technical committees to assist the standards committee in making recommendations to the Minister respecting a proposed accessibility standard.

(2) The Minister may appoint the following individuals to a technical committee:

- (a) members of the standards committee;
- (b) other individuals recommended by the standards committee that the Minister considers advisable.

(3) The Minister may provide for remuneration for the members of a technical committee.

#### **Standards development**

**12** On receiving terms of reference for a proposed accessibility standard under section 10, the standards committee must

- (a) develop the proposed accessibility standard in accordance with the terms of reference and the regulations, if any, and
- (b) submit the proposed accessibility standard to the Minister within the time period set out in the terms of reference.

## **Consultation**

**13** In developing a proposed accessibility standard, the standards committee must consult with at least the following:

- (a) persons with disabilities;
- (b) individuals and organizations that support persons with disabilities;
- (c) representatives of the Government departments, boards, commissions and agencies that have responsibilities relating to areas or to persons and organizations that may be made subject to the proposed accessibility standard;
- (d) Indigenous Peoples;
- (e) organizations that may be affected by the accessibility standard;
- (f) any other individuals or organizations that the Minister considers advisable.

## **Accessibility principles and relevant laws and standards**

**14** In developing a proposed accessibility standard, the standards committee must consider the following:

- (a) accessibility objectives of the persons, organizations, activities and places to which the proposed accessibility standard would apply;
- (b) technical or economic factors that may be associated with the implementation of the proposed accessibility standard;
- (c) measures, policies and practices necessary for the effective implementation of the proposed accessibility standard;
- (d) the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination and universal design;
- (e) the following laws and standards:
  - (i) relevant provincial laws;
  - (ii) relevant standards for accessibility in other jurisdictions;
  - (iii) the UN Convention;

- (f) the rights of Indigenous Peoples recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;
- (g) the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations as General Assembly Resolution 61/295 on September 13, 2007;
- (h) any other matter that the Minister considers advisable.

### **Consensus**

**15** The standards committee must attempt to achieve consensus on a proposed accessibility standard.

### **Publication and recommendation of proposed standards**

**16(1)** On receiving a proposed accessibility standard from the standards committee, the Minister must

- (a) consider the proposed accessibility standard,
- (b) publish on the ministry website the proposed accessibility standard submitted by the standards committee and the Minister's proposed changes to it, if any, and
- (c) provide the public with at least 30 days to submit comments on the proposed accessibility standard.

**(2)** After considering the comments received from the public, the Minister must recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that a regulation be made establishing the proposed accessibility standard with any changes that the Minister considers appropriate.

**(3)** An accessibility standard may not be established unless the Minister has made a recommendation under subsection (2) in relation to that accessibility standard.

### **Accessibility standards**

**17(1)** Subject to section 16(3), the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations establishing accessibility standards in relation to any of the following areas:

- (a) employment;
- (b) the built environment;
- (c) information technology and communications;

- (d) government services;
- (e) housing;
- (f) transportation;
- (g) health;
- (h) education;
- (i) procurement.

**(2)** Accessibility standards may only apply to the following:

- (a) the Government;
- (b) persons or organizations that
  - (i) employ individuals, or
  - (ii) offer accommodation within the meaning of the *Alberta Human Rights Act*;
- (c) persons that own, operate, maintain or control
  - (i) a facility, building, structure or premises, or
  - (ii) public transportation or transportation infrastructure;
- (d) other providers of goods or services to the public;
- (e) persons or organizations engaged in an activity or belonging to a class of activity prescribed by regulation.

**(3)** An accessibility standard must

- (a) specify the persons or organizations or classes of persons or organizations who are subject to the standard,
- (b) set out measures, policies, practices or requirements for identifying and removing barriers, or preventing barriers from being established, and
- (c) require the persons and organizations that are subject to the standard to implement the measures, policies, practices or requirements within the period specified in the standard.

(4) An accessibility standard may be general or specific in its application and may be limited as to time and place.

### **Annual reporting by Minister**

**18** The Minister must include in the annual report of the department administered by the Minister information on the following in respect of each of the areas referred to in section 17(1):

- (a) the number of terms of reference that were provided to the standards committee in the year to which the annual report relates;
- (b) the number of accessibility standards established in the year to which the annual report relates;
- (c) the plans for terms of reference to be provided to the standards committee in the following year;
- (d) progress, planned steps and timelines for implementation of each accessibility standard that applies to a program or service administered by the department.

### **Independent review of Act**

**19(1)** The Minister must, by appointing an individual in accordance with subsection (2), commence a review of the effectiveness of this Act and any regulations made under it

- (a) within 5 years of the coming into force of this Act, and
- (b) every 5 years after the date of the commencement of the previous review.

**(2)** An appointment under subsection (1) must require the individual appointed to

- (a) carry out the review in accordance with terms of reference, if any, set out by the Minister in the appointment,
- (b) in carrying out the review, consult with representatives of at least the following:
  - (i) persons with disabilities;
  - (ii) individuals and organizations that support persons with disabilities;

- (iii) Indigenous Peoples;
  - (iv) individuals and organizations that are subject to or affected by accessibility standards, and
- (c) within 1 year of appointment, submit to the Minister a report that sets out
- (i) the findings of the review, and
  - (ii) the recommendations, if any, of the individual appointed on how to improve the effectiveness of the Act and the regulations, including any recommendations that the Minister direct the standards committee to develop a proposed accessibility standard or review an accessibility standard.
- (3)** The Minister must submit the report to the Lieutenant Governor in Council and table the report in the Assembly if it is then sitting or, if it is not then sitting, within 15 days after the commencement of the Assembly's next sitting.

### **Regulations**

**20** The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

- (a) respecting the development of proposed accessibility standards for the purpose of section 12(a);
- (b) prescribing classes of activity for the purpose of section 17(2)(e).

