CONSEIL DES ARTS DU MANITOBA ARTS COUNCIL

# Manitoba Arts Council
# Accessibility Standard for Information and Communications Policy

## Purpose

To ensure that the Manitoba Arts Council's (MAC) practices comply with the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and meet the requirements of Manitoba's *Accessible Information and Communication Standard*.

## Introduction

The *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA) is provincial legislation introduced to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility. Standards will be developed in five key areas of daily living. These standards will outline specific measures to be taken by public sector and private sector organizations. Changes will result in improved accessibility for all Manitobans, regardless of (dis)abilities.

MAC strives to ensure that our policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles outlined in the *Accessible Information and Communication Standard*. Our policies, practices, and procedures reflect principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

We aim to remove barriers for people with disabilities who access information and communication from MAC.

## Definitions

### Accessibility

Related to this policy, accessibility means ensuring people of all abilities have opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. Accessibility refers to the ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product, or environment.

**Accessible formats**

Information provided in a way that is accessible to people with disabilities. Examples include large print, recorded audio, or Braille instead of standard printed material.

**Barrier**

As related to this policy, barriers are obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered from the beginning.

**Communications**

The exchanging of information or news.

**Communication supports**

Supports that individuals with disabilities may need to access information. Examples include:

- captioning
- alternative and augmentative communication supports
- plain language
- sign language
- other supports that facilitate effective communications

**Customer / Client**

The direct user or recipient (sometimes involuntary recipient) of a service.

**Information**

Data, facts, and knowledge that convey meaning. They can exist in:

- text
- audio
- video
- images

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# Information and Communications Accessibility Requirements

## Communication

We communicate publicly that MAC information is available via communication supports and alternate formats upon request. When MAC receives a request for accessible information, we consult with the person making the request to identify a support or a format that removes the barrier faced. MAC provides the format or support in a timely manner at no extra cost than for someone who did not make that request.

Our web content follows the latest international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The MAC website is written in plain language and has an accessible format widget with a variety of visual alternate formats.

MAC also provides other accessible formats or communication supports upon request. These can include but are not limited to:

- Braille
- Recorded audio
- Electronic or digital documents for use with a screen reader
- Sign language interpretation

## Feedback

MAC has a process in place to receive and respond to feedback, including complaints, about accessible or inaccessible information and communication. MAC welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Client feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

MAC lets the public know that methods are available for giving feedback. If a method is not suitable, individuals may request another method. All resulting actions arising from feedback or actions taken to resolve the complaint will be information available on request.

Privacy is respected, and all feedback is reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve access to our programs and services.

Client feedback is directed to the MAC Accessibility Coordinator. Where possible, complaints are addressed immediately. However, some complaints may require more time to address and must be reviewed for action. MAC will make sure that responses are communicated to the client in an accessible way that meets their needs.

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**Training**

MAC trains staff who communicate with the public on how to better meet the needs of people with disabilities and help eliminate barriers. This includes:

- Employees
- Anyone who:
    - develops or maintains our web content
    - purchases or procures information technology or communication tools
    - develops or implements our accessible information and communication policies and practices

Staff are trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices, and procedures.

## Modifications to this or other policies

We are committed to ensuring that our public service policies, practices, and procedures respect and promote the dignity and independence of all persons. No changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

## Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to people with disabilities. If you have a question about the policy, or if the purpose of this policy is not understood, please contact our Accessibility Coordinator:

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