

2023-2025 Accessibility Plan

Thursday June 1, 2023

Execulink Telecom



Table of Contents

1.0 General

- 1.1 Statement of Commitment
- 1.2 Contact information & Feedback Process
- 1.3 Alternative formats
- 1.4 Definitions

2.0 Areas Described under Section 5 of the ACA

- 2.1 The Build Environment
- 2.2 Employment
- 2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- 2.4 Communication, other than ICT
- 2.5 The Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities
- 2.6 The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services
- 2.7 Transportation

3.0 Consultations

- 3.1 Internal Consultations
- 3.2 External Consultations

4.0 Conclusion

1. General

1.1 Statement of Commitment

At Execulink Telecom (Execulink), we aim to provide an awesome experience for our customers, including those with disabilities. As our company grows and evolves, we continue to learn and develop ways in which we can be more accessible and inclusive to people with disabilities.

This Accessibility Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accessible Canada Act (S.C 2019, c. 10) and its regulations (ACA). This plan identifies barriers for people who live with a disability and outlines solutions to remove or mitigate those barriers where they exist with our organization.

1.2 Contact Information & Feedback Process

If you wish to request a copy of Execulink Telecom's Accessibility Plan, would like to provide feedback, or would like to request this information in an alternate format please contact us:

Mail:

Accessibility Coordinator

1127 Ridgeway Rd.

Woodstock, ON

N4V 1E3

Telephone:

1-877-393-2854

Email:

accessibility@execulinktelecom.ca

Information about how to submit feedback to is also available on our public website at the following link: <https://www.execulink.ca/legal-regulatory/accessibility-standards/>.

The person responsible for receiving accessibility feedback at Execulink Telecom is the Vice President Customer Care.

1.3 Alternative Formats

An electronic version of this plan is available can be viewed and downloaded on our website at: <https://www.execulink.ca/legal-regulatory/accessibility-standards/>

Execulink Telecom will provide the following alternate formats of this plan upon request through email at accessibility@execulinktelecom.ca or by phone at 1-877-393-2854.

- Print or Large Print – provided within 15 days of request
- Braille – provided within 45 days of request
- Audio (voice reading text out loud) – provided within 45 days of request

1.4 Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this plan:

- Disability: Any impairment, or difference in physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, or communication ability. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary, or can change over time.
- Barrier: Anything that might hinder people with disabilities' full and equal participation. Barriers can be architectural, technological, attitudinal, based on information or communications, or can be the result of a policy or procedure.
- Accessibility: The design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies and rules in a way that allows all people, including people with a variety of disabilities, to access them.

2.0 Areas Described under Section 5 of the ACA

2.1 The Built Environment

Execulink understands the importance of making our physical locations, which include our storefront and office locations, to be accessible for employees, customers, and the public. During the development of this plan, we reviewed and assessed all locations.

We will continue to include accessibility upgrades as part of building renovations and retrofits. As an example, in 2020 ergonomic sit/stand workstations were installed in during a retrofit of our head office in Woodstock, Ontario.

Identified Barriers:

- During our assessment of Execulink's physical locations, we identified employees were unsure how to proceed if they identify a potential physical barrier that could impact accessibility for both customers and employees.

Actions and Timelines:

- We will create a Statement of Procedure (SOP) document to be shared with all employees during the onboarding process. This will be completed no later than Q3 2023 and reviewed with all employees. Beginning in 2024, we will include a review in our monthly Health & Safety training each year.

2.2 Employment

Execulink is committed to offering fair, equal, and accessible employment practices.

While identifying employment barriers, Execulink reviewed our hiring practices, onboarding processes and overall employee support (i.e., accommodation).

All job opportunities state our commitment to being an equal opportunity employer with an inclusive and barrier-free environment. If contacted for an employment opportunity, we ask that the candidate advise us should accommodation be required.

Execulink Telecom is responsive should an employee's accessibility needs change, and they require accommodation. The employee is encouraged to reach out to their supervisor to discuss the required accommodation. The supervisor along with the employee will discuss with Human Resources the accommodation requirements and

begin the process of implementation (i.e., software requirements, physical requirements).

Identified Barriers:

- Lack of training regarding accessibility for persons with disabilities. As the types of disabilities are vast, as an organization it is critical that resources and information be made available to the supervisors and managers to ensure they appropriately support the employee. Training must also be provided to all employees so they may engage appropriately with customers and the public.
- There is an opportunity to improve standardized engagement with the employee and the company in the identification of possible accommodation needs.
- More complete documentation and processes are needed to ensure all employees and prospective employees are treated consistently and appropriately.

Actions and Timelines:

- A training course designed for leadership (supervisors, managers, executive) titled “Improving Workplace Accessibility Training for Leaders” has been sourced. Leadership will be required to complete the course by the end of Q3 2023.
- We will continue to source employee accessibility training with the target of all employees being trained by the end of Q1 2024.
- In determining the suitability of accessible accommodation, Human Resources and the employee’s supervisor will consult with the employee and their external support providers as requested.
- Create a SOP to ensure the process regarding workplace accommodation is well documented including timelines for review. This will be completed by the end of Q3 2023.

2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Execulink Telecom utilizes various technologies and tools to support our customers and our business. Customer facing technologies include our public website (www.execulinktelecom.ca), our customer portal as well as social media platforms. To support the development of Execulink's Accessibility Plan, a thorough review of our public website was completed by an external consultant. Our internal review included our networks, telecommunication and computer systems used by our customers and our employees.

Identified Barriers:

- Continued improvement to our website ensuring compliance with WCAG requirements.
- Improve the ease of using customer facing tools including our customer portal and our chat and email channels.
- Our system is not currently able to support Video Relay Service (VRS).

Actions and Timelines:

- Planned updates to our website will include a review of opportunities to increase compliance with WCAG (Level AA) and introduce features that better support accessibility.
- Enhancements to customer facing tools and channels will include a review of opportunities to improve ease of use.
- Pursue opportunities to implement VRS and align with the Telecom Regulatory Policy 2023-41 by Q1 2024.

2.4 Communication, other than ICT

Execulink communicates with our customers, the public, our employees and our suppliers and partners in a variety of ways. These include but are not limited to newsletters, email, social media, phone, chat, videos and advertising videos. We make every reasonable effort to ensure internal and external information is communicated simply, clearly, and concisely.

Identified Barriers:

- We identified that we are not consistent in visual standards throughout our communication vehicles.
- We further identified that when communicating in writing internally, we are not mindful of how to best communicate with those with disabilities.

Actions and Timelines:

- We will create templates and internal communication standards (SOP) that support accessibility guidelines by December 31, 2023.
- We will continue to work with consultants to improve accessibility in our external communications including marketing and advertising materials.

2.5 The Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Execulink uses goods and services purchased from external vendors to support its operations and services.

Identified Barriers:

- Existing procurement practices may not consistently meet accessibility requirements.

Actions and Timelines:

- In 2024 Execulink will consult with appropriate resources to better understand how we can support this area and develop applicable SOPs.

2.6 The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

At Execulink our Vision is “Our only goal is to enhance your lifestyle at home, work and play”. In the development of our Accessibility Plan, we recognize we have an opportunity to improve both the design and delivery of our programs and services to suit the needs of persons with disabilities.

Identified Barriers:

- Employees who enter customer homes and businesses require training in how to support people with disabilities through the installation and repair processes. For example, it is critically important to consult with customers regarding the accessible placement of equipment in their premises.
- We have an opportunity to improve the services we provide to customers with disabilities.
- Closed captioning for our TV services requires improvement. While closed captioning is an available setting for our TV service, not all our channel providers have closed captioning enabled.

Actions and Timelines:

- As noted in earlier commentary, we will source training or work with consultants to develop training for our Installation and Repair technicians. This will be completed no later than end of Q2 2024.
- Execulink will launch two new channels in Q3 2023. AMI Digital and AMI Audio are designed to provide broadcasting services for Canadians who are blind, partially blind or print restricted.
- Work with our external vendors to improve our Described Video and Closed Captions offerings.
- We will continue to support customer needs by sourcing organizations or providers of equipment we do not offer. We have engaged with CNIB to refer customers that are blind or partially blind regarding accessible remote controls. Where customers may require remote controls with larger and more simplified

buttons employees are to direct our customers to vendors who have accessible hardware.

2.7 Transportation

Execulink does not offer transportation services. For this reason, there is nothing to report under this heading.

3. Consultations

3.1 Internal Consultations

Execulink understands that consultations with persons with disabilities are critical to building an Accessibility Plan that supports their needs. We have reached out to our own employees to gather their feedback on how we can support accessibility.

Working with guidelines recommended by our external consultant, Execulink developed an Employee Accessibility Survey. Our anonymous, confidential survey was distributed to our 227 employees on March 15, 2023. 79 responses were received, representing 35% of our employee population. 14 employees (18%) identified as being a person with a disability. Employees were asked to identify what type of disability they have, with a several employees noting more than one. The disabilities that were identified included physical, chronic pain, hearing, neurodiversity, and mental health.

As part of our survey, we asked employees who identified as a person with a disability if they would be open to answering more specific questions to help us understand the barriers that they have faced, how they were resolved and what improvement recommendations they could provide. This feedback was incorporated into the development of this plan.

3.2 External Consultations

On behalf of its members, the Independent Telecommunication Provider Association (ITPA), contracted Left Turn Right Turn Ltd, an Ontario based consulting firm which supports organizations in their journeys towards universal accessibility. Left Turn Right Turn conducted two focus groups with persons with disabilities. They shared their experiences as customers and employees with disabilities. The consultations included approximately 10 people from across Canada. Participants included people with a variety of disabilities including blindness, deaf-blindness, ADHD, depression, Tourette's syndrome, cerebral palsy and more. Participants were compensated for their time. Additionally, we attended seminars as well as having a one-on-one discussion with Envol strategies.

Execulink engaged in additional consultations to support the development of this plan. We consulted with the Canadian Administrator of VRS to review this functionality. Through this consultation we were able to better understand how to ensure our customers that require this service can access and to build a plan to ensure that we are able to provide unfettered access to VRS services. We also consulted with our web development partner to understand our current website accessibility, what improvements that can be made to support people with disabilities and build our plan for improvement.

Execulink reached out to five national and local community organizations that focus on supporting those with disabilities to consult and understand how we could incorporate their feedback into our Accessibility plan. Efforts were made by email and phone on numerous occasions yet we did not receive a response from any of the five organizations. To ensure continued compliance to the Accessibility Canada Act, Execulink are committing to partnering with community organizations in the future and we will pursue opportunities to engage with these organizations.

4. Conclusion

Execulink recognizes that removing barriers for people with disabilities ensures all individuals receive the same awesome experience they deserve. We are committed to removing the identified barriers and encourage feedback to ensure we are making Execulink more inclusive to all. We will do this by continuing to engage with people with disabilities, organizations who support people with disabilities, and consultants to continuously understand our barriers and develop plans to address those barriers. We look forward to sharing our progress in future annual reports in accordance with the ACA.