



Accessibility Plan of the Eeyou Communications Network

2025-2028

Last Update:2025-05-28

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Accessibility Plan of the Eeyou Communications Network 2025-2028

Progress Report

Eeyou Communications Network (ECN) – About

Eeyou Communications Network provides diversified connectivity to global telecommunications networks, internet highways, and service and content providers in order to promote a wide range of opportunities both socially and economically.

In the evolution of northern telecommunications infrastructure, Eeyou Communications Network aims to interconnect these regions and facilitate the transit of data and services.

Feedback process and comments

ECN may be informed of accessibility barriers by telephone. Internal applicants may also submit their request online by completing the designated form. Therefore, the applicant must have access to a telephone line or internet connection. If these requirements impact an applicant's ability to report observations, another person may report the information on their behalf.

Consult our feedback process:

You may use the toll-free number if you wish to obtain a copy of our Accessibility Plan in alternate formats (print, large print, or other). Please note that a delay of 20 business days applies to this request.

All requests will be reviewed by our Human Resources department.

Contact us :

By telephone (toll-free number) : 1-800-284-5695

- By email :
- Address : 466, 3rd Street (Suite 105), Chibougamau, Québec G8P 2X6

Connecting remote region

The Eeyou Communications Network (ECN) is committed to accessibility through its mission of "Connecting our communities to the rest of the world."

By serving remote regions of Northern Quebec, ECN promotes digital and social inclusion for communities that are often underserved. This objective is reflected in its commitment to customers and communities by ensuring equitable access to technology, including for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, as a federally regulated company, ECN complies with the requirements of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA) and the Accessible Canada Regulations (ACR), thereby integrating accessibility into its services, development, and governance.

The Act in detail

In 2019, the Government of Canada enacted the Accessible Canada Act (the “Act”) with the goal of creating a barrier-free environment for persons with disabilities. The purpose of the Act is to allow any person living with visible or non-visible functional limitations to access an inclusive and accessible environment by identifying and eliminating barriers. The deadline to achieve a barrier-free Canada is set for no later than January 1, 2040.

Achieving the purpose of the Act is based on the recognition of the following principles:

- The right of every person to be treated with dignity, regardless of their disabilities
- The right of every person to equal opportunity for fulfillment, regardless of their disabilities
- The right of every person to barrier-free access and to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities
- The right of every person to make decisions for themselves, with or without assistance, regardless of their disabilities
- The fact that laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways in which they interact within their environments, as well as the multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination and marginalization they experience
- The fact that persons with disabilities must participate in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services and structures
- The development and review of accessibility standards and the enactment of regulations must aim to achieve the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities

The Act applies to various federal public sector organizations as well as federally regulated entities. This Accessibility Plan for the Eeyou Communications Network (ECN) aims to plan and implement the necessary changes to meet the objectives of the Act. As required by the regulatory framework, this plan specifically addresses potential barriers in the areas of:

- Employment
- Built environment
- Design and delivery of programs and services

- Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- Communications other than ICT
- Transportation
- Procurement of goods, services and facilities

This Accessibility Plan will span from June 2025 to June 2028, for a duration of three years.

Consultations

To create an accessibility plan truly adapted to the reality of persons with disabilities, ECN consulted the Chibougamau Association for Persons with Disabilities as well as its employees.

These individuals were consulted as follows:

- Online employee survey (sent May 14, 2025)
- Paper survey for Association members (sent May 13, 2025)
- Discussion with the Association representative (May 5, 2025)

To view the forms, see Appendices 1 and 2.

ECN created two separate surveys to gather feedback from internal staff and members of the Chibougamau Association for Persons with Disabilities. A total of 13 responses out of a possible 32 were received from internal employees and 0 from Association members. Fortunately, a prior discussion was held with the Association representative, which allowed us to better understand certain challenges experienced that could help improve overall accessibility.

Online Employee Survey

Here are the key findings from the internal online survey:

- 7.7% of respondents report having a disability.
- All respondents consider accessibility to be important or extremely important.
- 1 respondent has previously experienced accessibility-related barriers at work. This same individual confirms that measures were implemented and that they are satisfied with them.
- 100% of respondents are confident that the organization would be willing to implement accommodations if necessary. They also feel capable of guiding an employee toward the appropriate resource in the event of a barrier.
- 15% of respondents mention that additional measures could be implemented to improve accessibility.
- 23% of respondents mention that the workplace should be adapted for physical disabilities (for example, a ramp).

- 7.7% of respondents mention that access to documentation needs to be improved.

Overall, employees have a high level of confidence in the organization’s ability to address accessibility challenges should they arise, and they are familiar with the processes needed to properly guide colleagues facing such challenges.

Paper Survey for Members of the Chibougamau Association for Persons with Disabilities

A paper survey was conducted to facilitate the process for persons with disabilities. However, no responses were received. In the absence of responses, ECN was able to communicate with the Association representative to better understand the reality of its members. See the section below for further details.

Discussion with the Representative of the Association for Persons with Disabilities

During a call held on May 5, 2025, ECN introduced itself to the Association representative while explaining the purpose of its accessibility initiatives. During this brief discussion, several elements were identified as being particularly challenging for members:

- Very few members living with disabilities have access to the internet.
- Very few members use a cellphone for anything other than making calls.
- Documents sent to them must be provided in paper format and written in plain, easy-to-understand language.
- Some individuals are not fully independent and require support for routine tasks.

This discussion allowed ECN to realize that most of its communications are conducted online and that, even though we do not sell services directly to end customers, we remain difficult to access in terms of information and employment opportunities for them.

ECN Challenges and Accessibility Plan

Eeyou Communications Network provides connectivity to global telecommunications networks, internet highways, and service and content providers. Sales to individuals and businesses are carried out by resellers operating under AITP agreements. The only direct sales and external actions carried out by ECN concern major clients (mining companies, municipalities, etc.), and we also interact in the operation of the FTTH network under an “open access” model.

Employment

Following the evaluation of data collected during the surveys and discussions, the following elements were identified as areas to be addressed internally and externally regarding employment-related challenges.

Challenges	Solutions to be implemented
L Job postings are published only online, which makes access difficult for individuals without internet access.	Analyze solutions to offer more accessible job postings.
Job postings and the website do not mention that a person may request a paper version or a version provided verbally by telephone if necessary.	Revise the documents to make them more inclusive.
Access to documentation in both French and English must be improved. However, it is well structured and visually accessible.	Identify available and missing documentation, revise and translate it, and consolidate it in one centralized location.
We currently do not have accessibility awareness training.	Implement training through our learning platform.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, ECN already has practices in place that make employment more accessible:

- Interviews are always available in person or via Teams. This facilitates communication and makes the process less stressful for individuals who may experience social challenges.
- Customized accommodations have already been implemented internally. ECN demonstrates openness and understanding as long as the request is reasonable and does not create undue hardship.
- A computerized and automated training system is currently being implemented. This ensures all employees receive training and information in one centralized location to facilitate access.
- Although ECN promotes accessibility, certain positions require specific abilities and competencies that cannot be reduced due to high physical risk. It is therefore important to respect the required qualifications for a given position.

Built Environment

Challenges	Solutions to be implemented
The main office is not adapted for employees with physical disabilities requiring a wheelchair.	Analyze the office entrances and install a ramp as well as a solution for door accessibility.

It should be noted that the office has two floors. The second floor is not accessible to a person requiring a wheelchair. The position could be adapted and offered as remote work or relocated to the first floor (where all necessary services are available and accessible). In addition, a parking space could be reserved for this individual if such a case arises (ECN is not required to provide accessible parking as it has fewer than 15 parking spaces).

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Challenges	Solutions to be implemented
Technicians responsible for home installations are not trained or sensitized to serve clients with accessibility needs	Train frontline staff to better serve persons with disabilities.

As mentioned above, ECN provides connectivity but does not sell directly to individuals. Service delivery is therefore limited to home installations and major projects. This primarily affects installation supervisors and technicians. ECN will ensure that frontline employees receive appropriate training to provide inclusive service for all.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Challenges	Solutions to be implemented
The website was recently updated, but not necessarily in accordance with Web accessibility standards (WCAG).	Review and modify, if necessary, the website and promotional materials to ensure full compliance with WCAG.

ECN’s website was redesigned only a few years ago. It is visually appealing and user-friendly; however, accessibility standards will need to be revalidated and potential modifications planned and implemented if required.

ECN is also active through its communication strategy via social media, radio, and event participation. The company aims to maintain a presence in person, through video, and in written format to reach as many people in the community as possible.

Transportation

Eeyou Communications does not provide transportation services. This category does not apply.

Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

With respect to the procurement of goods, services and facilities, these points have already been addressed above (see Sections 1 and 3). ECN already provides employees, upon request, with work tools adapted to their needs (ergonomic chairs and adjustable desks). This allows us to respond to specific needs and eliminate certain ergonomic barriers in procurement and for our internal clients. These elements are part of our internal policies. Furthermore, due to the size of the organization, we are able to respond personally to requests and assess whether alternative solutions may better meet individual needs.

Conclusion

Eeyou Communications Network has implemented its 2025–2028 Accessibility Plan in alignment with the organization’s current practices. This comprehensive review identified strong practices as well as areas for improvement over the next three years. Progress achieved will be documented and communicated as required under accessibility legislation, before a new plan is required.

Finally, ECN is pleased to work toward creating a more accessible environment, both internally and externally.

Appendix 1 : Questionnaire for the Association

Are you a person with a disability according to the following definition: a disability is defined as a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment, or a permanent, temporary or episodic functional limitation that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify your disability (check all that apply):

- Hearing
- Vision
- Mobility
- Flexibility
- Dexterity
- Pain
- Learning
- Memory
- Developmental
- Mental health or psychological
- Unknown
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

Do you use the internet at home?

- Yes
- No

If no, why ?

Do you receive assistance to perform certain tasks?

- Yes, I have a support person with me at all times.
- Yes, I have a support person, but only for certain tasks.
- No, I am fully independent.
- Prefer not to answer.

When you have an issue with a service provider, how do you prefer to be contacted?

- By email
- By telephone
- In person

- I am not responsible
- Other

What measures would you like companies to implement to make customer service more accessible in relation to your disability?

Are you currently employed or seeking employment?

- Yes, I am employed
- Yes, I am seeking employment
- No, I am not looking for work

What challenges have you experienced when seeking employment?

- I do not have internet access, so I do not see job postings.
- I am afraid of interviews.
- Employers cannot accommodate my specific needs.
- The job description is too complex.
- I am not seeking employment.

Thank you for your valuable time. Are there any additional solutions you would like to suggest?

All responses collected through this form will remain anonymous and will be used to improve the accessibility of our services.

Appendix 2 : Questionnaire for employees

Are you a person with a disability according to the following definition: a disability is defined as a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment, or a permanent, temporary or episodic functional limitation that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders full and equal participation?

- Yes
- Non

How important do you consider accessibility issues?

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important
- Extremely important

In your work, have you ever encountered an accessibility barrier that prevented you or one of your colleagues from performing your work properly?

- Yes
- No

Were measures implemented to reduce the impact of these barriers (accommodations, task changes, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

Are you satisfied with these measures?

- Yes
- No

What measures could have been implemented to ensure your satisfaction?

-

Are you confident that the organization would be able to provide accommodations if you experienced accessibility barriers?

- Yes

- No

If an employee or client encountered an accessibility barrier at Eeyou, would you be able to guide them toward the appropriate resources for assistance?

- Yes
- No

In your opinion, are there additional measures that could be implemented to reduce the impact of accessibility barriers for employees?

- Yes
- No

What measures do you believe should be implemented?

-

Do you find that our facilities (buildings, workspaces, installations) are accessible and adapted for persons with disabilities?

- Yes
- No

What could make our facilities more accessible?

-

Can you easily access documentation in the language of your choice when needed?

- Yes
- No

What could make your access to documentation more accessible and convenient?

-

Do you have any other comments regarding accessibility issues or barriers?

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