

UNI FINANCIAL COOPERATION - Accessibility Plan 2023–2026. Progress report 2024–2025.

Table of contents

[General Information 3](#_Toc198905958)

[Areas described under section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA) 4](#_Toc198905959)

[Employment 4](#_Toc198905960)

[The built environment 6](#_Toc198905961)

[Information and communication technologies (ICT) 7](#_Toc198905962)

[Communications, other than ICT 8](#_Toc198905963)

[Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities 9](#_Toc198905964)

[Design and delivery of programs and services 10](#_Toc198905965)

[Transportation 11](#_Toc198905966)

[Consultations 12](#_Toc198905967)

[Feedback 13](#_Toc198905968)

# General Information

UNI is a financial cooperative dedicated to the sustainable prosperity of UNI, its members and its clients. It provides banking services, including financing and credit insurance, to individuals and businesses. For 88 years, UNI has been contributing to the economic stability of the communities in which it operates, and encouraging citizen participation through its cooperative mission.

Its commitment values are guides to action and light the way to achieving its Purpose:

* **Agility** means setting up a dynamic of continuous improvement, growth and innovation.
* **Courage** means taking a stand in our decisions and committing ourselves to ethical and sustainable choices.
* **Mutual aid** is about encouraging cooperation and mutual support to build a better, fairer future together.
* **Humanity** means putting people at the heart of our actions, and valuing diversity and inclusiveness.
* **Integrity** means acting with transparency and honesty, in compliance with rigorous ethical and regulatory standards.

The designated accessibility resource person is the Human Resources Manager.

## Contact us

You can submit your comments on the implementation of UNI's accessibility plan, or on the barriers you face in doing business with UNI, by contacting the accessibility team. For a copy of UNI's accessibility plan, visit the website or request it by:

Mail: Accessibility Team—Talent Management

295 Saint-Pierre Boulevard West, P. O. Box 5554

Caraquet, NB E1W 1B7

E-mail: accessible@uni.ca

Phone: 1-888-359-1357

## Alternate formats

UNI's 2024–2025 Progress Report, accessibility plan and feedback process are available upon request in alternate formats. You can contact us to obtain this report in another format.

Canadians who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired can register with [Canada VRS](https://srvcanadavrs.ca/en/), a free service, to make phone calls. Canada VRS callers are connected to a sign language interpreter who provides real-time interpretation for the call.

# Areas described under section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA)

In 2023, UNI published its Accessibility Plan and made commitments in six key areas to eliminate or prevent barriers for people with disabilities. This report sets out the progress made in relation to the commitments made in each of these areas

## Employment

We're still in the very early stages of this project, but with the activities we've completed and those still to come, we're confident we'll be able to meet our commitments to create and maintain an inclusive environment for employees with disabilities.

### Commitment 1: Communicate UNI's commitment to accessibility both internally and externally (e.g. on internal and external websites, in job descriptions and job advertisements).

**Progress update:**

* A statement of commitment to accessibility and inclusion, as well as an invitation to inform the Talent Management team of any need for accommodation, have been developed and are in the process of being rolled out to the career section of the organization's website, as well as on all job advertisements.
* UNI has a dedicated accessibility page on its website.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 2: Communicate the existence of accommodation processes during the recruiting process (e.g., in job offers, invites for job interviews, etc.)

**Progress update**:

* We identified and compiled the accommodations available during the recruitment process.
* Candidates are informed of UNI's commitment to accessibility and are encouraged to request accommodations from the Talent Management team.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 3: Provide education or awareness training on diversity and inclusion, including specifically inclusion of people with disabilities

 **Progress update:**

* A training plan is being developed in collaboration with various partners.
* A webinar and training course were delivered to a pilot group.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 4: Design and implement recruitment, onboarding, and talent management strategies to hire, train, and retain more people with disabilities and/or members of equity deserving groups.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 5: Review and prioritize organizational policies using an accessibility lens to help foster a workplace that is inclusive, secure, and welcoming to people with disabilities.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 6: Review and update the self-identification diversity questionnaire to be more inclusive.

**Progress update:**

* The self-identification questionnaire has been revised.
* All new employees receive the questionnaire together with an explanatory letter.
* The employee may, at any time during the course of his or her employment, change his or her choice of answer.

**Status:** Completed

### Commitment 7: Document and communicate the accommodation process to all employees.

**Progress update:**

* A compilation of possible accommodations has been made.
* A support and communication plan is under development.
* An electronic process to facilitate the request for equipment related to an accommodation need was put into production and communicated to all the organization's personnel.
* A catalogue of assistive technology has been developed and made available to employees to enable them to access technological tools according to their needs.
* UNI leaders were informed of a new partnership with a supplier. UNI is now able to offer barrier-reducing accommodations for Canadians who are blind or partially sighted. The organization's website reflects this service.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 8: Diversify the talent pool by working with external organizations that focus on the employment of people with disabilities.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 9: Develop a communications calendar relating to accessibility initiatives and days of significance for people with disabilities.

**Status:** Not yet started

## The built environment

This segment includes all UNI-occupied properties. They are located throughout New Brunswick. Our goal is to ensure that our business premises are accessible to all employees, members, customers, suppliers, partners and visitors. To this end, UNI has made the following commitments.

### Commitment 10: Document inventory and evaluate UNI’s places of business for accessibility.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 11: Initiate the development of accessibility standards for UNI’s places of business and implement a process to monitor compliance against the standards.

**Progress update:**

* UNI has begun analyzing the various existing accessibility standards for the built environment.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 12: Integrate accessibility principles and standards into the modernization plan.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 13: Implement and communicate the accommodation process, including possible accommodations in the built environment.

**Status**: Not yet started

### Commitment 14: Review UNI’s places of business evacuation plans to ensure they are accessible and that the evacuation solutions take into account people with disabilities.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 15: Assess whether UNI’s offices have sufficient private or quiet workspaces wherein employees who require it can fulfil their activities.

**Status:** Not yet started

## Information and communication technologies (ICT)

UNI uses various digital tools and technologies as part of our operations and to communicate with members, clients, and employees, including:

* Facebook
* Instagram
* LinkedIn
* Intranet portal
* uni.ca
* YouTube
* E-mail

This report provides an overview of the current state of IT accessibility within our organization. The following commitments have been developed by UNI with the aim of progressively eliminating ICT barriers and improving digital accessibility, using feedback received during consultations. The process required to make UNI's website and digital assets truly accessible will be protracted. Nevertheless, we are committed to making progress.

### Commitment 16: Create a remediation plan to remove barriers to accessibility identified on UNI’s external website.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 17: Formalize and communicate the ICT accommodation process to employees.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 18: Create a catalogue of approved assistive technologies to help provide employees with disabilities with the option to select the type of accommodation they require.

**Progress update:** A list of assistive technology equipment was compiled to create the catalogue. Our catalogue was then integrated into the IT portal in JIRA, so that HR could order the type of IT equipment they needed, depending on the situation.

**Status:** Completed

### Commitment 19: Train staff on digital accessibility, support, and communication with people with disabilities.

**Status:** Not yet started

## Communications, other than ICT

UNI is committed to providing and promoting materials and methods for drafting communications that comply with accessibility standards for their employees. The revision of existing administrative and corporate documents will be necessary to improve the clarity and simplicity of content.

### Commitment 20: Establish standardized accessibility criteria for corporate communications.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 21: Ensure that Microsoft Office accessibility features are activated.

**Progress update:**

* The accessibility features have been checked and are all activated.
* Procedures on how to use and install accessibility features have been created for communication to all UNI employees.
* These procedures are to be communicated to employees to promote these features.

**Status:** Completed

### Commitment 22: Raise awareness of established accessibility criteria among the various sectors that communicate with members, clients, employees and partners, and integrate them into all new communications.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 23: Review and prioritize existing communication materials to make them more accessible.

**Progress update:**

* The identification of administrative documents in need of greater visibility is underway.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 24: Start updating communication documents to make them accessible.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 25: Provide employees with accessible, digital templates.

**Progress update:**

* Monitoring of the templates available in our various in-house portals.

**Status:** On track

## Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Procurement of goods, services, and facilities refers to how UNI acquires and purchases goods, services, and/or other items. To eliminate barriers, UNI is working to include accessibility criteria in its procedures for purchasing or acquiring goods, services, or facilities.

### Commitment 26: Establish relationships with accessibility service providers, such as those who provide publishing and communication services in Braille, large print, digital voice assistance, captioning and sign language interpretation.

**Progress update:**

* UNI has completed the acquisition of accessibility services with suppliers.

**Status:** Completed

### Commitment 27: Provide training on accessibility for those responsible for the procurement of goods and services.

**Progress update:**

* UNI has begun the process of acquiring a supplier for training services

**Status:** Started

### Commitment 28: Set up a process for gathering information on new suppliers in terms of accessibility, in order to establish relevant performance indicators.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 29: Implement a supplier accessibility assessment process.

**Progress update:**

* Research into existing practices elsewhere was carried out.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 30: For suppliers with whom UNI already does business, develop a plan to identify a list of disability-owned organizations and strong accessibility practices.

**Progress update:**

* The first draft of the questionnaire was built.

**Status:** Started

### Commitment 31: Update procurement-related documents to reflect accessibility considerations (e.g. questionnaires, processes, templates, guidelines and contracts).

**Progress update:**

* The procurement directive is currently being updated.

**Status:** Completed

## Design and delivery of programs and services

Inclusion and accessibility for our members and clients are part of our customer service priorities. Our desire is to make adapted documents and creative tools available to our members and clients. We also want to train employees committed to accessibility in order to create physical and virtual points of service that are friendly and welcoming, with the aim of optimizing interactions with our clients.

### Commitment 32: Review and prioritize the explanatory documents supporting our products and services to include simple, clear language.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 33: Provide training on accessibility and equip teams in direct contact with members and clients on how to support and better interact with members and clients with disabilities.

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 34: Equip employees in business locations who are in direct contact with members and clients, and therefore with people with disabilities, to address the potential accessibility needs of members and clients.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 35: Communicate UNI's commitment to accessibility to its members and clients simply, clearly and proactively (e.g. website, point-of-service signage).

**Status:** On track

### Commitment 36: Communicate UNI's accessibility standards to members and clients simply, clearly and proactively.

**Status:** Not yet started

### Commitment 37: Evaluate the level of accessibility of UNI products, services and practices by including accessibility in satisfaction surveys sent to members and clients.

**Status:** Not yet started

## Transportation

This area of the Act concerns the elimination and prevention of barriers within the federal transportation network. Given the nature of UNI's mandate and activities, this area has been excluded from the 2023–2026 Accessibility Plan.

# Consultations

In April 2025, UNI sent an online survey to its employees, inviting self-identified employees with disabilities to respond. The initial purpose of the survey was to consult employees with disabilities on the draft version of our progress report in order to improve it.

In order to consult a larger number of employees with disabilities, and to respect the confidentiality of employees with disabilities who wanted to participate in the consultation and preferred not to identify themselves to a group, the consultation took place exclusively via an online survey. The survey was conducted using Microsoft Forms to ensure accessibility. Nine employees with disabilities responded to the survey, which included the following questions on the draft progress report:

* Do you have any comments or questions about the report?
* Is the report simple, clear and concise?
* Has UNI made progress in a commitment or area not mentioned in the report?
* Would you have liked to see progress on one or more commitments that have not yet begun?
* For commitments on track, would you like the report to contain more details on the progress made, or does it seem sufficient?
* Do you have any suggestions for activities that could contribute to the commitments underway?

## What we have learned

In general, on the draft progress report, the majority of participants noted that the report was simple, clear and concise. However, the following points were raised:

* the progress report was inclusive of different disabilities, but focused more on physical disabilities and less on other disabilities;
* Some commitments were vague, and it wasn't clear which handicaps were targeted for these commitments;
* The prioritization of commitments was unclear. It would have been nice to see progress on certain commitments that had not yet begun and that affected more employees, such as those on inclusive workplaces for neurodivergent people;
* Some commitments on track had few details of progress;
* The progression of commitments seemed adequate, and there had been no progress on commitments not mentioned.

These suggestions have been carefully considered and incorporated into the progress report. In addition, we will be reviewing the prioritization of unfinished commitments in each area to ensure that commitments affecting more people are prioritized where possible.

# Feedback

UNI and the Accessibility Team recognize the importance of understanding the barriers faced by our clients, members and employees as we advance our commitments in our journey toward a barrier-free organization.

In this regard, the feedback process set out in the 2023–2026 Accessibility Plan invites interested parties to make comments in any of the following ways: e-mail, telephone or mail.

Since the publication of the 2023–2024 progress report, we have received no feedback through the feedback process.