

Working from home without access to the departmental network?

Have no fear, eLearning@ESDC is here!

In honour of National AccessAbility Week, a variety of eLearning options are available to help you explore how you can play a role in making ESDC a leader in accessibility!



NEW learning recommendations every week!

eLearning@ESDC

No matter whether you are working on or off the departmental network, have no fear because eLearning@ESDC is here!

During these challenging times, you can rely on this weekly learning newsletter to connect ESDC learners—like you!—with meaningful learning.

A note from the College@ESDC:

- We are in transition! eLearning@ESDC is moving to a biweekly schedule, so expect the next edition on June 15!
- June 1 marks the beginning of [National Indigenous History Month](#), which honours the history, heritage and diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples; stay tuned for more Indigenous Awareness learning recommendations in our next edition!

Accessibility is always a priority, no matter the circumstances. People with disabilities are continually adapting to their work environments and there's much to learn from their experiences as we continue to adjust to our evolving working environment, now and in the future. As those working off-network and at home right now have come to know, there is more than just one way of working!

You might not have realized that about one in five Canadians have at least one disability that limits them in their daily activities. That's 6.2 million people! This week, to mark National AccessAbility Week (May 31 to June 6), we are shining a spotlight on accessibility and the steps ESDC is taking to identify, remove and prevent barriers to help ensure that employees and Canadians can reach their full potential. We can all contribute to achieving this goal in many ways; learning is a good place to start!

Take part in National AccessAbility Week by participating in one—or more—of the recommended learning activities below to explore how you can play a role in making ESDC a leader in accessibility!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Not all disabilities are visible! They can take many forms:
 - Cognitive disabilities (e.g. intellectual disability, autism, or Asperger's syndrome), learning disabilities (e.g. ADHD, dyslexia) or disabilities related to mental illnesses, such as depression, are not visible.
 - Other disabilities are neurological, such as fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome and multiple sclerosis. Injuries that result in long-term pain or physical and mental impairments are also invisible disabilities.

Learn more about [invisible disabilities](#).

- Disabilities are not always permanent or constant throughout life, either! They can be:
 - **Temporary:** Broken bones and surgeries or other medical procedures can cause a short-term disability.
 - **Episodic:** Multiple sclerosis, HIV or mental illness can fluctuate between periods of wellness and disability.
 - **Age-related:** Osteoporosis and dementia, for example, typically appear later in life.

Learn more about [episodic](#) disabilities.

- Since the [Accessible Canada Act](#) passed in 2019, ESDC has been developing an Accessibility Roadmap to become barrier-free for employees, managers and clients. It's focussed on addressing barriers in five areas:
 - Employment
 - Built environment
 - Information and communication technology
 - Program and service delivery
 - Culture change

Find out more about the [Roadmap \(PPTX, 552 KB\)](#).

- ESDC has an [Employees with Disabilities Network \(EwDN\)](#) (available on-network only), which is dedicated to providing a forum for employees with disabilities with support, interaction, sharing of lived experiences and educational resources and tools. Check out the short three question survey to provide feedback on your experiences in the last couple of months.

THIS WEEK'S TOP 5

No matter the circumstances, we must keep making efforts to make our work environment and the programs and services we deliver for Canadians accessible and inclusive to all, at all times.

Take part in one (or more!) of these learning activities to help you better understand what accessibility means, why it matters and how you can be a part of the solution!

1. [Accessibility Q&A on Slido \(event password: EwDNAccessibilityQ&A\)](#): Hosted by the Employees with Disabilities Network (EwDN) on June 3 from 12:30 to 1:30pm (EDT). Registration is on a first come, first served basis and space is limited so act fast!
2. [Accessibility and the changing world of work in photos](#): Wherever you are, take a photo of something in your current work environment that helps foster accessibility or creates a barrier, and then post it to Twitter with a short caption. Use the hashtag National #AccessAbility Week to create a virtual conversation. What a fun and creative activity that you can do with the kids!
3. [Curated playlist of Canadian films celebrating people with disabilities courtesy of the National Film Board \(temporarily available off-network only\)](#): Develop a deeper awareness about the meaning of "disability" and how it has changed from the 1960s to the present. Enjoy on your own or with others! (NOTE: Web page is in English but films are available in English, French, described video and/or have closed captioning).
4. [A Way with Words and Images](#): Not sure about the proper words and images to use when referring to people with disabilities? Read and bookmark this handy resource!
5. [My Accessible GC: What we are doing from Treasury Board Secretariat](#): Listen to panel discussions with senior leaders on accessibility in the public service.

LOOKING FOR MORE LEARNING?

Ready to take your learning further? Access one or more of these additional learning resources!

1. [Nothing without us: Accessibility strategy for the public service](#): Read about the GoC accessibility strategy.
2. Learn how to make your products and content accessible for all with these handy job aids:
 - [Make your Outlook email accessible to people with disabilities](#)
 - [Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities](#)
 - [Make your Excel documents accessible to people with disabilities](#)
 - [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities](#)
 - [Create and verify PDF accessibility \(Acrobat Pro\)](#)
 - [Foxit Phantom PDF Instructional Tutorials](#)
 - [Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines](#)

GUESS WHAT?

The Accessibility Roadmap Secretariat was established in February 2020 to provide leadership and coordination across ESDC on the Roadmap. [Get in touch](#) to find out more!

- The Department has already made important progress in meeting the goals of the ESDC Accessibility Roadmap:
 - An [Accessible Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\)](#) resource page is now available on iService, a central intake process is in place for accessibility-related requests and accessibility is now a mandatory consideration in all ESDC IT projects.
 - ESDC hired close to 130 employees who self-identify as having a disability between April 1 and September 30, 2019, bringing the total number of employees who self-identify as having a disability to nearly 1,800.
 - CFOB Real Property is working with Public Services and Procurement Canada to fast-track accessibility audits of ESDC worksites and make sure accessibility best practices are included in all future building designs.
 - You can find wayfinder beacons for Bluetooth-enabled smartphones and tablets in six Service Canada Centres (SCC) to guide clients with visual impairments, portable counter loop systems that transmit spoken word clearly to hearing aids have been purchased for 145 SCCs and, SCC clients can now submit accessibility-specific feedback online, by phone and by mail.
- In the COVID-19 context, we are **learning even more about accessibility** that will help us make further progress on the Roadmap and making sure ESDC is inclusive and barrier-free for employees and clients. For example:
 - We have become faster and more efficient in doing accessibility assessments of IT applications. Normally, these assessments can take months, but now they only take a matter of days to complete!
 - We're learning more about the equipment and technologies people with disabilities need to do their jobs and stay connected with colleagues while remotely.
 - Our public-facing [ESDC employee page](#), developed to support employees who are off-network, is available in an accessible format and received 40,000 visits in the first 6 weeks!

ON A PERSONAL NOTE... a message from Champion for the Employees with Disabilities Network, Jackie Zuk:



National AccessAbility Week gives us an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of Canadians with disabilities and our continued progress to eliminate barriers to accessibility. It is also an opportunity for us to recognize how important the contributions of persons with disabilities are and how we can all work together to build a country that is fully accessible and inclusive.

AccessAbility Week has taken on particular relevance this year. COVID-19 brought not only change in how we work but in all aspects of our lives. For those with disabilities, these challenges and the tools and strategies undertaken to support physical distancing are not always supportive or enabling. ESDC has been advancing work on our Accessibility Roadmap, the goal of which is to address barriers faced in the workplace, allowing for equal participation and opportunities for collective and individual success. To connect, go to our [Employees with Disabilities Network website](#) (available on-network only).

If you have any questions, the best way to reach the College@ESDC is to send an email to the NC-COLLEGE-GD@servicecanada.gc.ca.