



Accessibility Plan



Best Airline
Canada

Best Specialty Airline
North America

flyairnorth.com

Plain Language Summary of the Plan

The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) is a law to make Canada accessible. Under the ACA, the Air North – Yukon's Airline needs to plan to be more accessible. We are working to be more accessible. This is important to Air North, to our employees, to Yukoners and to Canadians. This plan is one step to being more accessible.

We created our plan by:

- Talking to individuals with disabilities
- Meeting with organizations that serve with people who have disabilities
- Talking to government agencies that assist Yukoners with medical travel
- Hosting an online survey about accessibility at Air North
- Sending a survey to people who work at Air North
- Identifying barriers
- Planning to remove or reduce these barriers

We plan to make Air North more accessible by doing the following:

- Collecting feedback about accessibility
- Providing clear information about the feedback process
- Reviewing and tasking the feedback we receive
- Encouraging people with disabilities to apply to work for Air North
- Working with non-government organizations to help people with disabilities become candidates for employment at Air North
- Examining leasing additional accessible check-in counters in collaboration with airport partners
- Ensuring our website meets the requirements of AA conformance set out in WCAG 2.0
- Updating our website so customers with a disability can self-identify and tell us what assistance they may require
- Redesigning the accessibility section of our website to include more information pages
- Reviewing our call volumes to determine the hours of operation for our call centre
- Working with passengers with disabilities to make connecting flights
- Conducting a slow walk-through for passengers with Autism and their families
- Meeting with organizations to discuss procurement
- Reviewing our RFP process to include accessibility-related criteria
- Posting a list of porter services

We welcome feedback on this plan.

Full Version of the Accessibility Plan

Message from Air North:

Our goal at Air North – Yukon's Airline is to offer a uniquely Yukon travel experience.

We think air travel should be a wonderful experience. We were honoured to receive the Travellers' Choice Award for Best Airline in Canada in 2020 based on customer feedback and reviews.

Air North is 100% owned by Yukoners. Our major partner is the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. One in 15 Yukoners hold an equity or employment stake in the airline. Our customers are our neighbours, our friends, and our family.

We want all Yukoners and all Canadians to take part fully in society. We share the principles that underpin the Accessible Canada Act:

All persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities;

All persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities;

All persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society regardless of their disabilities;

All persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;

Laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons; and,

Persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures.

We want every one of our customers' trips to be both memorable and enjoyable. We built our company by listening and responding to customer's needs. We believe every happy customer we serve is good for our business. Below is our Plan to make that happen.

Sincerely,

Air North Leadership Team

1. General

1.1 Description of Air North

Air North is an airline based in Whitehorse, Yukon that serves destinations in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario. We have more than 400 full-time and part-time employees.

1.2 Contact Information & Feedback Process

Air North welcomes feedback from the public, shareholders, and our employees. Your feedback about this Plan or the feedback process helps us remove barriers.

1.3 Accessibility Contact

The Chief Operating Officer is designated to receive feedback on behalf of the entity. The Chief Operating Officer may be contacted by email, telephone, or post.

Chief Operating Officer
accessibility@flyairnorth.com
867-668-2228

Accessibility feedback e-mail
accessibility@flyairnorth.com

You may also submit your feedback by mail to:

Chief Operating Officer
150 Condor Road
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 0M7

You can submit anonymous feedback. If you want to provide anonymous feedback do not provide your name or any other identifying information. Do not include your return mailing address on the envelope if submitting feedback by mail.

We will acknowledge your feedback in the same way you contacted us if you provide contact information.

Air North will provide the following alternative formats of this plan:

- print
- large print
- braille
- audio format, or
- an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities.

You can request alternative formats of this plan, and a description of our feedback process by contacting us at accessibility@flyairnorth.com

1.4 Feedback Process

Air North will include on our webpage for services to persons with a disability, the contact person, and a link to our accessibility email account.

The Chief Operating Officer will review each feedback message received. The Chief Operating Officer will assign the message to the relevant department for follow-up by an assigned due-date. Air North will maintain a list of feedback messages received, when the messages were received, contact information if provided, department involved, follow-up actions taken, and respond to the person providing feedback advised of the follow-up. Air North will periodically review these messages to identify themes or patterns. The frequency of the reviews will depend on the volume of feedback messages received.

Feedback will be incorporated into future progress reports and updated plans.

1.5 Definitions

The following are important terms in the ACA. They are used throughout this plan. They are defined here in plainer language.

For the full ACA definitions, visit: Accessible Canada Act (<https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/page-1.html>)

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.

Disability: Any impairment, or difference in physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, or communication ability. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary, or can change over time.

2 Employment

2.1 Goal

To provide employees and job seekers with disabilities increased access to employment and promotional opportunities at Air North.

2.2 Current Status

Air North is subject to all applicable federal legislation; specific to accessibility, Air North is subject to the Employment Equity Act (EEA) and the Canadian Human Rights Act. Our participation and goals under the EEA are around investigating, identifying, and taking action to correct the condition of disadvantage in employment for the four designated groups via programs, policies, analyses, and plans. Our responsibilities and established goals extend beyond the four designated groups under this legislation and they are reviewed and updated annually (as necessary). Striving to be a barrier-free employer is a continuous process that we seek to improve on year after year; this plan supports and aligns well with responsibilities and goals under the EEA.

2.3 Consultation Results

Air North's survey of employees asked if they had a disability and if so, what barriers they faced. Of the 114 responses, 10 identified as having a disability. Of those, 5 said they faced barriers.

Due to the small sample size the responses are summarized. Recommendations included removing sound-dampening barriers such as plexiglass and improving wheelchair access.

A not-for-profit organization requested a follow-up meeting with Air North employment officials to discuss reestablishing a mutually beneficial relationship. The organization indicated that prior to the pandemic Air North had been working cooperatively with them to fill positions.

Employees also expressed appreciation for management being willing to work with them to address accommodations.

2.4 Targets

In 2023, Air North will include in advertisements for job opportunities information advising prospective employees that Air North offers accessible employment options.

In 2024, Air North will re-engage with not-for-profit organizations providing support to job-seekers with disabilities to match job opportunities with prospective employees.

In 2025, Air North will consult with an employment specialist on ways to improve Air North's hiring practices for persons with disabilities.

3 Built Environment

3.1 Goal

To provide our employees with barrier-free workplaces and to provide our customers with a memorable and enjoyable, barrier-free travel experience.

3.2 Current Status

Air North bases its operations in Whitehorse, Yukon. Passenger Service Agents and ground crews are located at each of the communities we serve.

3.3 Buildings

Air North has buildings at our base in Whitehorse. We also lease space for operations in the airports we serve. The accessibility of our stations and terminals varies by location. Due to the differences in size, services available in Vancouver or Toronto may not be available in Old Crow.

3.4 Fleet

Air North has one Boeing 737-400 and four Boeing 737-500 jets. Air North has three ATR 42-320 turboprops for passenger service and one for cargo. The accessibility of our aircraft depends on the aircraft.

3.5 Consultation Results

Persons with disabilities asked for the front row of seats on the airplane be reserved for them. Air North should provide an aisle chair on the flight if the front row is not available.

Persons with disabilities recommended that one of the first three rows be removed and the extra leg room between the seats to accommodate mobility aids.

Persons with disabilities often require more time to check-in, clear security, and board. Customers requested a priority check-in line for persons with disabilities that had accessible height counters.

Air North's aircraft do not have accessible washrooms. Customers requested that Air North retrofit aircraft to make the washrooms accessible by installing grab bars. Customers recommended that Air North's next new airplane has at a minimum, one accessible washroom.

Moving heavy wheelchairs from the hold to the aircraft door can take a long time. These delays may cause passengers to miss connecting flights or delay their use of washroom facilities. Customers recommended Air North work with airports to have access to cargo elevators from tarmac to jetway level to move mobility aids. Customers also indicated that heavy mobility aids could be damaged when moving between the hold and the passenger cabin. Customers requested that those handling mobility aids have improved or refresher training.

Customers requested an on-board mobility aid like a walker for customers to use while going to / from the washrooms.

Customers requested more golf-carts to transport them from the check-in counter to the gate.

Customers requested that Air North advise customers at check-in of the availability of mobility aids to assist those who would otherwise walk long distances.

Customers requested wider seats, more leg room, and aisle seat arm rests that raise.

Customers requested seatbelt extenders be available without having to ask for one.

Customers asked that staff be trained on dealing with situations where strong scents or aromas are present in the cabin.

Customers recommended staff training and awareness of invisible disabilities.

Customers requested a room at the airport for persons with sensory related disabilities.

Customers indicated that in the absence of a jetway to the aircraft, that boarding be done via ramps instead of stairs.

The programs serving people with disabilities and their families recommended changes to the built infrastructure. These changes included the ability for people using sophisticated, specialized mobility aids to remain in their aid instead of being moved to an airplane seat. They identified the lack of accessible washrooms on board aircraft. They recommended a review of the attendant program. People with mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, and communication impairments may present as fully capable, but need an attendant.

3.6 Targets

In 2023, Air North will review our customer feedback processes to understand better areas of concern.

In 2024, Air North will re-examine leasing additional accessible check-in counters in collaboration with relevant airport authorities.

4 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

4.1 Goal

To improve the experience of customers with disabilities wishing to book tickets and find information.

4.2 Current Status

Air North operates a website, flyairnorth.com and a call-centre that are its predominant means of communicating with customers. Customers make reservations through website, call centre, and email. All reservation agents are trained to support customers accessibility needs by discussing and arranging the assistance each passenger requires. The agents make notes that are shared with the flight crews. They can also take any feedback or comments for communication to our accessibility contact.

Support for customers with disabilities is built on the model of customer self-disclosure. The website does not currently provide for customers to self-disclose disabilities or to share additional assistance they may require.

Air North is currently auditing the website procedures and is looking to improve the website's accessibility and information.

Air North broadcasts flight information over public address systems at the airports. Where available, Air North also publishes flight-related information to televisions / monitors.

Air North uses public address systems on-board to provide safety briefings and in-flight information.

4.3 Consultation Results

Persons with disabilities advised they may book their ticket online. To share additional information about their disability, to complete their seat selection or to request additional accommodations, they need to call the airline, which adds time to complete the booking process.

Supporting documents are required for certain supports or accommodations. Some of these documents must be provided for each flight. Customers requested Air North retained those documents on file.

Air North passengers flying to larger centres for medical appointments using a ticket paid for by a medical travel program need to contact the call-centre to reschedule flights. Sometimes the call-centre closes before the passenger knows they need to reschedule.

Passengers with disabilities wishing to travel with an attendant must call the airline to receive the lower fare and to complete their seat selection.

Customers requested the website be redesigned to make it easier to share information related to disabilities

and desired accommodations when booking flights. These accommodations included the requirement for mobility aids, service animals, attendants, dietary restrictions, and others.

Customers requested that passengers' profiles include information related to their disability and desired assistance.

Customers requested additional information such as estimated distance from the check-in counter to the gate or from the gate to the luggage carousel to assist them in determining if they need a mobility aid.

4.4 Targets

In 2023, Air North will ensure our website to meet the requirements of AA conformance set out in WCAG 2.0.

In 2024, Air North will review and updated our website so customers can self-identify through the website if they have a disability, and what assistance they may require.

In 2023, Air North will work with partners to achieve better outcomes for passengers traveling to address medical needs.

In 2024, Air North will redesign the accessibility section of our website to include information pages in cooperation with organizations serving people with disabilities.

In 2024, Air North will review call volumes to determine the hours of operation for our call centre.

In 2025, Air North will review call volumes to determine the hours of operation for our call centre.

5 Communications, other than ICT

5.1 Goal

To ensure that Air North's communications tools and services are accessible and inclusive, available in plain language and free of biases and discrimination.

5.2 Current Status

Flight Attendants and Passenger Service Agents provide check in counter and inflight service. Flight Attendants individually brief each passenger requiring assistance at the start of the flight on the safety features and emergency procedures. Flight attendants advise passengers with hearing disabilities individually of on-board announcements. These messages are made in visual, verbal and/or written format to persons with disabilities who request such a service.

5.3 Consultation Results

Customers with disabilities requiring assistance are seated first and disembarked last. The flight crew asks that passengers requiring assistance remain until others have deplaned and then helps the whole group. Persons needing assistance to make connections, especially when flights are delayed, recommended that those with connecting flights be the first to disembark the plane and provided with a guide to take them to their next flight.

5.4 Targets

In 2023, Air North will work with passengers with disabilities to help them make their connecting flights.

6 Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

6.1 Goal

To enhance the accessibility of Air North's programs and services by increased awareness and knowledge of accessible and inclusive design and delivery.

6.2 Current Status

Air North's Policy for the Carriage of Passengers with Disabilities is laid out in Rule 71 of our Tariff.

With 48 hours advanced notice, Air North will ensure that services are provided to Persons with Disabilities. Air North will make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests not made within this time limit.

Air North staff assist with registration at the check-in counter and guiding customers to the boarding area. We assist in boarding and deplaning as well as stowing and retrieving carry-on baggage. We assist passengers moving to and from an aircraft lavatory. We assist customers in proceeding to the general public area or to another carrier. We transfer a passenger between their own mobility aid and one provided by Air North. We transfer a passenger between a mobility aid and their seat. We inquire periodically during a flight about a person's needs. We brief individual passengers with disabilities and their attendant on emergency procedures. We retrieve checked baggage or provide a passenger with information for porter services.

Air North carries accessibility aids at no cost to the passenger including wheelchairs; walkers, canes, crutches, and braces; communication devices; prosthesis or medical devices. Due to space limitations on some aircraft, Air North may not be able to accommodate some battery-powered mobility aids. The reservations team will provide passengers with more information at the time of booking.

If a Passenger requires an Attendant, a seat may be booked for the Attendant at a discount, subject to conditions that are discussed with the passenger at time of booking. Air North may also require that an Attendant accompany a passenger with a disability as a condition of providing transportation if it is determined that an Attendant is essential for the safety of the passenger.

When flying to or from the United States, in addition to Canadian Legislation, Air North is required to comply with US Laws and Regulations. Accessibility regulations for air travel are found in the US Code of Federal regulations, Part 382 (14CFR382).

Where possible, Air North is committed to the harmonization of Canadian and US Regulations to the highest standard published and in force between the two countries.

In the case of schedule irregularities, Air North gives priority for assistance to any Person with a Disability and unaccompanied minors.

Air North does not charge a seat pre-selection fee for a person with a disability who requires a seat to meet

a disability-related.

Air North representatives will inquire periodically about the needs of persons in wheelchairs who are not independently mobile who are waiting to board an aircraft, and will attend to those needs where the services required are usually provided by Air North.

Air North's policy for service animals is laid out in Rule 75(D) of the Tariff. Service Animals need to be certified as having been trained by a professional service animal institution, they must remain on the floor at the person's seat and they must be properly harnessed.

6.3 Consultation Results

Customer responses to surveys and organizations supporting persons with disabilities described embarrassing situations of being identified as having a disability. Individuals spoke about the need to treat people with disabilities with respect. Many of the comments from individual survey responses and from organizations supporting persons with disabilities indicated that Air North's staff were treating all passengers with respect.

Customers and organizations representing persons with disabilities commented on service animals. Concerns raised included the requirement for a service animal to have been trained at a recognized institution, including support animals and the simplification and retention of forms.

Customers and organizations representing persons with disabilities commented on Attendant Fare prices. Concerns raised included the amount of the discount for an attendant and the booking process.

Customers requested that Air North address strong aromas and scents in the cabin space with Flight Attendants being trained to address the situations instead of passenger-to-passenger discussions.

Customers requested additional training for Flight Attendants to familiarize themselves with the barriers that a person with Autism may face.

A not-for-profit organization recommended that Air North host on an annual basis for persons with disabilities a slow-walk-through that starts at the check-in counter and ends with the customers emplaning and then deplaning. The not-for-profit felt such an exercise would help children with disabilities prepare for future travel. They also felt it would help Air North employees understand some of the barriers faced.

6.4 Targets

In 2023, Air North will review its training procedures with respect to customers with a cognitive or intellectual disability.

In 2023, Air North will conduct a slow walk-through with Autism Yukon and other partners for clients with Autism and their families to familiarize them with the travel experience from check-in to boarding and disembarking.

In 2024, Air North will review its training procedures with respect to customers with a cognitive or intellectual disability.

In 2024 Air North will conduct a slow walk-through with Autism Yukon and other partners for customers with disabilities and their families to familiarize them with the travel experience from check-in to boarding and disembarking.

In 2025 Air North will conduct a slow walk-through with Autism Yukon and other partners for customers with disabilities and their families to familiarize them with the travel experience from check-in to boarding and disembarking.

7 Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

7.1 Goal

To enhance the accessibility of Air North's programs and services by increased awareness and knowledge of accessible and inclusive design and delivery.

7.2 Current Status

At present, Air North does not have any formal policies specific to the procurement of goods, services, and facilities, established to identify, remove, and prevent barriers.

Air North's corporate culture is to find ways to provide customers with a travel experience that is both memorable and enjoyable. Air North will continue to be open to business relationships that provide goods and services that support our values.

7.3 Consultation Results

Procurement was not addressed specifically by respondents to the consultations.

7.4 Targets

In 2024, Air North will meet with organizations serving people with disabilities to examine creating policies, programs, practices, and services designed to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in its procurement of goods, services, and facilities.

In 2025 Air North will review our RFP process to include specific accessibility-related criteria.

8 Transportation

8.1 Current Status

Air North does not provide ground transportation services for customers arriving at or departing the airport. Air North employees assist passengers with disabilities in moving luggage from the drop off zones to the check-in area. Air North will also move their luggage from the baggage carousel to ground transportation pick up area. Air North will direct customers to use porter services where available.

8.2 Consultation Results

Customers requested help moving baggage to the check-in desk and from the luggage carousel to transportation options.

8.3 Targets

In 2023, develop and post on the website a list of porter services available at the different airports that Air North serves that includes the name and contact information for the service so that customers can contact the porter service in advance of their travel.

In 2024, update and post on the website a list of porter services available at the different airports that Air North serves that includes the name and contact information for the service so that customers can contact the porter service in advance of their travel.

In 2025, update and post on the website a list of porter services available at the different airports that Air North serves that includes the name and contact information for the service so that customers can contact the porter service in advance of their travel.

9 Provisions of Regulations under the CTA and ACA

9.1.1 Provisions of CTA Accessibility-Related Regulations (Under ss.170(1))

As a small TSP, Air North is subject and fully compliant to the:

- Air Transportation Regulations, Part VII (for air carriers not captured under the ATPDR); and
- The Personnel Training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities Regulations (for all TSPs not captured under the ATPDR).

Air North currently meets the definition of a "small air carrier" under the ATPDR. We do not foresee this changing in the near future. However, in support of providing the highest level of accessible air transportation, Air North has plans to voluntarily comply with the more extensive large carrier requirements under the ATPDR. This will be continually rolled out over an established timeline.

Further, the U.S. Department of Transportation has additional accessibility rules Air North follows: "Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Air Travel (under CFR Part 382).

9.1.2 Provisions of Regulations Made Under ACA ss. 117(1)

The Governor in Council can designate additional areas in which barriers are to be identified and prevented under section 5 of the ACA. As of the time of writing of this plan, it has not done so. If additional areas are designated in the future, Air North will address these as required.

9.2 Targets

No new targets were identified.

10 Consultations

Air North is committed to including the perspectives of people with disabilities in our accessibility planning. We consulted with people with disabilities when preparing this plan. We are committed to consulting people with disabilities for all future accessibility plans.

10.1 Consultations with Passengers who Have Disabilities

Air North used two anonymous surveys to collect feedback. The first was advertised on social media and shared with organizations serving persons with disabilities. It focused on customers with disabilities and their attendants. The survey was open to the public for 10 days. Air North identified customers with disabilities and reached out by telephone to offer telephone or in-person conversations.

Due to the small population of the Yukon and the concomitant small number of persons with disabilities, no attempt was made to collect statistical information on the range of disabilities represented in the survey nor on the number of respondents by type of disability.

Air North conducted telephone interviews with persons with disabilities. In some cases, attendants and care-givers provided input as well.

10.2 Consultations with Employees

The second survey polled employees. It asked about the employee's own experience with barriers at Air North as an employer, and if they were aware of any barriers customers faced. One-hundred and fourteen employees responded with 10 identifying as having a disability. Given the small sample size, no attempt was made to determine the breadth of the disabilities or barriers represented.

10.3 Consultations with Organizations serving People with Disabilities

Air North invited organizations serving people with disabilities to distribute the online survey to their members and families. We also asked to meet. Follow-up discussions were held with Autism Yukon; Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Society Yukon; Inclusion Yukon; and Teegatha' Oh Zheh. Every organization that participated in follow-up conversations expressed appreciation for Air North reaching out.

Air North consulted The Yukon Government's Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan Medical Travel Program, and the Government of Canada's Non-Insured Health Benefits Program.

10.4 Consultation Results

Approximately 150 people participated in the public, web-based survey. Fifty-one identified as having a disability. Fifty-four identified as a support person for someone having a disability.

Respondents' comments generally focused on addressing barriers as defined by the ACA. Issues outside of the Accessibility focus were noted and passed to management for follow-up later. Respondents' comments are summarized under the relevant section of the plan.

The Government of Yukon's Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan Medical Travel Program, and the Government of Canada's Non-Insured Health Benefits program made recommendations related to services for their clients. Air North will meet with them separately for further discussions.

Customers noted that Air North's equipment, call-centre wait-times and website could be improved, but the people of Air North, especially the Passenger Service Agents and the Flight Attendants, treat them with respect and understanding. Many persons with disabilities stated that when they did encounter barriers the people of Air North went to great lengths to assist them in having an enjoyable travel experience.

11 Conclusion

Accessibility plans will be published every three years with annual progress reports to track their implementation. We recognize the goal of achieving full accessibility is a process. This plan is a step towards that goal.



Accessibility Contact

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Chief Operating Officer
accessibility@flyairnorth.com
867-668-2228

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accessibility@flyairnorth.com

You may also submit your feedback by mail to:
Chief Operating Officer
150 Condor Road
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