



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024-2027

Gander Int'l Gander International
Airport Authority

GLAA Airports Authority's Accessibility Plan and Feedback Process

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Executive Summary

Purpose

This plan guides Gander International Airport's position on creating a barrier-free environment for passengers, staff, and customers. It outlines objectives related to accessibility, which strive to meet the expectations of the communities in which we operate. GIAA reviews this document to ensure that it reflects the needs of all passengers and users of the airport. This plan is predicated on the vision that GIAA can improve the passenger experience for all passengers and create an inclusive environment.

GIAA is committed to meeting the requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act (ACA)*, the *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations (ATPRRs)*, and the *Accessible Canada Regulations (ACRs)*. This plan helps show our community where we are headed and how to get there.

Our Commitment to Accessibility

As the International Air Transport Association (IATA) reminds us, travel is the business of freedom. GIAA believes in providing products and services that reinforce autonomy, dignity, and the freedom to travel regardless of perceived differences.

The GIAA is dedicated to ensuring a comfortable, secure travel experience tailored to the needs of individuals with disabilities. Everyone should have equitable and unobstructed access to Gander International Airport regardless of their abilities. This commitment reflects our resolve to foster an inclusive and accessible environment for all travellers. We will continuously collaborate with our partners and individuals with disabilities to identify, eliminate, and prevent accessibility barriers within our airport infrastructure, services, and communication platforms.

We adhere to relevant accessibility laws and regulations, striving to surpass the minimum requirements whenever possible. Our initiatives are guided by accessibility standards and best practices. Our accessibility policy will be regularly reviewed to stay current and pertinent.

The GIAA and its partners understand that accessibility and inclusion lay the foundation for building a sustainable future, and we prioritize identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to equal access at YQX. We will be welcoming and inclusive to all.

COLLABORATIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

We acknowledge that accessibility is a collective responsibility and pledge to collaborate closely with all relevant stakeholders, including disability rights organizations, travellers with disabilities, and accessibility experts. We value their contributions and insights, which are vital to guiding our accessibility efforts and helping us create an inclusive environment for everyone.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS-RAISING

We recognize that awareness and training are crucial for fostering a culture of accessibility within our organization. We are committed to providing regular training for our employees and the airport community on accessibility topics, including best practices for interacting with people with disabilities and the proper use of assistive equipment.

AIRPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

We promise to keep investing in clear, easy-to-understand signage, wayfinding, and other specific infrastructure improvements to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities at our airport. As we modernize and enhance terminal facilities, we will keep the needs of disabled guests front of mind.

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

We understand the important role that technology and innovation play in enhancing accessibility. We are committed to actively seeking and implementing solutions that enable people with disabilities to navigate our terminal building independently and confidently.

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

We are dedicated to maintaining open and transparent communication with individuals with disabilities and other concerned stakeholders. We will provide accessible communication channels to gather feedback, suggestions, and concerns related to accessibility.

Consultations

In 2024, we established a consultative process that includes disability advocacy groups and people with lived experience. It aims to work with our community to identify, remove, and prevent barriers from being introduced into our services and facilities. We recognize that an effective Accessibility Plan requires ongoing consultation with our community.

To support the development of our Accessibility Plan, we invited people with auditory, mobility, and sensory disabilities to provide feedback about customer service and any barriers they encountered at the airport. The GIAA also consulted with various groups representing Canadians with disabilities and lived experiences, including Inclusion NL.

This Accessibility Plan was created with input from people with disabilities in the following ways:

- **Public Consultation Sessions:** A public consultation session was held on June 12th in the community board room of the international lounge. Attendees were provided feedback on barriers faced by people with disabilities, our commitment to remove barriers across the seven key focus areas, and the overall plan. These sessions were advertised through the airport's standard channels, including the website and social media posts. Various stakeholders and community members, many of whom identified as having a disability, attended the sessions.

Persons with lived experiences in attendance included:

- Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, and use hearing technology
- Persons who are blind, have low vision, and have vision disabilities
- Persons who have autism (their caregivers)

Attendees emphasized the need for improved signage and wayfinding, enhanced services for individuals with mobility impairments, and better social programs and support for neurodiverse individuals and those with invisible disabilities.

- **Public Survey:** An online survey was conducted to gather feedback from disabled travellers. A total of 12 reply's were received.
- **Employee Consultation:** A consultation session was held with employees from various organizational levels and departments. This facilitated session focused on guiding questions to understand how to foster an accessible

workplace and identify barriers and ideas to address these barriers for YQX employees.

General

Who can I contact to give feedback or ask questions?

As a traveller, a member of the worker community, or an employee at Gander International Airport (YQX), if you would like to provide feedback about how YQX is implementing this Accessibility Plan or if you have encountered any barriers at YQX, please connect with us personally or anonymously using the email, phone number, or mailing address outlined above. Feedback can also be submitted through an online feedback form on our website or via direct messaging on social media (links provided below). Our feedback options provide an acknowledgment of receipt and can maintain anonymity. The Manager of Security and Facilities is the designated person to receive feedback on behalf of YQX.

Contact Name: Garrett Watton, Manager of Security & Facilities

Phone: +1-709-256-6663

Email: info@ganderairport.com

Mailing Address:

1000 James Blvd.

Gander, NL, Canada

A1V 1W8

Website:

www.ganderairport.com

Facebook:

www.facebook.com

Twitter:

www.twitter.com/ganderairport

Alternate Formats

Upon request, an accessible alternate format (e.g., print, large print, Braille, audio format, or an electronic format compatible with adaptive technology) of this

Accessibility Plan or the Feedback Process can be provided by contacting us at the mailing address, phone number, or email outlined below, or through any other links provided on this page.

How do we understand barriers to accessible transportation?

GIAA follows the social model of disability; people with disabilities encounter barriers in the environment rather than being disabled by their differences. For that reason, barrier identification is at the core of our efforts to deliver effective customer service. Barriers include attitudinal, information, and physical or architectural barriers.

1. Attitudinal barriers

- These result when people think, or act based on false assumptions.

2. Information barriers.

- These are created when information is offered in a format that suits some of the population but not all people.

3. Physical/architectural barriers

- These physical obstacles prevent access to a facility, or location.

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

Information and communications technologies (ICT) are critical to ensuring a stress-free travel experience. GIAA's website provides all flight information and schedules, including delays and cancellations.

Information on critical developments that are time-sensitive, affect available services, or may impact airport users' health, safety, and security are posted.

We provide visual and audible announcements in the terminal through our public address (PA) system. We provided flight, health, safety, and security information in audio and visual formats.

Communication and Training

GIAA is committed to ensuring that information can be communicated in a way that best suits the individual. This means offering information in alternative formats upon request, such as accessible electronic formats, large print, audio formats, and braille, providing information in clear and concise sentences.

Design and delivery of programs and services

In 2024, we established a consultative process to engage advocacy groups and people with lived experience. The process enables GIAA to receive feedback on how it designs and implements airport services.

Additionally, GIAA has “Accessibility for All” awareness training for staff. Among other topics, the training provides staff with barrier identification and strategies to overcome barriers for people with disabilities.

Procurement of goods, services, and facilities

GIAA recognizes that a positive way to prevent barriers from being introduced is by responsible procurement practices. In 2025, GIAA will incorporate a commitment to accessible procurement into a Procurement Policy and Procedure. We aim to partner with companies and businesses that believe in a barrier-free transportation system and can demonstrate commitment to this philosophy through their product/service offerings and development. In practice, this sets the expectation of embedding accessibility into our business requirements and evaluation criteria when procuring goods, services, and products used by passengers, employees, and other airport users.

Transportation

GIAA recognizes its role as a transportation hub that connects our communities to the rest of the country and the world. Through our operational and safety meetings, we encourage tenants and other transportation services to work closely with us and offer accessible services and/or products.

Built Environment

GIAA ensures that any changes to the architectural environment and new construction comply with the latest applicable building codes and standards. For example, this includes documents like the Canadian Standards Association (CSA)/Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC) B651:23 *Accessible Design for the Architectural Environment*. The GIAA will work to ensure that universal design principles are at the forefront of airport capital improvements and procurement. This is important because it prevents barriers from being introduced into the airport environment, eliminating the need to make costly changes to infrastructure in the future.

Provisions of the CTA accessibility-related regulations

GIAA is committed to meeting the requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act (ACA)*, the *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations (ATPRRs)*, and the *Accessible Canada Regulations (ACRs)*.

GIAA is subject to the Canadian Transportation Agency's *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDRs)* and the provisions of these regulations that apply to it. In particular, GIAA is subject to "Part 1—Requirements Applicable to Transportation Service Providers" and "Part 4— Requirements Applicable to Terminal Operators."

Accessibility Action Plan, 2024

GIAA remains committed to continuous improvement and to enhancing accessibility for all airport users. Over the next three years, we will continue to identify, remove, and prevent barriers based on the following action plan. GIAA will report on and review the Accessibility Action Plan to maintain momentum in achieving our goal of a barrier-free airport.

Each action is accompanied by the anticipated barrier that the action will address and the target completion date

Information & Communication Technologies (ICT)

Accessibility Goals	Target Date
Website and Social Media Platforms <ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore options to integrate accessibility intelligence (AI) tools, so users can choose an option that works best for them, such as font and contrast adjustments and reading text to speech.	September 1, 2024

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update website to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Use alt text to provide text descriptions of images or video posted online. 	<p>September 1, 2024</p> <p>Going forward</p>
<p>Public Address (PA) and Sound Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all audio systems to ensure announcements are clearly audible. Investigate the integration of visual displays into the PA system and all pre-recorded announcements. Investigate the integration of assistive listening technologies or hearing loop systems to all passenger and visitor areas. 	<p>December 1, 2024</p> <p>February 1, 2025</p> <p>February 1, 2025</p>
<p>Self-serve kiosks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with airline carriers and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to implement self-serve kiosks into their operations, that offer multi language and universal signage to diversify the passenger experience 	<p>Ongoing</p>

Information & Communication (other than ICT)

Accessibility Goals	Target Date
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<p>Website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all GIAA accessibility programs and services are presented on the website and discoverable through the search option. 	<p>December 1, 2024</p>
<p>Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all signage meet the accessibility standards including font size, color contrast, universal symbols and standard naming conventions • Ensure all washroom and destination signage is cable of being read through tactile characters, raised symbols and or braille. • Use inclusive terminology for a more universal language option. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>September 1, 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Way Finding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a PDF Accessibility Map that clearly identifies the location of accessible features, facilities and services through the airport. 	<p>December 1, 2024</p>
<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training to staff and airline partners to recognize and understand the nature of the person’s disability. • Provide training to staff and airline partners so that they are familiar with the programs offered or to be offered at the GIAA. 	<p>February 1, 2025</p> <p>February 1, 2025</p>

Procurement of Goods and Services

Accessibility Goal	Target Date
<p>Public Tendering and RFPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all public tendering and RFPs are viewed with an accessibility lens and • Accessibility is integrated into the requirements. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current contracts to establish if accessibility initiatives can be integrated prior to contract renewal. • Ensure managers understand how to evaluate accessibility requirements related to the procurement of goods and services. 	<p>October 1, 2024</p> <p>September 1, 2024</p>
<p>Vendor Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure vendors are meeting their commitments to provide accessible services and to address accessible related requests and complaints in a timely manner. 	<p>Going forward</p>

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Accessibility Goal	Target Date
<p>Lanyard Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Partner with Halifax International to implement Autism Aviators, a familiarization program to help neurodiverse people walk through every step in air travel in a mock check in experience.Implement the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard Program, that provides those with invisible disabilities the option to self-identify and allow airport workers to provide additional assistance.	<p>December 1, 2024</p> <p>December 1, 2024</p>
<p>Curbside Assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement curbside assistance for passengers with disabilities through curbside signage, so passengers can call for service and be escorted to the check in counter.	<p>March 1, 2025</p>
<p>Escort Passes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement an escort program for passengers needing additional assistance so that	<p>October 15, 2024</p>

support persons can follow through security to the departure gate. Passes can be issued by the airline as well as the Corp of Commissionaires.	
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Transportation

Accessibility Goal	Target Date
Parking	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review long term and employee parking lots to ensure they have the required ratio of Accessible parking stalls 	July 15, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure accessible parking signage is prominent. Each stall to be equipped with paint markings and signage. 	July 15, 2024

Built Environment

Accessibility Goal	Target Date
Seating	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrofit existing seating in domestic and departures to offer accessible options like raised seats and armless end chairs with embossed accessibility symbols. 	January 1, 2025
Acoustic paneling	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review installing acoustic paneling in open, noisier areas to reduce noise and vibration and 	Nov 1, 2024

<p>provide a more calming environment.</p>	
<p>Accessible Doors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofit existing accessible washrooms with occupancy notification systems. • Install additional power door operators on the second-floor hallway. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Safety Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review air terminal building to ensure all applicable stairs, ramps, and curbs have slip resistant strips and or of the color contrast type markings. • Tactile attention strips will be installed on the International Lounge stairs (top and bottom) and anywhere else identified in the review. 	<p>October 1, 2024</p> <p>October 1, 2024</p>
<p>Evacuation Equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current equipment installed in emergency exit stairways to ensure they are up to date and relevant to persons how cannot independently navigate stairs. 	<p>August 15, 2024</p>

Employment

Accessibility Goal	Target Date
<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all front-line persons working at the GIAA have training to assist persons with disability and accessibility needs and • Is compliant with the ATPDR • Introduce an accessibility initiative at each Employee Information Session. Such as the safety topics discussed at each toolbox meeting. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Job Ad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review job descriptions and ads prior to posting to ensure potential accessibility barriers are removed and • Work in collaboration with disability organizations and boards to promote employment opportunities within the disability community. 	<p>Going forward</p> <p>Going Forward</p>

Glossary

Accessible, Accessibility: products, services, facilities, or environments that can be accessed, used by, or understood by all persons, including those with disabilities

Assistive Devices: any device used to assist persons with disabilities, including:

- Mobility assistive devices, such as a cane, walker, wheelchair, electric scooter, or similar device used to assist with mobility;
- Communication devices, such as a hearing device, laptop computer, communication board, or similar device used to assist with communication; and
- Medical devices, such as a personal oxygen tank or similar device, are used to assist with the medical requirements of a disability.

Barrier: anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including physical, architectural, information or communications, attitudinal, technological, or systemic policies or practices

Contractor: an organization or individual contracted by the GIAA to provide services on behalf of the GIAA

Disability: any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary, or episodic, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society
Information: includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, images, digital or print, and that conveys meaning.

Service Animal: an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person’s disability as a result of visual indicators such as an identifying vest or harness worn by the animal or
- The person provides documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to a disability.

Support Person: in relation to a person with a disability, a support person is any person who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods, services, or facilities