

# Tell us what you think

about the Draft  
Built Environment  
Accessibility Standard



## Tell us what you think about the Built Environment Accessibility Standard

The Government of Nova Scotia is making a Built Environment Accessibility Standard.

A standard is a set of rules. It says what people need to do. It tells them how to do it.

Accessibility standards tell people how to make places and activities accessible. They help remove barriers for people with disabilities. They can stop new barriers from being made.

**A barrier is something that gets in the way. It stops people from doing what they want to do. Barriers often happen to people with a disability. Barriers can keep a person from doing some things.**

This standard will be Nova Scotia's first accessibility standard to be made into law.

We want to know what people think about the standard. They can read it and make comments. We have to give people 60 days to do this. Then we can make the standard part of the law.

**We want to hear from you. This will help us make the Standard better.**

The standard was made by the Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate. They worked with the Accessibility Advisory Board. The Board is a group of accessibility experts. The Board created a committee. This is a group of people who work together. The committee included the following groups:

- People with disabilities
- People who will follow the standard
- Accessibility experts

The committee told us what needed to be in the standard. You can read what they said at the website below.

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/built-environment/>

### What is the built environment?

The built environment is all the places and spaces made by people. These are the spaces where we live, work, learn, and play. These spaces are inside and outside of buildings. These also include outdoor spaces like trails, parks, and beaches.

### What is in the standard?

The standard has five parts. They are described below.

#### Standard Regulations

- These are part of the law.
- They are made under the Accessibility Act.
- They tell people what they must do to make places and spaces accessible.
- People who own and build spaces must follow them.

#### Building Code Regulations

- These are rules about how buildings are made.
- These rules are also changing.
- The changes will make sure new buildings are accessible.

#### Guidelines

- These are not laws.
- They tell people what they can do to make spaces and places more accessible.

#### Fire Safety Regulations

These are rules about keeping people safe from fires and hazards in a building

#### Government Actions

These are things Government will do to make buildings and outdoor spaces more accessible

### Who has to follow the standard?

The Standard Regulations are for governments and public groups, like the following.

- Government of Nova Scotia
- Cities, towns, and villages
- Schools and universities
- Libraries
- Other government agencies

The Standard Regulations may also be for businesses and other organizations.

The Building Code Regulations are for all buildings in Nova Scotia. Any building that needs a building permit has to follow them.

Everyone can use the Guidelines. They are not law.

Fire Safety Regulations are for all buildings in Nova Scotia.

## **When will there be changes?**

The standard will become part of the law. We want this to happen in 2024. People will have to start following the standard in 2026.

This will give people two years to get ready. They can use this time to learn about the standard. They can make plans that follow the new rules.

When the Building Code Regulations are changed, people will have to follow them right away. All building permits will follow the new Building Code.

## **I already have a building. Do I need to make it accessible?**

We all need to fix places and spaces to make Nova Scotia accessible.

The new standard is mostly for new buildings and new spaces. It is there so new barriers are not created. It will apply when you build new places and spaces.

Many groups will do more than this. They will update older places and spaces. They will use the guidelines to make access even better.

## **How can I tell you what I think?**

We want to know what people think about the new Standard for places and spaces. You can tell us what you think at the website below.

<https://novascotia.ca/built-environment-public-review/>

If you need help to tell us what you think, please contact us at the email below.

[accessibility@novascotia.ca](mailto:accessibility@novascotia.ca)

## **How will my information be used?**

We will look at everything people tell us about the standard. We may need to change it to make it better. We will make these changes before the standard becomes part of the law.

We are also making other accessibility standards. These will make Nova Scotia more accessible. You can learn more about these at the website below.

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/>