



Accommodation Measures for Formal Language Training

Accommodation measures can support an equitable learning environment by addressing barriers that may prevent an individual from fully participating in language training. Accommodation measures are determined on a case-by-case basis to allow individuals to fully demonstrate their second official language proficiency.

How to implement accommodation measures for formal language training

In the core public administration, the **duty to accommodate** applies wherever the employee is required to perform work, which includes **language training**. The duty to accommodate is about addressing workplace barriers to prevent discrimination on the [13 prohibited grounds](#) under the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#). The [Directive on the Duty to Accommodate](#) describes the roles of managers and employees in the accommodation process and includes the appendix [Mandatory Procedures for the Duty to Accommodate](#).

The **following six steps** are a general process for second language training accommodation.

1. Communicating accommodation needs

The implementation of accommodation measures is a shared responsibility. While the manager is responsible for ensuring that measures are put in place, you (the employee) are responsible for clearly communicating your accommodation needs. You are encouraged to work with your manager and the various parties involved in the management and delivery of training to ensure that your training objectives are met effectively.

2. Gathering relevant information and assessing needs

Talk with your manager about the barriers you face in the workplace that might hinder your productivity, including any accommodation measures that were provided on an informal basis or any accommodation measure that was provided in a previous position or organization. Discuss a range of options or measures that may address the need for accommodation.

If needed, consultations with accommodation experts¹ can help you and your manager explore what measures could be put in place and determine the best learning options to meet your needs.

You can also use the [Government of Canada's Workplace Accessibility Passport](#) to facilitate the conversation with your manager about barriers and possible solutions. This Passport is a voluntary tool for employees to document discussions with their managers about the barriers they experience in the workplace and the tools and supports they need to overcome these barriers and succeed in their careers.

Managers can seek guidance from their institution's relevant functional specialists on accommodation or exceptional staffing situations when bilingual positions are staffed non-imperatively, according to the [Public Service Official Languages Exclusion Approval Order](#) and [Public Service Official Languages Appointment Regulations](#).

3. Selecting the learning solution and identifying accommodation measures to be implemented

There are many ways to learn a new language. Two types of training are usually available to public servants: self-directed informal training and formal training.

➤ Self-directed informal training

We've provided three suggested self-directed learning paths for achieving language levels A, B and C. These paths consider the five main aspects of language learning: comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and fluency.

- [Level A Learning Path for Second Official Language Training \(self-directed\)](#) (link to come)
- [Level B Learning Path for Second Official Language Training \(self-directed\)](#) (link to come)
- [Level C Learning Path for Second Official Language Training \(self-directed\)](#) (link to come)

➤ Formal training

Formal language training is usually offered in a classroom. It can be offered in person or virtually, in groups or individually, on a full-time or part-time basis.

We've provided suggestions for formal training in the National Capital Region (NCR) and in other regions.

- [Formal Language Training in the National Capital Region \(NCR\)](#)
- [Formal Regional Language Training \(outside the NCR\)](#)

Based on the information you may have provided, the learning solution(s) selected could include the development of an adapted language training plan. If appropriate, the training plan should incorporate:

- starting level
- duration of training
- type and method of training (full-time or part-time, in person or virtual, group or individual)
- relevant pedagogical recommendations, including measures to be implemented

While every situation is different and accommodation measures are determined on a case-by-case basis, what follows is a sample of potential accommodation measures that could be considered depending on the workplace barrier to be addressed.

1. Accommodations may involve changes to the training format or the training environment, such as:
 - individual training
 - in person or distance training
 - an adapted schedule (for example, more time or more breaks)
 - subtitles

- adapted software or platforms
- ergonomic equipment
- accessible buildings and infrastructure
- a specific location, such as an assigned seat, a quiet area, wide enough for wheelchair access or to accommodate a guide dog or service dog
- a Braille display or Braille printer
- adjusted lighting, natural light, supplementary lighting, dimming or variable-intensity lighting

2. Accommodations can be pedagogical, applied to teaching strategies or the types of classroom activities, such as:

- visual aids (transcriptions, instructions, explanations, exercises)
- additional time to complete certain tasks
- repetition of explanations and instructions
- regular reviews and consolidation periods
- spoken activities only
- access to regular, targeted phonetic exercises

4. Implementing accommodation measures

Your manager is responsible for the employer's legal duty to accommodate and inform you of accommodation-related decisions.

Public Services and Procurement Canada's standing offers already provide adapted language training options such as [online tutoring for oral proficiency in French as a second language \(stream 4\)](#) and [in English as a second language \(Stream 3\)](#) with **visual interpretation** (sign language) and **live subtitles** and **pedagogical advisor** services for learners with learning disability. These standing offers provide **part-time** or **full-time** virtual training options across Canada.

Before the training begins, you should meet with the language learning specialist and/or pedagogical advisor, as well as the teaching resource who will provide the training, to ensure that the accommodation measures to be put in place are clearly understood by all parties, and to understand how they will be applied.

5. Keeping records and following up

Your manager is responsible for retaining a record of the accommodation request, including the accommodation provided. They should also follow up regularly with you to ensure that the language training is going well and that the accommodation measures put in place address the identified barriers. You are encouraged to communicate regularly with your manager about your needs, whether the training takes place on the job or at a supplier's premises.

6. Scheduling with the Public Service Commission second language evaluation including accommodation measures (if applicable)

Some employees may also require accommodation measures for the Second Language Evaluation: Oral Language Evaluation, Test of written expression or Test of reading comprehension.

As an employee, you cannot directly submit a request for a language assessment to the Public Service Commission (PSC). Instead, your manager should contact the human resources department

to forward your request to the PSC. (See [Overview of the assessment accommodation process](#) on the PSC website.)

If a request for accommodation measures for Second Language Evaluation is required, your manager should submit the request as early as possible and include the expected end date of the language training in your assessment request. This will help the PSC coordinate the assessment date with the end date of the language training.

Tips for maximizing your chances of success during formal language training with accommodation measures

- Take the time to clearly communicate your accommodation needs.
- Collaborate fully with your manager.
- Plan your training well.
- Discuss with your manager if you're not sure of what accommodation measures may address the workplace barriers you are encountering.
- Inform your manager promptly if you are not satisfied with the accommodation measures put in place.
- Keep your manager informed of your language training progress.

ⁱ For more information on managing an accommodation request, contact:

- departmental contact for workplace accommodation
- functional specialists:
 - functional specialists may include but are not limited to health professionals (neuropsychologists, audiologists, etc.) and subject matter experts in labour relations, occupational health and safety, duty to accommodate, employment equity, facilities, information technology.

Additional resources:

- [Learning Disabilities Association of Canada](#) (For Adults section)
- [L'Institut des troubles d'apprentissage](#) (French only)
- [Accessibility, Accommodations and Adaptive Computer Technology \(AAACT\) program](#)