

Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) is a member of the Interregional Advisory Committee for Library Accessibility (IACLA). This committee provides advice to the Annapolis Valley Regional Library (AVRL), Cape Breton Regional Library (CBRL), Colchester East Hants Public Library (CEHPL), Cumberland Public Libraries (CPL), Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL), and Western Counties Regional Library (WCRL) on identifying, preventing, and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities in programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. At least one half of the members of the advisory committee have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities. The committee plays a pivotal role in helping the participating regional libraries become accessible, in compliance with [Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act \(2017\)](#).

IACLA produces an annual activity report which is posted on the ECRL website for public reference. This report outlines the commitments ECRL has made to improving the accessibility of public library services. The ECRL Operational Accessibility Plan for 2023-2024 outlines specific actions ECRL will undertake to help achieve those commitments.

Areas for action outlined by the IACLA report and ECRL's goals include:

Collections

Revise collection development policy by including collection development for works by persons with disabilities or resources for person with disabilities. Special emphasis should be paid to local authors.

Employment

On an ongoing basis enhance staff capacity with targeted professional development and training courses. Professional development completed includes:

- ✓ Accessibility Confident Employers (ACE) Foundations Learning Event offered by the Sea Change CoLab
- ✓ Completion of Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate's information session on the Proposed Build Environment Accessibility Standard

Information and Communication

Initiate and improve communications and flow of information between ECRL and the public, stakeholders, municipal units, and others.

- ✓ Made connection with Director of Programs & Services, Dept of Justice Accessibility Directorate @ NSLA conference and gathered additional information and resources to support Accessibility planning for Prescribed Public Sector Bodies.
- ✓ Celebrated December 3rd, International Persons with Disabilities Day by promoting works by authors with disabilities.
- *On a monthly basis promote collection by and about persons with disabilities on social media channels, ongoing.*

Programs and Services

Increase staff competence with accessibility features of Public Access Computers to offer additional public service support.

- ✓ Developed resources on accessibility features of the Windows operating system
- *Train staff on Windows accessibility features - to be completed by March 31, 2024.*

Built Environment

- ✓ Investigate applying for a grant to get a new accessibility ramp at our regional office.
- ✓ Made changes to the physical space at the Petit de Grat Library to help the library obtain Rick Hanson certification.
- *Complete a redesign of the shelving layout for the Petit de Grat Library to increase physical accessibility to local collections – to be completed by March 1, 2024.*