

## Mobile (Smartphone) Apps

March 2018

### Minimum Sustainable Recommendations

In support of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act, request the mobile app/software developer incorporate accessibility features during the design phase. Accessibility features should support the [National Disability Authority Guidelines for Application Software Accessibility](#) and include the following:

- The app must be compatible with iOS and/or Android accessibility features (e.g. VoiceOver for iOS and Talkback for Android) and assistive technologies.
- Use the simplest language possible for instructions, prompts and outputs and, where possible supplement instructions with pictorial information or spoken language.
- Avoid display flickering or flashing with a frequency of more than twice per second.
- Ensure content labels, touch target size and button sizes are adequate.
- Ensure there is a high contrast between background and text/images.
  - Use an online colour contrast checker to ensure there is adequate contrast.
- Allow sufficient time to accommodate the slowest users.
- If applicable, provide a way for the user to cancel the transaction at any point.
- The app interface should be similar across all mobile operating systems.
- Ensure software can accommodate users with multiple impairments
  - The app should be developed in a way that all persons can perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the app regardless of the disability (auditory, cognitive, neurological, physical, speech and visual).
- Ensure the app has a “help” function, if applicable.
- Ensure privacy and security during use.

### What are the issues?

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and its related Standards require entities to identify and prevent barriers to accessibility in operations. For a person who has a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, a barrier is anything that interacts with that impairment in a way that may hinder the person's full and effective participation on an equal basis.

Modern smartphones have numerous features to address physical, mental, intellectual and/or sensory impairments. For example, both Apple iOS and Android operating systems have features (e.g. VoiceOver or Talkback) to assist those who are visually impaired. However, software/app developers do not always program their apps to use the accessibility features provided by mobile operating systems in smartphones and do not design the app's interface to support accessibility. This can result in persons with impairments not being able to fully access and enjoy the app.

### What are the options?

Fortunately, more and more mobile app developers are aware of the issue and have been designing and programming their apps to include accessibility features. Software/App developers have been using [National Disability Authority Guidelines for Application Software Accessibility](#) to ensure accessibility has been considered and implemented in their app/program.

This document contains key considerations and suggestions for sustainable specifications and standards. Use of these specifications are intended to be guidelines for public sector procurers. Mention of any company name or product does not constitute or imply endorsement.