



NOVA SCOTIA

FONDATION



NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

CNIB's SnowWay Campaign 2025

Key Messages

1. Winter weather can mean treacherous travel conditions for millions of people across Canada, especially for vulnerable populations, including children, seniors, people with strollers and persons with disabilities. Snow and ice-covered walkways and transit routes create mobility barriers that pose serious safety and mobility risks for pedestrians, especially those who are blind, Deafblind, or have low vision.
2. Snow removal is an accessibility issue, a mobility issue, and a human rights issue. When municipalities, businesses, snow removal contractors, and homeowners fail to clear snow and ice effectively, people with sight loss cannot safely navigate the built environment in their communities and access public transit, undermining their independence and ability to carry out their daily activities.
3. In Canada, public services like snow and ice maintenance are the responsibility of municipalities. Although many regions have by-laws requiring timely snow removal from public spaces and walkways, compliance with these policies tends to be poor, leaving those who are blind or low vision with few options for recourse.

4. Municipalities, businesses, snow removal contractors, and homeowners have a duty to clear pedestrian pathways of snow and ice within 48 hours following significant snowfall (or sooner if mandated by your municipality) and refrain from depositing snow pile obstructions back onto sidewalks or walkways. This includes residential and public sidewalks in front of homes, private properties, and businesses.
5. Municipalities should review snow clearing policies and practices, including budgetary decisions, to ensure they are effective for everybody, including persons with sight loss. Specific recommendations include:
 - a. Municipalities should prioritize pedestrian areas for clearance, especially along public transit routes. Transit stops and shelters must be fully cleared so they are easily identifiable and accessible.
 - b. At intersections with pedestrian pushbuttons like Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), sidewalks surrounding the area must be fully cleared of snow and ice so pedestrians can access and activate pushbuttons.
 - c. Tactile walking surface indicators (TWSIs) must follow best practices for design and installation to ensure they are detectable in winter months and will not be damaged by snowplowing.