



Richmond Centre for Disability

Maximizing Independence

DISABILITY AWARENESS & SENSITIVITY TRAINING

About the Richmond Centre for Disability

The Richmond Centre for Disability (RCD) is a multidimensional service providing organization operated by and for persons with disabilities. Our mandate is to promote self determination and Independent Living Philosophy to our target population. After 9 years' of service provision, we are currently serving nearly 600 individuals weekly through various projects and activities such as Information & Networking services, Accessible Parking Permits, peer support groups, recreational activities, as well as training for computer, English, life skills and financial literacy.

As part of the strategy to achieve our mission in increasing community awareness and full accessibility, the RCD delivers Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training to volunteers, service providers and employees from community and businesses, who provide direct services to persons with disabilities.

How did we start?

In 2004, through the support of the City of Richmond and initial funding from Tourism Richmond, the RCD developed the Access Richmond Website to highlight the accessible destinations in Richmond.

The website (www.accessrichmond.ca) was launched in October 2005 and currently there are 109 listings of businesses, services and sightseeing destinations published on the website. We enjoy close to 20,000 page hits in summer seasons and average over 8,000 page hits on a monthly basis.

As a spin-off from the Accessibility Survey, the RCD was approached in September 2005, through the recommendation of Vancouver Airport Authority (YVR), by the Richmond Hotel Association to deliver Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training to their members, to fulfill the mandatory requirements of YVR for ground transportation service providers. They included Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, Hampton Inn, Best Western Richmond Hotel, Accent Inn, Ramada Inn, Executive Airport Plaza Hotel, Radisson Hotel, and Quality Inn; as well as other ground transportation service providers such as Park 'N' Fly, National Sightseeing & Shuttle Services, and Enterprise Rent A Car.

This sparked our dedication to provide appropriate sensitivity training to volunteers, communities, businesses, governments and all citizens.

What have we achieved so far?

2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge Network, as part of the national standards for an Accessibility Plan, contracted a training session, in-person, for their employees; 40 people attended • RCD conducted Accessibility Audits for Fairchild TV and Fairchild Radio offices, to fulfil their requirements for the national Accessibility Plan
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests for Disability Awareness and Sensitivity training started to re-emerge • RCD formed a new team of trainers to respond to the emerging need of training, with 4 members • First virtual training session was offered to Fraser Basin Council; 20 people attended • Health Canada commissioned a virtual training session for their Environmental Health Program employees, total 48 people joined • A virtual training session was conducted for Riipen, 50+ employees attended the training • Offered a Train-the-Trainer session to Universal Coach Line Ltd. and gave permission to use our training materials, as well as reviewed their Personnel Training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities manual; 5 managers were trained
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted one training session to Luxury Bus, 4 drivers attended • Training was halted by the COVID-19 pandemic
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted a training session to Universal Coach Line Ltd. new drivers, 13 employees attended and brought their accessible bus for demonstration • A special “Empathy over Sympathy” training workshop was developed for Tsawwassen Springs employees, total 12 people attended
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued training sessions to 3 taxi companies, for 30 drivers • Offered training to UBC Dentistry students, around 30 people • Offered training to Richmond Olympic Oval volunteers and staff, total 18 participants • Approved the request from a research student from the University of Santo Tomas, writing a research paper titled “Youth for Inclusivity: The Use of Disability Awareness Program in Developing Positive Attitudes toward Persons with Disabilities of the Youth in Christ the King Parish Church” to use our training materials • Approved the request from the Washinton State Bar Association to use our training materials for their continuing education of their faculty members

2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered 10 training sessions to one coach company, one charter bus company, several taxi companies and one community agency – Richmond Care Richmond Gives' Better At Home Program volunteer drivers, total 46 attendees • Conducted a special training series to the BC Taxi Association, with representatives from 20 taxi companies across the Lower Mainland of BC, total 98 people attended training
2014 and 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted over 20 training sessions for Taxi Driver throughout the Lower Mainland, more than 60 drivers attended the training • Delivered a special-designed curriculum to Luxury Transport Inc, which is a chartered bus company; they newly acquired two accessible buses with vertical lift • Offered in total 2 training sessions to RCD volunteers • Delivered a training to Teco Taxi in Fort St. John; 14 Taxi Drivers completed the training
2012 and 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted over 30 training sessions for Taxi Drivers throughout the Lower Mainland, more than 100 drivers attended the training • Delivered presentation to Volunteer Richmond Information Services' Senior Peer Counselor Group as well as the City of Richmond front line staff • Offered 2 training sessions each year to RCD volunteers
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 9 training sessions for ground transportation service providers including Park 'N Fly and Taxi Drivers throughout the Lower Mainland; over 50 drivers attended the training • Delivered presentations to HRSDC Youth Centre workers and Volunteer Richmond Information Services' Senior Peer Supports Group volunteers • Offered 2 training sessions to over 20 RCD volunteers
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifically designed a new curriculum for Taxi Drivers for accessible cabs serving Metro Vancouver, through the special arrangement of the Passenger Transportation Branch, to equip attendants providing quality services during the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver; the new curriculum included "Tie-down Mechanism for wheelchairs and scooters" and its demonstration • Conducted 13 training sessions for Taxi Drivers throughout the Lower Mainland, over 80 drivers attended the training • Delivered presentations to SFU students taking the Career Practitioner Course and HRSDC Youth Centre workers • Offered 2 training sessions to RCD 20 volunteers

2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided a shortened version of training to the staff from Community Services Division of the City of Richmond; 32 people received the training and majority of them were working at front line such as community centres • Conducted 4 training sessions for Park N' Fly shuttle bus drivers; 38 drivers attended the training • Offered 4 workshops for Service Canada staff; 22 government employees received the training • Delivered 2 trainings sessions for 29 RCD volunteers and 1 workshop for 9 caregivers of people with disabilities • Confirmed the delivery of training to Vancouver taxi drivers, through the coordination of the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure's Passenger Transportation Branch in January 2010
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed a shortened version of training curriculum and provided 3 training workshops of 1 hour to 145 Richmond Aquatic Centre staff of the City of Richmond • 8 other training workshops were conducted for businesses, volunteers, community partners as well as staff from Service Canada Youth Centre; over 50 people attended the training • Submitted a proposal to the City of Vancouver, upon their request, to provide sensitivity training to Taxi drivers and/or city staff; no words have been heard so far • Park N' Fly from Toronto was enquiring a national based training for their staff; the proposal did not work out due to potentially high cost for travelling
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hired a full-time Accessibility Coordinator • Provided 10 workshops of Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training to 4 businesses, the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Millennium Youth Group and the RCD Respite Worker Training Course; close to 100 people received the training • Provided a short training discussion for Richmond Taxi regarding the tie-down system of their newly purchased and modified accessible cab • 2 volunteer training workshops were offered for 36 RCD volunteers • Worked closely with the City of Richmond to improve the accessibility of the municipal public facilities • Provided insightful input to hospitality businesses and community agencies to enhance the accessibility of their facilities, such as Touchstone Family Association

2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Vancouver Taxi Association representatives in January to discuss the possibility of providing Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training to their members in place of the proposed Taxi Host Level 2 from the City of Vancouver; the plan did not materialize • Revised and updated the training curriculum to better fit the needs of businesses – Welcome Customers with Disabilities • Formed an Accessibility Team, with 2 contracted staff and headed by an Accessibility Consultant, to perform accessibility surveys and conduct Sensitivity Training • 3 trainings sessions were delivered to businesses and trained 45 service providers • 2 volunteer training workshops were offered for 40 RCD volunteers
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a 3-hour training curriculum for businesses providing services to people with disabilities, especially designed for hotel and ground transportation service providers • Conducted 2 “Train the Trainers” courses for RCD staff and some board members; the initiative is on-going till now • 15 training sessions were delivered and 102 shuttle and coach drivers attended the training course • 4 training workshops were conducted for RCD volunteers to better work with people with disabilities; a total of 54 volunteers received the training

Summary

From 2005 to 2023

- Total 178 training sessions were delivered in 13 years’ time
- Over 2,150 individuals attended the RCD Sensitivity Training Workshops
- All RCD staff members, some RCD Board members and many volunteers were trained to deliver the training; most of them have disabilities
- Training was provided to a variety of audiences, including hospitality business, ground transportation service providers, taxi drivers, Municipality employees, Federal Government employees, community partners, social service providers, caregiver for people with disabilities, as well as volunteers and individuals who offer their services to people with disabilities
- The RCD continues to provide training and recommendations for establishing and customizing protocols for “Emergency and Evacuation Planning for People with Disabilities”