



CASSELS BROCK & BLACKWELL MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION

In 2005, the government of Ontario passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (the **AODA**). The government's goal is to make Ontario accessible by 2025. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (**IASR**) under the AODA require that Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP establish, implement, maintain, and document a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines the firm's strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities and to meet its requirements under the IASR.

B. OBJECTIVES

This plan describes

- the initiatives previously implemented by the firm that identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities
- the efforts made to date to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities
- the measures that the firm will take in the upcoming five years to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities

C. OVERALL COMMITMENT

The firm is committed to

- ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities
- treating people in a way that respects their dignity and independence
- meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner
- meeting our accessibility requirements under the AODA and IASR

This multi-year plan outlines the firm's strategy to prevent and remove barriers to address the current and future requirements of the AODA. In accordance with the requirements set out in the IASR, the firm will

- post this plan on its website (www.casselsbrock.com)
- report as required on the progress of the implementation of this plan
- provide this plan in an accessible format, upon request
- review and update this plan at least once every five years

D. BARRIER-REMOVAL INITIATIVES

Barriers to accessibility are any obstacles that prevent or make it difficult for a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability. There



has been recognition and heightened awareness of the need to address concerns regarding accessibility. The firm is committed to implementing formal and informal initiatives to address accessibility issues and hence identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

Accessibility initiatives have begun and will continue to be addressed through the various departments, mainly Human Resources, Office Services, and Health and Safety. Outlined below are the different barriers to accessibility and the firm's plans to assess and address each item.

1. Architectural and physical barriers

These barriers relate to the features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities. Examples include doorways that are too small for wheelchairs, electric scooters or walkers, poor lighting for people with low vision, and doorknobs that are difficult for people with arthritis to grasp.

Planned action

The firm will

- conduct a tour of the office space by to review and assess any current physical and architectural barriers that may exist
- investigate barriers that are noted and outline potential solutions
- work with building management and vendors, as required to communicate and ensure solutions meet AODA requirements

Target Completion Date: January 1, 2015

Status: In Progress

2. Information or communication barriers

These barriers exist when a person cannot easily understand information. Examples include print that is too small to read and signs that are not clear or easy to understand.

Planned action

The firm will

- review existing signage or communication to identify known barriers
- investigate barriers that are noted and outline potential solutions
- identify and confirm resources that enable the firm to provide information and communication support upon request and in a timely manner

Target Completion Date: January 1, 2015

Status: In Progress



3. Technology barriers

These barriers exist when a technology cannot be modified to support various assistive devices. Examples include a website that doesn't support screen-reading software and telephones that do not offer amplification or voice controls.

Planned action

The firm will

- review existing technology to identify known barriers
- investigate each noted barrier and outline potential solutions
- identify and confirm resources that enable the firm to provide options for technology support upon request and in a timely manner

Target Completion Date: January 1, 2015

Status: In Progress

4. Attitudinal barriers

These barriers occur when people with disabilities are discriminated against. All attitudinal barriers deny people the right to be treated respectfully and equally. Examples include thinking people with disabilities are inferior or incapable and assuming a person with a speech impairment cannot understand you.

Planned action

The firm will

- continue to educate all firm members about the AODA, Human Rights Code & anti-discrimination legislation
- investigate each noted barrier and outline potential solutions
- provide training to all firm members in order to provide understanding and awareness surrounding attitudinal barriers

Target Completion Date: January 1, 2015

Status: In Progress

5. Organizational barriers

These barriers occur when an organization's policies, practices, or procedures discriminate against people with disabilities. Examples include a hiring process that dictates only online applications are accepted and offering only software that is not compatible with screen-readers.

Planned action

The firm will

- review existing policies, practices and procedures to identify known barriers



- investigate each noted barrier and outline potential solutions
- make changes to policies, practices and procedures to ensure compliance with AODA requirements

Target Completion Date: January 1, 2015

Status: Completed

6. Barrier removal summary

Planned action

Once all barriers have been noted and potential solutions have been investigated, the information will be gathered and summarized in a document by the firm that will include a list of all barriers, their impact, and the potential solutions. These potential solutions will then be prioritized so that those that are most feasible and/or have the biggest impact to our clients and employees can be addressed first.

Target Completion Date: Ongoing

Status: In Progress

E. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Establishment of accessibility policies

The firm is committed to developing, implementing, and maintaining policies about what it will do to meet the IASR requirements and become more accessible.

Action taken

- The firm has developed and implemented an Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) Policy. Included in this policy is our overall commitment to the AODA and the requirements under the IASR.
- This policy has been posted on our website (www.casselsbrock.com)

Compliance Date: January 1, 2014

Status: Completed

2. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The firm is committed to creating a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that focuses on identifying, preventing, and removing barriers for people with disabilities.

Action Taken

- This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan has been created to
 - describe the actions that have already been completed
 - outline proposed future actions based on the legal requirements
- This plan has been posted on our website (www.casselsbrock.com)



Compliance Date: January 1, 2014

Status: Completed

3. Training

The firm is committed to providing training on applicable IASR Requirements as well as our obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Planned Action

The firm will

- provide training to all firm members which includes anyone who is involved in the development of policies in a suitable format which may include in-person, online, handouts, or presentations
- confirm that anyone who provides goods, services or facilities on our behalf has been trained
- offer ongoing training to new firm members or updated training to existing firm members when there are changes to accessibility policies
- keep a record of the firm members who have been trained

Compliance Date: January 1, 2015

Status: In Progress

F. ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

The firm is committed to

- excellence in serving all clients including people with disabilities
- providing its services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
- giving persons with disabilities the same opportunity to access our services and to benefit from those services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients

Action taken

The firm has created and implemented a Customer Service Policy to ensure that

- persons with disabilities are provided equal opportunity to obtain, use, and benefit from the firm's services
- services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
- services provided to persons with disabilities are integrated with the provision to others unless an alternative measure is necessary to allow a person with a disability to benefit
- communications with a person with a disability are conducted in a manner that takes the person's disability into account



- persons with disabilities may use assistive devices, service animals, and support persons as is necessary to access the firm's services, unless superseded by other legislation
- clients are provided with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities, by placing such notices at all public entrances and reception counters on our premises
- training is provided to all employees, volunteers, and others who regularly deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of client service policies, practices, and procedures
- training includes guidelines on interaction, communication, and provision of the best customer service to all clients, including persons with disabilities
- completion of accessibility training is tracked and recorded
- the feedback process is communicated and continues to be welcomed from persons with disabilities through multiple communication channels

This policy has been posted on our external website (www.casselsbrock.com).

Compliance Date: January 1, 2012

Status: Completed

G. ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

The firm is committed to making company information and communications accessible to persons with disabilities. We will meet the accessibility requirements by ensuring that

- our platforms are accessible
- information is provided in accessible formats that meet the needs of persons with disabilities

1. Accessible websites and web content

Action taken

(a) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, LEVEL A

Our website and its content meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, as outlined in the Accessibility Standard for Information and Communication, as follows:

- the launch of any new website or a significant refresh to our existing site and any of its web content published after January 1, 2012, conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A

Compliance Date: January 1, 2014

Status: Completed

Planned action

(b) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, LEVEL AA



- our public website and all web content on the site published after January 1, 2012, will conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA, other than providing captions on live videos or audio descriptions for pre-recorded videos

Compliance Date: January 1, 2021

Status: In Progress

2. Making feedback accessible

Planned action

The firm will make feedback processes accessible by providing accessible formats and communications supports when requested. This means ensuring we are ready to receive feedback in ways other than the originally communicated methods.

Compliance Date: January 1, 2015

Status: Completed

3. Accessible formats and communications

Planned action

The firm will offer accessible formats to the public and its clients. We will meet this need by

- assessing the information that we currently provide to the public and our clients
- making this information accessible upon request by working with the person who has requested an alternate format to determine how we may best meet their needs
- provide the information requested as soon as possible

Compliance Date: January 1, 2016

Status: Completed

H. ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR EMPLOYMENT

1. Workplace emergency response Information

The firm is committed to providing an individualized workplace emergency response plan for firm members who have identified the need for assistance during an emergency evacuation.

Action taken

- workplace emergency response information procedures have been developed to include persons with disabilities
- individualized plans have been communicated verbally to firm members who have disclosed a disability
- where required, assistance is provided, with the disabled person's prior consent, to help them evacuate the workplace in case of an emergency or disaster



- individualized plans have been communicated to Safety personnel, on an “as needed” basis
- prepare individualized workplace emergency response information forms for firm members who have disclosed a disability and who require accommodation according to their disability

Individualized plans will be created when the need arises.

The firm will continue to review and assess general workplace emergency response procedures and individualized emergency plans to ensure accessibility issues are address.

Compliance Date: January 1, 2012

Status: Completed

2. Recruitment

The firm is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain employees with disabilities.

Planned action

The firm will

- review existing recruitment policies, procedures, and processes to ensure that they are inclusive of persons with disabilities
- notify job applicants of the availability for accommodation for applicants with disabilities during the selection process by including this information in the job posting
- include availability of accommodation notice as part of the script in the scheduling of interviews and assessments
- consult with the applicant who identifies a need for accommodation to arrange for suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant’s accessibility needs
- notify successful applicants of our general polices for accommodating firm members with disabilities by speaking to them directly, including information in the offer letter, or both

Compliance Date: January 1, 2016

Status: Completed

3. Information for firm members

The firm is committed to

- notifying firm members about our policies for supporting those with disabilities
- providing information in an accessible format to firm members when requested



Planned action

The firm will

- notify firm members about our policies for supporting firm members with disabilities, using a variety of communication methods including our firm newsletter, emails, our internal website, group meetings, and one-on-one conversations
- notify firm members when new policies are created or when changes are made to existing policies
- upon request, provide firm members with workplace information in an accessible format or with communication support suited to the individual needs of the firm member, including information needed for job performance or general information that is available to all firm members at work
- consult the firm member to determine their needs and find a suitable solution to making the information accessible for them, if the need for accommodation is identified

Compliance Date: January 1, 2016

Status: Completed

4. Process to accommodate firm members

The firm is committed to making accommodation plans for firm members with disabilities. The firm fully supports firm members who have been away from work because of a disability, whether permanent or temporary. When considering performance management, the firm is committed to taking into account the accessibility needs of our firm members and any accommodation plans.

Planned action

(a) Individual accommodation plans

In accordance with the IASR, the firm will

- assess the accommodation needs
- create individual accommodation plans for firm members with disabilities to help them perform their jobs
- involve firm members in the development of their plans
- protect the privacy of our firm members' personal information
- regularly review firm members' accommodation plans to ensure needs are understood and make adjustments when necessary
- make individual accommodation plans available in accessible formats when requested

Individual accommodation plans will outline the accommodations that will be provided, how we will help firm members stay safe in an emergency, and timing of plan review



(b) Return to work process

In accordance with the requirements of the IASR, the firm will

- communicate the action which will be offered to support firm members in their return to work when they have been absent due to a disability and require accommodation
- ensure that the return to work support and accommodation offered considers the nature of the disability (i.e. temporary, recurring, or permanent) in order to meet the needs of each individual

(c) Performance management and career development

In accordance with the IASR, the firm will

- make performance management documents available in accessible formats when requested
- provide feedback and coaching to firm members in a way that is accessible to them
- provide accommodations for firm members who identify a disability to support career development opportunities including learning new skills, taking on more responsibility in their current role, etc.

Compliance Date: January 1, 2016

Status: In Progress