

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Accessibility Policy

The goal of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the "Act") is to create a more accessible Ontario by identifying, and to the extent possible, preventing and eliminating barriers experienced by persons with a disability.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (the "Customer Service Standard") was established under the Act to ensure goods and services are, where at all possible, equally accessible to every member of the public.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (the "Integrated Accessibility Standard") establishes particular accessibility standards for information and communications, employment, transportation and the design of public spaces.

This plan, and additional policies and related practices, represent Ridout & Maybee LLP commitment to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and to meet the requirements under AODA and its regulations.

Statement of Commitment

Ridout & Maybee LLP is committed to providing consistent professional services to persons with disabilities by putting into practice these four key principles:

- Dignity
- Independence
- Integration
- Equal Opportunity

With respect to our clients we commit to providing the same service, in the same or similar manner and in the same place as other clients.

Additionally, the Firm is committed to ensuring that every individual receives equitable treatment, without discrimination, with respect to employment and services including accommodation where required, in accordance with the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA and its Regulations. The Firm will meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner.

Accessibility Plan is Available to the Public

This policy is available to the public and can be found on our firm website at: <https://www.ridoutmaybee.com/accessibility/>

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

This Plan outlines the efforts taken to prevent and remove barriers to address requirements of AODA.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

Ridout & Maybee LLP will:

- Provide services in a manner that respect the four key principles of and establish, implement and monitor a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding services provided to a person with a disability;
- Respond in a timely manner to all feedback received and ensure barriers to services are removed for clients and potential employees;
- Review our practices, policies and procedures to ensure any barriers preventing a person from accessing our services are removed;
- Ensure training is provided to all employees providing services including initial and ongoing training;

Actions taken:

- Developed, reviewed and revised a Customer Service Policy. This included a review of the manner in which services are provided and ensuring we address barriers including attitudinal barriers through training and awareness programs, engineering and administrative controls to address barriers at source or along the path.
- Developed a comprehensive Customer Service Guide, for use by internal members of the firm, to assist in provide our services to those with a disability. This guide is reviewed every two years and amended as issues arise.
- AODA training was provided initially, in-person, to all members of the firm. Regular training and refresher courses are provided as well. All new members receive training on AODA along with the Customer Service Guide.
- Our AODA Customer Service Guide covers specific issues including:

Ensuring that if a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the support person is accommodated.

Ensuring that persons with disabilities who require the use of a service animal are permitted to access all areas of our premises open to the public or third party, with the service animal and what to do (or not do) when a client is accompanied by the service animal.

Ensuring staff are aware of hidden disabilities and how to assist someone to access our service.

Ensuring staff understand how to address a request for accessible formats and alternate forms of communication.

- Provide notice of disruption on our firm website when there is a temporary service disruption. For example, a power outage in the building.
- Develop a process to collect feedback from persons with disabilities through multiple communication channels, including on our firm's website. A dedicated Accessibility page has been dedicated to AODA.
- Report compliance with the Customer Service Standard.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

Workplace Emergency Response Information

Our Commitment:

The Firm is committed to providing the Partners, employees, clients and all individuals in our premises with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request.

Where the Firm is aware that an employee has a disability and that there is a need of accommodation, individualized workplace emergency response information will be provided to the employee as soon as practicable if such information is necessary given the nature of the disability.

Action Taken/Planned:

- Identify individuals requiring individual emergency plan.
- Individualized workplace emergency response information procedures have been developed for employees with disabilities, as required.
- Workplace emergency response information forms have been prepared for employees who have disclosed a disability and who are being accommodated according to their disabilities.
- Where required, the Firm will provide assistance to specific disabled individuals, with the disabled individual's prior consent, to help them evacuate the workplace in the case of an emergency or disaster.
- These individualized emergency plans have been communicated to the individuals' respective managers and safety personnel on an as needed basis.
- On an ongoing and regular basis, the Firm will review and assess general workplace emergency response procedures and individualized emergency plans to ensure accessibility issues are addressed.
- In the circumstance where an individual's disability is such that workplace emergency response information is necessary, the firm will provide an individualized plan for the employee, keeping in mind their needs. In

addition, with the employee's consent this information will also be provided to the individuals who are designated to provide assistance to the employee.

Accessibility in Employment

Recruitment, Individual Accommodation Plans & Return to Work,

Performance Management, Career Development & Redeployment

Our Commitment:

Ridout & Maybee LLP is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. During the recruitment and selection process the firm will post information about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities on our website and include it with our job postings.

Applicants who are selected for an interview and/or testing will be notified that accommodations for material to be used in the process can be offered in alternate formats or with communication support, upon request.

Ridout & Maybee LLP will also ensure any third party recruitment agency where we elicit their services have policies and procedures in place that is in compliance with the AODA legislation.

Action Taken/Planned - Recruitment

- Notify our employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its *recruitment processes*. This includes accommodations relating to format or material used during the interview process.

Action Taken/Planned – Individual Accommodation Plans

- In circumstances where a selected applicant requests an accommodation, we will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation, in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.
- We have/will inform our employees of our policies used to support our employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.
- In circumstances where an employee with a disability so requests, we have consulted with the employee to identify barriers and address them.
- We have developed a written process for the documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

Action Taken/Planned – Return to Work

- In circumstances where employees are absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work, the firm will develop and write a process to support employees returning to work due to disability and requiring disability-related accommodations. This return to work process will outline the steps that the firm will take to facilitate the return to work, which in our experience has been very individual, and we document the process and exchange.

Action Taken/Planned – Performance Management & Career Development

- In circumstances where we use performance management plans in respect of our employees, we will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.
- Accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans have/will be taken into account when providing career development opportunities.

Action Taken/Planned – Redeployment

- In circumstances where we redeploy employees, we will take into account the accessibility needs of our employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans. For example, working shorter days, having a longer break away from the desk etc.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARD

Our Commitment:

Ridout & Maybee LLP is committed to making firm information and communications accessible to persons with disabilities. The Firm has made changes to the website and web content which take into consideration the four principles of accessibility: perceivable; operable; understandable and robust.

Feedback, Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Action Taken & Planned:

- Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports.
- Consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the accessible format or communication support and make changes to web design or communication and marketing efforts to address concerns.
- Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communicating supports in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility

needs due to disability, and at a cost no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

- Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports through our firm website.
- Work with our website designers to ensure WCAG compliance as per the regulation.
- Regularly checking that email address, forms and links on the accessibility page are functional and available in alternate formats.

Transportation Standard

The Transportation Standard of the AODA requires transportation service providers to make the features and equipment on routes and vehicles accessible to passengers with disabilities.

Steps taken:

- Although this is not directly related to our industry, the Firm has undertaken to ensure, where possible, access to disability parking, ramps and elevators are available and comply with building code regulations.
- When using a third-party taxi or transportation service, we ensure, for employees who have a disability, the vendor sends an accessible vehicle. For example, wheelchair accessible.

Design of Public Spaces

Although the Ontario Building Code covers rules for the accessibility in most indoor spaces, the Design of Public Spaces Standard includes guidelines for service-related elements – for example, our waiting rooms.

Steps taken:

We have evaluated our public space and implemented the following engineering controls: re-engineering space to allow for wheelchair accessibility, installing automatic door-opening mechanisms, allowing for use of washrooms and entrance into our space more accessible.

Meeting rooms are all within close proximity to our reception area allowing ease of access to meetings and interviews.

Ensure no fixed seating area in common spaces, allowing for accessible seating for wheelchair.

General Requirements

Emergency Procedures

Ridout & Maybee LLP has provided and will continue to provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary, and as soon as possible. When an employee requests assistance with respect to workplace emergency response, the information and plan is developed and reviewed by the individual along with members of the JHSC. The information will also be distributed to necessary parties with the employee's consent.

For clients, volunteers or vendors visiting the office, emergency evacuation plans are posted in public spaces and exits in some offices are also marked in braille.

Action Taken

- Each individual having regular access to our physical space was provided with an opportunity to complete an Emergency Response Information Worksheet which was then reviewed and addressed.
- All new employees, interns and volunteers are provided with emergency procedures for the specific office location and provided with a document regarding the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation of the AODA and soliciting information with respect to a disability that may affect or alter the response to a workplace emergency response.

Contact Details

For more information about our accessibility plan, customer service policy, customer service guide or our AODA commitments, please contact:

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**Documents can be provided in accessible formats upon request.*