



The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Society is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The Society recognizes the diverse needs of all our staff and service users and will respond by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all. The Society is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005 (AODA)

In 2005, the government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Is it the goal of the AODA to remove barriers and make Ontario a welcoming and accessible place for persons with disabilities.

To help public, private and not-for-profit organizations identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility, the AODA sets out specific accessibility standards in five key areas of daily living:

1. customer service
2. information and communications
3. employment
4. transportation
5. built environment.

The accessibility standard for customer service came into force at the Society in 2011. This resulted in a comprehensive training program undertaken by every employee to help ensure the Society provides accessible customer service throughout our community. This commitment is reinforced in our Access and Accommodation / Addressing Barriers to Equal Opportunity in Service Delivery Policy g-1-1-40.

The information and communications and employment standards were enacted as Ontario Regulation 191/11 - the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IAS) in 2011 with requirements being progressively phased in through to 2021.

The standard for the built environment, which applies to facilities as well as outdoor spaces, came into force in January 2013 and applies beginning in 2015 to new construction and maintaining new or redeveloped elements of public spaces.

Another important impact of this legislation is in the requirement that the Society create a multi-year accessibility plan to aid us in meeting our accessibility goals. This includes both those required by the AODA and our accessibility goals above and beyond the scope of the AODA. As a result, this multi-year accessibility plan builds upon recent accomplishments of the Society and helps to chart the path forward in our efforts to identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN OBJECTIVE

The objective of this multi-year accessibility plan is to aid the Society in identifying and removing barriers while also supporting the larger planning for AODA compliance and accessibility initiatives.

The multi-year accessibility plan will be posted on the Society's website.

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF OTTAWA'S PAST ACHIEVEMENTS

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

The following measures have been implemented by the Society:

- Ensuring all persons who, on behalf of the Society, deal with the public or other third parties, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of client service policies, practices and procedures, as well as all others providing services to our clients, are trained to communicate and provide the best possible customer service to all clients, including persons with disabilities.
- Ensuring staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients with disabilities who are accessing the Society's services.
- Providing telephone service to clients, offering to communicate with clients by TTY if telephone communication is not suitable to their needs.
- Ensuring clients accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal in areas of the Society open to the public and other third parties, are accommodated.
- Ensuring that if a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the support person is accommodated.
- Providing clients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of service or inaccessibility of facilities used by persons with disabilities, by placing such notices at all public entrances on the Society premises.
- An "Access and Accountability" tab has been added to the About Us section of the website www.casott.on.ca, to

communicate the Society's accessible customer service policy including related procedures and guidelines.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The following measures have been implemented by the Society:

- Continuing to welcome feedback from persons with disabilities through multiple communication channels.
- Ensuring staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients with disabilities who are accessing the Society's services.
- Providing telephone service to clients, offering to communicate with clients by TTY if telephone communication is not suitable to their needs.
- All publicly available information is available in accessible formats and communication supports upon request for persons with disabilities.
- The Public is notified of accessible formats and communication support through internet and signs that will be posted in publicly accessible areas such as the reception area.
- The Society incorporated WCAG 2.0 Level AA design for their web content.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR EMPLOYMENT

The following measures have been implemented by the Society:

- All internal and external job postings state the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities.
- Applicants are reminded of the availability of accommodations for the interview during the prescreen and confirmation of interview email.
- All new hires are notified of the availability of accommodations on their first day during HR Documentation.
- All policies and procedures are available to all employees on the Society's intranet site.
- New worker orientation covers policies including Accommodation and Return to Work Policy, as well as AODA Customer Service training, Ontario's Accessibility laws and Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.
- The Society has Employee Emergency Response Plans developed and completed on an individual basis by the employee and Human Resources, all information is kept confidential.
- The Society has in place an Accommodation and Return to Work Policy and process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability.

- Modified Work Plans developed on an individual as needed basis.
- Human Resources reviewed and revised Performance Management Policies and Procedures to ensure they respect persons with disabilities.
- Human Resources reviewed and revised Staff training and Development policies and procedures to ensure they meet the needs of employees with disabilities.
- Creation of the Accessibility Committee.
- Creation of the Policy and Procedure Review Committee.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR TRAINING

The following measures have been implemented by the Society:

- The Society provides training to employees, volunteers, all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilitates on behalf of The Society on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.
- The Society provides training in a way that best suits the duties of the employees, volunteers and other staff members.
- The Society maintains records of the training that is provided including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

PUBLIC SPACES/OFFICE BUILDING

The following measures have been implemented by the Society:

- Added one larger washroom on the first floor.
- Installed accessibility buttons on all floor washrooms to ensure all entrances are accessible.
- Reviewed design of staff workspaces and ensured all photocopiers, kitchen layout and desk layout had enough space to be accessible.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR GENERAL ACTIONS

The following measures have been implemented by the Society:

- Developed and implemented an AODA Integrated Standards Regulation Policy.
- Statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner in

The Society policies.

- Creation and maintenance of the multi-year accessibility plan that outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under IASR.
- Post the accessibility plan on the website and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request.
- Review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

THE CHILDREN’S AID SOCIETY OF OTTAWA’S MULTI-YEAR PLAN

Action Plan/Status	Date of Completion
General	
Ensure Accessibility Committee meets regularly and specific goals	2024 - 2028
The Policy and Procedure Review Committee review policies and procedures on an ongoing basis to ensure policies and procedures are inclusive. Ensure that membership of this committee includes individuals who self-identify with disabilities.	2024 - 2028
The Accessibility Committee will update the Equity Committee on its work and gather feedback annually.	2024-2028
Public Spaces/Office Building	
Ergonomic Equipment, including sit stand desks, ergonomic table and tools on setting up workspaces provided throughout the workspace for individuals to use.	January 2024
Have a member of the Accessibility Committee join the building inspections quarterly.	January 2024
Redevelopment of 4 th floor layout to be reviewed by Accessibility Community.	December 2024
Information and Communication	
All computer applications offer accessibility formats.	January 2024
All meeting rooms have to be upgraded with technology to ensure they are accessible.	January 2024
Create a new procedure for CASO forms to be more widely accessible using the AODA recommendations.	December 2024
Ensure all People and Culture communication materials are accessible, including job postings, application forms and internal documents	December 2024
Identify and track all forms within the organization that require validation. Create a document management system	September 2025
Create a page on our Intranet site for Accessibility. This will include documents and further information on tools offered by CASO.	December 2025

Implement accessibility standards in CASO forms	December 2027
Conduct a quality assurance review to ensure all CASO forms meet accessibility standards per procedure.	December 2028
Continue communication and learnings around mental health to build awareness and remove stigma within the organization.	2024-2028
Embed equity and accessibility language and practices within our organization	December 2028
Training & Development	
Provide Accessibility training specific to all People and Culture staff to increase understanding of accessibility issues, compliance and inclusive hiring practices.	December 2024
Mental Health Supports – expand on Mental Health Initiatives and support for employees, including providing refreshers of the Working Mind training to all supervisors.	December 2025
Develop and deliver training on accessibility requirements relating to forms.	December 2025
Train all mentors in the mentorship program on creating an inclusive work culture which includes disability awareness and inclusion.	December 2025
Inclusive Leadership Training – offer management training on creating an inclusive work culture which includes disability awareness and inclusion	December 2026
Employment	
Implement accessible interview and recruitment processes including accessible application platforms and active offers such as time slots, in person/virtual basis.	December 2024
Creation of an equitable hiring committee specifically trained to ensure that biases are avoided in the interview process as well as ensure hiring managers are aware of accommodations and disability etiquette in the interview process.	December 2024
Extend mentorship programs to include employees who self-disclose with disabilities.	December 2024
Ensure mentorship tools are accessible and sessions take place in a safe environment.	December 2025
Collaborate with Community Organizations to actively seek and hire individuals with disabilities	December 2025
To review and seek input from employees to help identify work accommodation barriers and stigma.	December 2026