

Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living - Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Introduction and Statement of Commitment

The Ontario government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) in 2005. It is the goal of the government of Ontario to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living (MVACL), is committed to complying with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and all of the standards under it in order to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner.

The regulations associated with the Integrated Accessibility Standards (hereafter referred to as the “IASR”) under the AODA require that effective January 1, 2014, MVACL establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities and to meet its requirements under the IASR.

Under the AODA, the following accessibility standards set certain requirements that are applicable to MVACL:

- Customer Service;
- Information and Communications; and
- Employment

This multi-year plan outlines MVACL’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers to address the current and future requirements of the AODA, and in order to fulfill our commitment as outlined in MVACL’s Accessibility Policies.

In accordance with the requirements set out in the IASR, MVACL will:

- Post this plan on its website (www.mvacl.ca);
- Provide this plan in an accessible format, upon request; and
- Review and update this plan at least once every five years

Overview

- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations
 1. Emergency Procedure, Plans or Public Safety Information
 2. Workplace Emergency Response Information
 3. Training
 4. Information and Communication Standards
 - a. Feedback, Accessible Formats and Communication Supports
 - b. Accessible Websites and Web Content
 5. Employment Standards
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Informing Employees of Supports
 - c. Documented Individual Accommodation Plans/Return to Work Process
 - d. Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Commitment:

The Accessibility Standards for the Customer Service Regulation were created to establish accessibility standards for customer service in Ontario. In keeping with this regulation, the organization is committed to providing respectful services that focus on the unique needs of the individual.

To achieve this, the organization makes reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of services to the public and other third parties adhere to the following guiding principles as set out in Accessibility Standards for Customer Service: Ontario Regulation 429/07.

- Our services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of our services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a

disability to obtain, use or benefit from the services.

- Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the services.

MVACL has been in compliance with the Accessible Customer Service Regulation under the AODA since January 1, 2012.

Action Taken:

The following measures have been implemented by MVACL:

- Ensuring all persons who, on behalf of MVACL, deal with the public or other third parties, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures, as well as all others providing services to our customers, are trained to communicate and provide the best possible customer service to all customers, including persons with disabilities;
- Ensuring staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities who are accessing MVACL's services;
- Ensuring completion of accessibility training is tracked and recorded;
- Ensuring customers accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal in areas of MVACL 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.
- Issuing a public notice in a timely manner in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of service or inaccessibility of facilities used by persons with disabilities. The notice must include the reason of the disruption, the anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or service, if any, that may be available.
- Continuing to welcome and appreciate feedback from persons with disabilities through multiple communication methods;
- Reporting compliance with the customer service standard on the Accessibility Compliance Reporting tool at ServiceOntario's One-Source for Business website.

Required compliance date: January 1, 2012

Status: Completed

Planned Action:

- Report continued compliance with the customer service standard on the Accessibility Compliance Reporting tool at ServiceOntario's One-Source for Business website.

Required compliance date: December 31, 2014

Status: Completed

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

1. Emergency Procedure, Plans or Public Safety Information

Commitment:

MVACL is committed to complying with the provisions of the AODA in respect of this requirement, with the objective of making our agencies premises safer for persons with disabilities during emergency circumstances.

Action Taken:

The following measures were implemented by MVACL effective January 1, 2012:

- Emergency procedures, plans and public safety information that are prepared by MVACL and made available to the public, will be made available in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request;

Required compliance date: January 1, 2012

Status: Completed

2. Workplace Emergency Response Information

Commitment:

Where MVACL is aware that an employee has a disability and that there is a need for 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 employee's disability.

Action Taken:

The following measures were implemented by MVACL effective January 1, 2012:

- Where the organization becomes aware of the need to accommodate an employee's disability, and if the employee's disability is such that the individualized emergency response information is necessary, MVACL will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to the employee with the disability as soon as practicable after it becomes aware of the need.
- If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, with the employee's consent, MVACL will provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the organization to provide assistance to the employee.
- MVACL will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when:
 - the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
 - the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and/or
 - MVACL reviews its general emergency response policies.

Required compliance date: January 1, 2012

Status: Completed

3. Training

Commitment:

MVACL is committed to implementing a process to ensure that all employees, volunteers, and all other persons who provide services and facilities on MVACL's behalf, and persons participating in the development and approval of MVACL's policies, are provided with appropriate training on the requirements of the IASR and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, and are provided with such training as soon as practicable.

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, MVACL will:

- Determine and ensure that appropriate training on the requirements of the IASR and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, is provided to all employees, volunteers, third-party contractors who provide services and facilities on MVACL's behalf, and persons participating in the development and approval of the MVACL's policies;
- Ensure that the training is provided to persons referenced above as soon as practicable;
- Keep and maintain a record of the training provided, including the dates that the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided;
- Ensure that training is provided on any changes to the prescribed policies on an ongoing basis.

Required compliance date: January 1, 2015

Status: In process

4. Information and Communication Standards

Commitment:

MVACL is committed to complying with the provisions of the AODA in respect of this requirement, with the objective of making applicable company information and communications accessible to persons with disabilities.

(i) Feedback, Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, MVACL will:

- Ensure that feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports, upon request. The organization will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.
- Except as otherwise provided for under the IASR, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports upon request for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs.
- Consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.
- Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Required compliance date:

January 1, 2015 – Feedback-related provisions

January 1, 2016 – Accessible formats & Communication Supports-related

Status: In process

(ii) Accessible Websites and Web Content

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, MVACL will ensure that MVACL's public website and online content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A (new websites and online content) by January 1, 2014, to Level AA for all content by January 1, 2021.

Required compliance date: January 1, 2014 – WCAG 2.0 Level A – new Internet websites and web content, January 1, 2021 – WCG 2.0 Level AA – all Internet websites and web content, except for exclusions set out in the IASR.

Status: In process

5. Employment Standards

(i) Recruitment

Commitment:

MVACL is committed to complying with the provisions of the AODA in respect of this requirement, with the objective of making the recruitment process accessible to persons with disabilities.

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, MVACL will do the following:

Recruitment General

MVACL will notify employees and the public of the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process. This will include:

- A review and, as necessary, modification of existing recruitment policies, procedures, processes and templates.
- Specifying that accommodation is available for applicants with disabilities, on MVACL's website and on job postings.

Recruitment, Assessment and Selection

MVACL will notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used in the assessment/selection process. This will include:

- A review and, as necessary, modification of existing recruitment policies, procedures, processes and templates;
- Inclusion of availability of accommodation notice as part of the script in the scheduling of an interview and/or assessment;
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, consult with the applicant and arrange for provision of suitable accommodations in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

Notice to Successful Applicants

When making offers of employment, MVACL will notify the successful applicant of its policies for

accommodating employees with disabilities. This will include:

- A review and, as necessary, modification of existing recruitment policies, procedures, processes and templates;
- Inclusion of notification of MVACL's policies on accommodating employees with disabilities in offer of employment letters.

Required compliance date: January 1, 2016

Status: Future-dated

(ii) Employee Supports

Commitment:

MVACL is committed to complying with the provisions of the AODA in respect of this requirement, with the objective of informing employees of available accessibility supports.

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, MVACL will:

- Inform its employees of its policies used to support its 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.
- Provide the information required to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.
- Provide updated information to its employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.
- Where an employee with a disability requests it, consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:
 - Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
 - Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.
- MVACL will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Required compliance date: January 1, 2016

Status: Future-dated

c. Documented Individual Accommodation Plans/Return to Work Process

Commitment:

MVACL is committed to complying with the provisions of the AODA in respect of this requirement, with the objective of improving accommodation and return to work processes in the workplace.

Planned Action:

MVACL's existing policies will be reviewed to include processes that MVACL will follow to accommodate an employee with a disability and to facilitate an employee's return to work after absenteeism due to disability. MVACL will review and assess the existing policies to ensure that they include a process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with a disability, if such plans are required. MVACL will ensure that the process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans includes the following elements:

- The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
- The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
- The manner in which MVACL can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at MVACL's expense, to assist MVACL in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how accommodation can be achieved.

- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan.
- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
- If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee.
- The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Individual accommodation plans will:

- If requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided, as required in the Standard;
- If required, include individualized workplace emergency response information, as required in the Standard; and
- Identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

MVACL will ensure that the return to work process as set out in its existing policies outlines the steps MVACL will take to facilitate the employee's return to work after a disability-related absence, outlines the development of a written individualized return to work plan for such employees, and requires the use of individual accommodation plans, as discussed above, in the return to work process.

Required compliance date: January 1, 2016

Status: Future-dated

d. Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

Commitment:

MVACL will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans:

- When using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities;
- When providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities;
- When redeploying employees with disabilities.

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, MVACL will:

- Review, assess and, as necessary, modify existing policies, procedures, practices and templates to ensure compliance with the IASR;
- Take the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and, as applicable, their individualized accommodation plans, into account when:
 - Assessing performance
 - Managing career development and advancement
 - Redeployment is required

Required compliance date: January 1, 2016

Status: Future-dated