

## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

CPA Canada  
2021 – 2026

### **Introduction:**

CPA Canada’s updated multi-year accessibility plan outlines the goals and actions that CPA Canada will implement to address and remove barriers across the organization to ensure that people with disabilities can participate in CPA Canada’s programs, initiatives, communications and employment opportunities.

### **Statement of Commitment to Accessibility:**

CPA Canada supports the rich diversity of all employees, volunteers and stakeholder groups. We are unwavering in our dedication to fostering an inclusive, barrier-free environment that champions diversity and values the contributions of individuals with disabilities.

As an organization, we wholeheartedly embrace and strive to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA), alongside their associated regulations.

Our commitment involves proactively addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities promptly and efficiently, ensuring ongoing support and equal access for all. We will continue to prevent barriers by designing inclusively and supporting positive attitudes that address “ableism” – attitudes which devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities.

### **Background:**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is landmark legislation in Ontario aimed at making the province fully accessible by 2025. It sets out a clear goal and timeline for accessibility standards in various areas of public life.

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) is Manitoba's legislation and is focused on improving accessibility across the province. It aims to create standards to identify, prevent, and remove barriers for individuals with disabilities in various aspects of life.

The key components of the AODA and AMA include:

1. **Standards Development:** Both require the establishment of accessibility standards in key areas such as customer service, employment, information and communications, transportation, and the built environment.
2. **Compliance Deadlines:** Each Act outlines specific measures for compliance with the established standards, ensuring that businesses and public sector organizations implement measures to remove barriers to accessibility on or before specified dates. They also include mechanisms for enforcement and penalties for non-compliance.
3. **Barrier Removal and Prevention:** There is an emphasis on the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that impede the full participation of individuals with disabilities in society. This involves proactive measures to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

### **CPA Canada's Goals and Objectives:**

1. **Accessibility Policies and Documentation:**

Objective: Establish and maintain comprehensive policies and documentation that support accessibility standards, outlining procedures, responsibilities, and compliance strategies within the organization.

2. **Physical Accessibility:**

Objective: Ensure all physical spaces are fully accessible and compliant with AODA and AMA standards, including elevators, accessible washrooms, and appropriate signage.

3. **Information and Communication Accessibility:**

Objective: Develop and implement accessible formats for all communications, including websites, documents, and multimedia, to ensure they are accessible, easily navigable and understandable for individuals with various disabilities.

Objective: Ensure all digital platforms, software, and technology used by the organization are accessible to individuals with disabilities, meeting AODA and AMA digital accessibility standards.

4. **Accessible Customer Service:**

Objective: Provide comprehensive training to all employees, volunteers and others who provide services on behalf of CPA Canada or participate in developing our policies, to ensure they are equipped to offer accessible and inclusive customer service to individuals with diverse needs and disabilities.

## 5. Employment:

Objective: Implement policies and barrier-free practices to facilitate the recruitment, hiring, and retention of individuals with disabilities, promoting an inclusive and accessible workplace. This includes ensuring job descriptions are inclusive and providing reasonable accommodations.

## 6. Education and Training:

Objective: Provide ongoing education and training programs for employees, volunteers and others who provide services on behalf of CPA Canada or participate in developing our policies, promoting awareness and understanding of accessibility issues, rights, and best practices, creating a culture of inclusivity within the organization.

## 7. Continuous Improvement and Evaluation:

Objective: Regularly assess and evaluate CPA Canada's progress towards accessibility goals, ensuring a culture of continuous improvement by adapting to evolving standards and best practices.

## 8. Engagement and Collaboration:

Objective: Engage with employees, disability advocacy groups, and stakeholders to gain insights, feedback, and guidance on enhancing accessibility efforts, fostering collaboration to address diverse accessibility needs.

## Action Plan:

### 1. Accessibility Policies and Documentation:

The general requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the AODA require CPA Canada to have an accessibility policy, a statement of commitment, a customer service policy and a multi-year accessibility plan. CPA Canada has developed and implemented corporate policies including:

- CPA Canada's Statement of Commitment to Accessibility
- CPA Canada's Accessibility Policy
- CPA Canada's Customer Service Policy

### Initiatives:

- Establish a corporate Accessibility Governance Structure and Accountability Framework to oversee the implementation of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Provide guidance and expertise to business lines to achieve progress

- Provide regular updates on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to the Senior Leadership Team and ensure updates are posted on CPA Canada's website

Timeline: (Ongoing)

Outcomes:

- An organization that fosters a culture of equity and inclusion, that values and includes employees, volunteers and stakeholders with disabilities.
- Employees and volunteers are aware of resources and can easily find accommodation and accessibility information and policies.
- Employees and volunteers have the support they need to identify, prevent and remove accessibility barriers.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for addressing accessibility requirements across CPA Canada.

## **2. Physical Accessibility:**

CPA Canada recognizes that built environments can pose barriers to persons with disabilities and is committed to increasing the accessibility and the removal of barriers in the built environment.

Initiatives:

- Implement accessibility improvements and maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance.
- Incorporate accessibility considerations into the relocation of physical offices.
- Respond to temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces are not in working order by notifying the public and providing timelines for remedial action.

Timeline: 1-3 year commitment with ongoing review and continuous improvement

Outcomes:

- Prevention and removal of accessibility barriers within CPA Canada facilities
- Improved accessibility of CPA Canada workplaces by incorporating accessibility into the design of new facilities as well as during renovations and redevelopments of existing facilities.

### **3. Information and Communication Accessibility:**

CPA Canada is required to communicate and provide information in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities. We will maintain compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA, and will take steps to ensure any feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities.

#### Initiatives:

- Encourage feedback about our accessibility, including customer service, website, and employment practices
- Ensure all publicly available information is made accessible upon request
- Post on our website that we can provide accessible information upon request
- When asked by a person with a disability, we will work together with them to accommodate their needs within a reasonable timeframe
- Continue to work with our web development group as well as utilizing accessibility validator tools to identify and address any accessibility gaps
- Conduct ongoing assessment of CPA Canada's website and conduct testing for accessibility
- Continue to ensure that any process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports
- Continue to train and educate employees and such other individual required under AODA, providing guidelines and guidance on how to provide clear, accessible, and timely information and communication

Timeline: Year 1 - Year 5 (Ongoing)

#### Outcomes:

- Employees have the tools and resources to develop and provide information in accessible formats.
- Employees, volunteers and stakeholders with disabilities have equal access to information through communication supports, alternative formats, accessible websites and digital content.

### **4. Accessible Customer Service:**

CPA Canada is committed to excellence in customer service. This includes providing customer services that is both accessible to and inclusive of employees, volunteers and stakeholders with disabilities. The IASR requires CPA Canada to provide accessible services for people with disabilities and to have policies and procedures in place to support accessible customer service.

Update: November 2023

### Initiatives:

- Continue to embed an accessibility lens and strengthen our customer service program
- Continue to develop and implement programs on disability awareness and accessible service regularly updating training to align with current best practices.

Timeline: Year 2 - Year 3 (Ongoing)

### Outcomes:

- People with disabilities receive services in the same quality and within the same timeline as others and benefit equally from customer service initiatives.
- Employees have access to tools, resources, policies and procedures to support accessible customer service.

## **5. Employment:**

CPA Canada is committed to advancing accessibility, diversity and inclusion of employees with disabilities. CPA Canada will maintain the processes for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability. The People & Culture department will continue to support the organization by providing quality and timely services to support an accessible and inclusive environment for everyone.

### Initiatives:

- Continue to embed an equity lens to all recruitment processes to remove any unintended accessibility barriers.
- Regularly review People & Culture policies and procedures to identify, prevent and remove barriers to employment and development opportunities. This review will ensure ongoing compliance with legislation.
- Continue to provide learning opportunities to employees and volunteers on accessibility related topics to create awareness and understanding of accessibility issues and rights.
- Continue to conduct an employment equity survey to inform workplace planning priorities through data-informed decision-making.

Timeline: Year 1 - Year 4 (ongoing)

### Outcomes:

- Equitable, clear and consistent employment and accommodation policies and practices that seek to remove systemic barriers so that people with disabilities may participate fully during the recruitment process.

## **6. Engagement and Collaboration:**

Resolving accessibility barriers necessitates a joint effort and shared accountability. Implementing inclusive methods for involving employees and volunteers will enhance CPA Canada's decision-making capabilities and foster robust connections with those we work with and support.

CPA Canada will commit to ongoing, meaningful engagement with diverse stakeholders including employees and volunteers. Additionally, CPA Canada will ensure that employee and public engagement activities are accessible and that we work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders to align and advance accessibility priorities.

Regular assessments and adjustments to the plan will ensure its effectiveness and success in promoting accessibility within CPA Canada. Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request from the contacts below.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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