



MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN – 2022-2027

Overview

MD Lawyers Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is intended to outline and identify the policies, processes and plans the company currently has in place, is in the process of developing and /or implementing or intends to develop and/or implement in response to the requirements established by the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

MD Lawyers takes its obligations under the IASR very seriously and will review and revise this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan annually, or more frequently as deemed necessary.

Statement of Commitment

MD Lawyers including our clients/customer, employees, job applicants, suppliers, the public and any visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, or use our services. As an organization, we respect and uphold the requirements set forth under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its associated standards and regulations and well ensure that we offer a safe and welcoming environment that is respectful of each person's dignity and independence.

The goal of the AODA is the achievement of a fully accessible Ontario through the identification, prevention and removal of barriers. To meet this objective and the requirements under the AODA, Lawyers has, and will continue to, incorporate accessibility measures into our policies, procedures, training, websites, environment and best practices (as identified in our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan).

The AODA's key principles of integration, equality, dignity and independence will be applied regardless of whether an individual is:

- * Working within or visiting our office;
- * Accessing our information;
- * Procuring our services and support online or via our phone-in services

As an organization, MD Lawyers is dedicated to meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities in a timely manner. We understand that providing a barrier-free environment is a shared effort, and as an organization, we are committed to working with the necessary parties to make accessibility a reality for all.

Questions or concerns MD Lawyers Accessibility Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan are to be directed to the Director of Operations, Cheryl Scollard, submitted via the company's AODA Feedback Process as noted with the MD Lawyers Accessible Service Provision Policy.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan: 2022-2027

<p><i>Accessible Customer Service Policy</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement an Accessible Customer Service Policy addressing all requirements under the regulation. 2. Develop and deliver training to all staff, volunteers, and individuals completing work on behalf of MD Lawyers that may provide assistance to the public. Provide training to all new staff. 3. Develop and make public a process for receiving and responding to feedback from customers with disabilities. 	<p>Completed /Ongoing</p>		<p>Director Operations / Managing Partner</p>
<p><i>MD Lawyers Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MD Lawyers has developed and implemented an Accessible Customer Service Policy specific to the organization. This policy is updated and maintained by the Director of Operations, Cheryl Scollard 2. All new staff are required to participate in and complete the AODA Customer Service Training within their two week of employment with the company Record of completion is retained MD Lawyers upon completion. 3. MD Lawyers has developed and will make public a process for receiving and responding to feedback from customers with disabilities. The feedback process is inclusive of multiple means by which feedback can be received, including by phone, in-person, by E-mail and by written correspondence. All employees have been informed of and trained on the company's feedback process. 			

Part 1 – General Requirements			
<p><i>Accessibility Policies</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create and make public a statement of commitment. 2. Develop and implement company-specific accessibility policies. 	<p>Completed /Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / Managing Partner</p>
<p><i>MD Lawyers Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MD Lawyers has created and made public a statement of commitment. The statement of commitment will be located on the company’s website and in the reception area of our office. 2. MD Lawyers policies and procedures have been reviewed to identify current and future barriers to accessibility. Identified barriers have been addressed and policies amended. <p><i>*Alternative formats of the policy will be made available upon request. *</i></p>			
<p><i>Multi-Year Accessibility Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create and make public a multi-year accessibility plan. 2. Provide the plan in accessible formats upon request. 3. Review the plan every five (5) years. 	<p>Completed /Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / Managing Partner</p>
<p><i>MD Lawyers Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All Applicable IASR requirements have been reviewed to develop a living Accessibility Plan. Roles off all internal Stakeholders have been reviewed to determine how each will be affected by requirements. The Accessibility Plan has been created to include training, procedures and policy development and is available to the public. 2. Requests for accessible formats of this document will be forwarded to the Director of Operations Cheryl Scollard who will work with the individual to determine the most suitable format. 3. This plan will be amended as required and will be reviewed fully by October 31, 2027 and every five (5) years thereafter. 			
<p><i>Training</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train all employees, including contract and unpaid 	<p>Completed /Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / </p>

<p>mentees/interns on applicable IASR requirement and the organization's responsibilities under the Human Rights Code (as it pertains to persons with disabilities).</p>			<p>Managing Partner</p>
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MD Lawyers Action Plan

1. Training for new employees will be delivered via online training modules covering all applicable content as required under the IASR:
2. Certification/record of completed training will be filed in the Director of Operations office and the personal file of each employee.

Training will also be made available via alternate formats including in-person presentation, as requested

Part II – Information and Communication Standard

<p><i>Accessible Websites and Web Content</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure website and web content published after January 1, 2012 conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, level A. 	<p>Completed /Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / Managing Partner</p>
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MD Lawyers Action Plan

1. MD Lawyers is aware of the requirements related to its web content and is currently under construction, to comply with WCAG 2.0 level A mandatory requirements.

<p><i>Feedback</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon request, be able to receive and respond to feedback from clients, individuals inquiring about MD Lawyers, our employees and members of the public who have a disability. 	<p>Completed /Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / Managing Partner</p>
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MD Lawyers Action Plan

1. A process for receiving and responding to accessible feedback requests has been developed and communicated to all relevant employees. Currently MD Lawyers can facilitate requests via the Land Line Telephone, E-mail and mail (enlarged text available).
2. As feedback may be received by various departments and personnel at MD Lawyers, feedback requests has been developed and delivered based on the different positions within the company.
3. Receiving and responding to feedback will be included in all new hire orientations where position frequently receives and responds to requests.
4. All other employees will be notified as to the internal party to whom they should direct any accessible feedback requests.

<p><i>Accessible Formats and Communication Supports</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon request, provide accessible formats and communication supports to individuals with disabilities. 2. Notify the public of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. 3. Where a communication support or accessible format cannot be provided immediately, consult with the client to arrange for a suitable format as soon as possible. 	<p>Completed /Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / Managing Partner</p>

MD Lawyers Action Plan

1. Complete an assessment of the ways in which each department provides information to our clients, potential clients and the public (i.e. Invoices, customer service, marketing etc).
2. Develop guidelines/process for responding to various requests. Currently, clients and the public may submit a complaint or inquiry in person/phone/email/regular mail.
3. Train employees on guidelines/process and ensure they are aware that requests that cannot be met immediately must be forwarded to the Director of Operations who will arrange for a suitable and alternative format/communication support. Training to include typical requests that may be encountered, how the request may be facilitated and will be department-specific.
4. Make a public MD Lawyers ability to provide for or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports by posting a statement on the company website.

Part III– Employment Standard

Workplace Emergency Response Information

1. Create and implement individualized plans to assist employees with disabilities during an emergency.
2. Obtain consent from employees with individualized plans to disclose emergency response or evacuations plans to the person responsible for assisting the employee in situations where the plan requires the assistance of a colleague.
3. Create and provide emergency information formatted in such a way that the employee with the disability can understand its contents/direction as soon as practicable following the receipt of the request and/or individualized plan.
4. Review the individualized plan/information:
 - o When the employee moves to a different location in the office;
 - o When the employee’s overall accommodation needs and plan are reviewed; and
 - o When the company reviews its general emergency response policies.

Ongoing
(Based
on
employee needs)

Director of
Operations
/
Managin
g Partner

MD Lawyers Action Plan

1. Recognizing that most disabilities are invisible or episodic and therefore not readily apparent, the New Hire Contact/Emergency Information Form has been amended to allow employees to identify emergency planning requirements. Emergency planning information and directions are also included in the internal Accommodation Policy which has been provided and communicated to all current employees and provided to all new hires as part of their orientation package.

2. The process for providing emergency information includes alternative formats and will be completed in a timely manner upon receipt of the request or becoming aware of the need for an individualized plan.
3. The process/policy used by the HR department to develop an individualized emergency response plan includes the requirement that consent is obtained from the requesting employee to disclose the contents of the plan to the individual required to provide assistance when responding to the emergency or evacuation. The process for obtaining consent also includes obtaining the acknowledgement of the employee designated
4. Individualized emergency plans include the requirement that the plan be reviewed:
 - o If the employee moves to another location within the office that would affect that person's ability to respond to the emergency or evacuation (the ability of the individual designated to provide assistance, where needed, will also be considered);
 - o On a recurring timeline, to be established during the creation of the individualized emergency response plan. Factors that are taken into consideration when developing the recurring timeline (i.e. once every six (6) months, annually, etc.) include the nature and severity of the disability as well as its classification of permanent or temporary. A review of the plan will also be initiated if requested by the employee; and
 - o When the company amends its emergency response and/or evacuation procedures.

<p><i>Documented Individual Accommodation Plans</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. Create and implement individualized plans. 	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / Managing Partner</p>

MD Lawyers Action Plan

1. MD Lawyers will develop and implement a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. As per IASR requirements, the plan will include the following elements:
 - The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the accommodation plan;
 - MD Lawyers will endeavour to ensure the employee is able to actively participate in the development of the accommodation plan. Limitations will be identified and clearly communicated to the employee prior to the development of the plan.
 - The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.

- The manner in which MD Lawyers can request the participation of a representative from the company in the development of the accommodation plan.
- The steps that will be taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
 - The content of the accommodation plan will be restricted to only those required to facilitate the plan or supervise the employee. The accommodation plan template will include a section identifying the individuals that will have knowledge of the plan and will require each person to sign an acknowledgement of the confidentiality of its contents.
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
- An outline of how the reasons for a denial of an accommodation will be communicated to the requesting employee;
 - *Employees will be informed of the factors that will be taken into consideration by the company when a request for accommodation is received as well as employer and employee expectations and responsibilities.
- The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to a disability;
 - Accommodation plan documents will be made available in accessible formats.
- The accommodation plan template will include a section regarding the provision of accessible formats and communication supports to be completed in the event that such supports are required by the employee.
- The accommodation plan will also include an emergency response/evacuation plan if required by the employee.
- The accommodation plan will be created to include a section outlining additional accommodations that are required.

<p><i>Recruitment, Assessment and Selection</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the company's recruitment processes. 2. During the recruitment process, notify applicants selected to participate in our selection and assessment processes that accommodations are available upon request and in relations to the materials and/or processes used by MD Lawyers. 	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Director of Operations / Managin g Partner</p>
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Should a job applicant request accommodation, consult with the individual and make adjustments to best suit his/her needs. 4. Notify successful applicants of the company's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities. 			
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MD Lawyers Action Plan

1. MD lawyers has an accessibility statement posted on our Indeed Careers Page notifying applicants that reasonable accommodations will be made upon request to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in our recruitment efforts. This statement is also included on all job postings and is communicated to all potential applicants.
2. Successful applicants will be informed of the availability of accommodations relating to MD Lawyers selection/assessment processes upon initial contact from the hiring manager or Director of Operations;
 - o All assessment methods utilized by the company will be reviewed and alternates developed to facilitate accessibility requests;
 - o When updating or amending assessment/selection methods, an assessment will be conducted to identify potential barriers and alternative/accessible formats will be developed; and
 - o Any accommodation request pertaining to the company's selection/assessment methods that cannot be met with current alternate formats will be forwarded to the Director of Operations who will work with the individual to develop an acceptable alternative.
3. When scheduling interviews, MD Lawyers will include a statement in all E-Mail confirmation indicating to the applicant that accommodations are available and inviting the applicant to inform the hiring manager/HR Coordinator of any necessary accommodations.
4. Our internal Accommodation Policy will be provided to all new hires as part of their orientation package. This policy includes all of the means by which MD Lawyers will support employees with disabilities; also included are emergency planning/responses, accessible formats and communication supports and the availability of accessible performance management, career development and job change processes. Alternative formats of the policy will be made available upon request.

<p><i>Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When an employee with a disability requests it, work with that individual to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for: 2. Where a request is made, work with the requesting employee to determine the suitability of the proposed accessible format/communication support. 	Ongoing		Managing Partner
<p><i>MD Lawyers Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The availability of accessible formats and communication supports has been communicated to all employees through the company's internal Accommodation Policy. All future employees will be made aware of their availability through the same policy which is provided with the new hire orientation package. MD Lawyers has completed a review of information that is provided to employees and the manner in which it is provided. Information that is needed to perform an employee's job is generally provided via one-on-one or group training sessions whereas information that is generally available in the workplace is typically provided in written policy format available in hardcopy or electronically. Prior to providing the information needed to perform one's job or information generally available in the workplace, employees requiring accessible formats or communication supports will be requested to notify the Director of Operations so that alternate arrangements may be made. 2. Upon receiving a request, the Director of Operations will work with the employee and any individuals responsible for providing the information (for example the employee's supervisor) to deliver a suitable accessible format or communication support. Prior to involving the employee's supervisor, consent will be obtained from the employee. 			
<p><i>Information for Employees</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate the company's policy on accommodating employees with disabilities to all staff members. 2. Ensure that all new hires are informed of the company's policy on accommodating employees with disabilities. 	Ongoing		Managing Partner
<p><i>MD Lawyers Action Plan</i></p>			

1. Provide all new hires with the Accommodation Policy in their personal training resources. The policy addresses all of the means by which MD Lawyers will support employees with disabilities, including emergency planning/responses, accessible formats and communication supports as well as accessible performance management, career development and job change processes.
2. Ensure that all employees are informed of changes to the accommodation Policy as they occur. Changes will be communicated via E-mail and or/or group information sessions.

<p><i>Processes to Accommodate Employees/Return to Work Process</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a process to develop accommodation plans and return to work plans for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. 	Ongoing		Managing Partner
<p><i>MD Lawyers Action Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assess IASR requirements and develop a template accommodation form and a return to work form that both address all applicable requirements. Use of these updated forms will ensure that all accommodation and RTW plans are properly recorded and retained on file. For consistency, the accommodation plan template will be used in conjunction with RTW processes. 			
<p><i>Accessible Performance Management, Career Development and Job Changes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the organization's performance management and career development opportunities account for the accessibility needs and plans of employees and that these processes are inclusive and barrier-free. 	Ongoing		HR Manager / Managing Partner

MD Lawyers Action Plan

- Evaluate MD Lawyers current performance management and career development processes to identify barriers. Develop processes to ensure that such functions are completely accessible. The Accommodation Policy will identify. Outline accessible

performance management and career profession to ensure consistent and clear communication to all employees.

Redeployment

- Take into account the accessibility needs and accommodation plans of employees who are reassigned to an alternate position with the company as an alternative to a layoff.

Ongoing

Managing Partner

MD Lawyers Action Plan

- As part of the redeployment process, MD Lawyers will incorporate the accessibility needs and accommodation plans of any employee that is being redeployed to an alternative position. The Director of Operations will oversee the redeployment process; however, new and /or amended reporting hierarchies will be reviewed to determine who is to be involved with and informed of any accessibility plans and requirements.

