

FURNITURE BANK (FB) MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

In 2005, the government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (the “AODA”). It is the goal of the Ontario government to make Ontario accessible by 2025. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (“IASR”) under the AODA require that Furniture Bank (FB) 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 FB:

- Customer Service;
- Information and Communications;
- Employment; and
- Proposed Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment

This multi-year plan outlines FB’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers to address the current and future requirements of the AODA, and in order to fulfill FB’s commitment as outlined in the HR Policy Manual # Accessible Customer Service (AODA).

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

- Establish, review and update this plan in consultation with persons with disabilities, as needed and as the company complies with each of the requirements over time;
- Post this plan on its website (www.furniturebank.org);
- Report as required on its website (www.furniturebank.org) on the progress of the implementation of this plan;
- Provide this plan in an accessible format, upon request; and
- Review and update this plan at least once every five years.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE PLAN

We endeavour to ensure that the plan and related practices and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

- i. **Dignity** - Persons with a disability must be treated as valued persons as deserving of service as any other person.

- ii. **Equality of Opportunity** - Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our services.
- iii. **Integration** - Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other person. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs.
- iv. **Independence** – Services must be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, we will always be willing to assist a person with a disability but will not do so without the express permission of the person.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Commitment:

FB has been in compliance with the Accessible Customer Service Regulation under the AODA, and will continue to comply with that regulation.

The plan applies to all persons who, on behalf of FB, deal with clients, members of the public or other third parties. This includes our employees, volunteers, students, and contracted services, except where otherwise noted.

FB is committed to excellence in serving all clients, family members, and visitors, including persons with disabilities, and it will carry out its functions in a manner which delivers an accessible customer service experience.

FB is committed to providing its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. This commitment will be integrated wherever possible and will ensure that persons with disabilities will benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other persons.

Action Taken:

The following measures have been implemented by FB:

1. Ensuring all persons who, on behalf of FB, 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 clients, are trained to communicate and provide the best possible customer service to all customers, clients, family members and visitors, including persons with disabilities;

2. Ensuring staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by persons with disabilities who are accessing FB's goods or services;
3. Ensuring completion of accessibility training is tracked and recorded;
4. Offering to communicate with clients or other persons by email or if appropriate, in person, if telephone communication is not suitable to their needs;
5. Ensuring persons accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal in areas of FB open to the public are accommodated;
6. Ensuring that if a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the support person is accommodated;
7. Providing 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 FB premises. If the disruption is long-term, FB posts an announcement on its website informing persons of the location, duration of the disruption and alternate solutions;
8. Continuing to welcome and appreciate feedback from persons with disabilities through multiple communication channels;
9. Including the above-mentioned items in a FB HR Policy # – Accessible Customer Service (AODA) which is accessible to all employees and is included on our website www.furniturebank.org
10. Reporting compliance with the customer service standard on the Accessibility Compliance Reporting tool at Service Ontario's One-Source for Business website.

Required legislative compliance: December 31, 2012

Implementation timeframe: September 1, 2018

Completion date: September 1, 2018

INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS REGULATION (IASR)

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES, PLANS OR PUBLIC SAFETY INFORMATION (Emergency Procedure and Fire Plan)

Commitment:

FB is committed to providing and maintaining premises that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

Action Taken:

The following measures were implemented by FB effective January 1, 2017:

Emergency procedures, plans and public safety information that are prepared by FB 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;

The request for emergency procedures, plans and public safety information in an accessible format may be made in any of the following ways:

- In person at the Reception desk at 25 Connell Court Unit 1;
- By telephone at 416.934.1229. Ask for the Director, People and Culture;
- In writing to: Director People and Culture, Furniture Bank 25 Connell Court Unit 1, Etobicoke ON M8Z 1E8;
- Electronically by sending an email to: info@furniturebank.org;

Those who make such a request may expect to hear back within 72 hours of leaving their request, provided that contact information has been provided by the requestor.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012

Implementation timeframe: January 1, 2017

Completion date: January 1, 2017

WORKPLACE EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

Commitment:

Where FB 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 Furniture Bank:

The agency has made a commitment to provide individualized workplace emergency response information procedures which will be developed for employees with disabilities, as required;

Where required, FB provides assistance to specific disabled employees, with the disabled employees' prior consent, to help them evacuate the workplace in case of an emergency or disaster. These plans for providing assistance will be set out in individualized emergency plans for the employees, upon notification by the employee or the employee's supervisor to the Director, People and Culture.

These individualized emergency plans will be communicated to the employees' respective supervisor and the Joint Health and Safety Committee, on an 'as needed' basis;

On an ongoing and regular basis, and as per the applicable terms of the IASR, Furniture Bank will review and assess general workplace emergency response procedures and individualized emergency plans to ensure accessibility issues are addressed.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012

Implementation timeframe: January 1, 2017

Completion date: January 1, 2017

TRAINING

Commitment:

FB is committed to implementing a process to ensure that all employees, volunteers, third-party contractors who provide goods, services and facilities on FB's behalf, and persons participating in the development and approval of FB'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, FB has taken the following measures:

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 goods, services and facilities on FB's behalf, and persons participating in the development and approval of FB's policies;

Ensure that the training is provided to persons referenced above as soon as practicable and that the training content and method of delivery is appropriate for the duties and responsibilities of the employee's position;

Keep and maintain a record of the training provided, including the dates that the training was provided and 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 legislative compliance: January 1, 2015

Implementation timeframe: September 1, 2018

Completion date: September 1, 2018

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

Commitment:

FB is committed to making company information and communications accessible to persons with disabilities. FB will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the information and communication standard to ensure that its information and communications systems and platforms are accessible and are provided in accessible formats that meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

1. Feedback, Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, FB will:

Upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports to persons with disabilities in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs;

Post a statement on the FB website regarding the availability of accessible formats and communication supports and;

Provide, upon request, and if available, accessible formats (eg, large print, audio or braille) and communication supports (eg, plain language, captioning, sign language) for receiving and responding to feedback from persons with disabilities.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2015 – Feedback

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 – Accessible formats & Communication Supports

Implementation timeframe: September 1 2018

Completion date: September 2018 - Feedback

Completion date: September 2018 - Accessible Formats & Communication Supports

2. Accessible Websites and Web Content

Planned Action:

In accordance with the IASR, FB will:

Ensure that new content placed on the website www.furniturebank.org conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A;



Ensure that the website www.furniturebank.org conforms to WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021

Required Legislative Compliance: January 1, 2014 – WCAG 2.0 Level A – new websites and web content.

Required Legislative Compliance: January 1, 2021 – WCG 2.0 Level AA – all websites and web content. Implementation timeframe: TBD

Completion date WCG 2.0 Level AA: TBD

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Note: AODA employer obligations regarding employment do not apply to volunteers or unpaid persons.

1. Recruitment

Commitment:

FB is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain employees with disabilities. This includes providing accessibility across all stages of the employment cycle.

Planned Action:

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

a. Recruitment – General

FB 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 and processes;
- Specifying that accommodation is available for applicants with disabilities, on FB's website and on job postings;
- Working with suppliers (eg, Indeed.ca, etc) to ensure external Web pages are compliant with the Information and Communication Standards under the IASR's requirements.

b. Recruitment, assessment and selection

FB 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 and processes;
- 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, Human Resources will consult with the applicant and, if possible, arrange for provision of suitable accommodations in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

c. Notice to Successful Applicants

When making offers of employment, FB 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 and processes;
- Inclusion of reference to accommodating employees with disabilities in offer of employment.
- Review of FB policies on accommodating employees with disabilities in Human Resource orientation at time of onboarding.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016

Implementation timeframe: September 1, 2018

Completion date: September 1, 2018

2. Informing Employees of Supports

In accordance with the IASR, FB will inform all employees of policies that support employees with disabilities.

This will include:

- Informing current employees and new hires of FB policies supporting employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's needs due to disability;
- Providing information under this section as soon as practicable after the new employee begins employment, specifically in the orientation process;
- Keeping employees up to date on changes to existing policies on job accommodations with respect to disability;

Where an employee with a disability so requests it, FB will provide or arrange for provision of suitable accessible formats and communications supports for:

- Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
- Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

In meeting the obligations to provide the information that is set out in the paragraph above, FB will consult with the requesting employee in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016

Implementation timeframe: September 1, 2018

Completion date: September 1, 2018

3. Documented Individual Accommodation Plans and Return to Work Process

Commitment:

FB will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the IASR to ensure that barriers in accommodation and return to work processes are eliminated and corporate policies surrounding accommodation and return to work are followed, where applicable.

Planned Action:

FB policies will include steps that Furniture Bank will take to accommodate an employee with a disability and will be revised to include a section on facilitating an employee's return to work after absenteeism due to disability, and a section on the development of documented individual accommodation plans.

Documented individual accommodation plans will include the following elements, in accordance with the provisions of the IASR:

- the manner in which the employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the plan;
- the means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis;
- the manner in which can FB request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at FB's expense, to assist FB in determining if and how accommodation can be achieved;
- the manner in which the employee can request participation of a representative from his or her workplace;
- steps that will be taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- the frequency in which individual accommodation plans will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which this will be done;
- the way in which a denial of a plan will be communicated, if an individual accommodation plan is denied;
- the means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs;
- any other accommodation that is to be provided to the employee will be included in the plan;
- individualized workplace emergency response information, if any is required;
- any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports that have been provided for or arranged, in order to provide the employee with:
 - Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
 - Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

FB will develop, implement and document a Return to Work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require accommodation in order to Return to Work. The focus will be on non-WSIB injuries and illnesses.

Required Legislative compliance: January 1, 2016

Implementation timeframe: September 2018

Completion date: September 2018

4. Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

Commitment:

FB 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, Furniture Bank will:

Review, assess and, as necessary, modify existing policies, procedures and practices 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

Review, assess and, as necessary, include in Performance Management training, accessibility criteria;

Take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities, including notification of the opportunity to request accommodations on internal job postings;

Take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when redeploying employees.



Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016

Implementation timeframe: September 1, 2018

Completion date: September 1, 2018

PROPOSED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The goal of the proposed standard is to remove barriers in public spaces and buildings, as applied to newly constructed or redeveloped buildings after January 1, 2017. When the standard is finalized and comes into force, Furniture Bank will ensure that any applicable requirements set out in the standard are followed.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2017

Implementation timeframe: TBD

Completion date: TBD