

BLG

Borden Ladner Gervais

2021-2025

**Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
for Borden Ladner Gervais'
Ontario Offices**

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Introduction to Accessibility Standards in Ontario

In 2005, the government of Ontario set the goal of creating a barrier-free Ontario for people with disabilities by 2025 by creating the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (“AODA”).

To reach this goal, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (the “Ministry”) has created Regulations that set out the actions that organizations (public, private and not-for-profit) must take to meet this goal and the deadlines they must follow in doing so. The Regulations cover accessibility standards in customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment.

Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (“BLG”) is committed to playing its part in helping Ontario become a more accessible province for all individuals. Our Firm’s Ontario offices have already complied with the standards under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service regulation by creating internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure our members recognize the role we play in making Ontario more accessible. These initiatives included the creation of a training program for all Firm members on the AODA and how to provide accessible services. We have also developed a feedback process, via our website (www.blg.com) and in hard-copy form available at our reception desk, for individuals to help us ensure that we maintain our high level of accessibility to all individuals.

BLG has created this multi-year accessibility plan to communicate our continued initiatives. We are committed to identifying and removing barriers that exist for persons with disabilities.

The accessibility standards regarding the website and web content was updated by the Ministry with a requirement for compliance by January 1, 2021. BLG met these standards when enhancing their website by incorporating the AODA requirements into its website design in 2019.

Statement of Commitment

BLG is committed to treating all individuals in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence, as evidenced by our *Respectful Workplace* Policy and accessibility initiatives. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of individuals 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, 2005* and its Regulations.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The multi-year accessibility plan is a tool for BLG to communicate its accessibility initiatives internally and to the public. This plan will be reviewed at minimum every five years and will be supplemented by annual reports that will also be available online. The attached chart outlines the planned initiatives for BLG's Ontario offices for the years 2021 through 2025.

2011 – 2021 Accomplished Initiatives

1. In April 2011, we created our first accessibility policy to solidify BLG's commitment to building a more accessible community.
2. As of 2012, all of our members have been trained on the AODA standards and how to provide accessible services. New members are generally trained within 30 days.
3. In December 2012, we submitted our first Annual Report to the Ministry to demonstrate our compliance with the accessibility standards.
4. In 2012, we redesigned our reception services and resources to improve accessibility to all individuals.
5. In 2012, we have made additional telecommunications equipment available to our members and clients, as well as provided training to firm members on how to use this equipment to improve accessibility of our resources.
6. In 2012, we have identified the most accessible meeting rooms at BLG and ensure that all meetings with clients who have disabilities and all introductory meetings with clients occur in these rooms so that we are prepared to accommodate any client in a timely manner.
7. In 2012, we invested in additional signage to make office navigation easier for all individuals.

8. In 2013, we developed a feedback procedure via our website (www.blg.com) and in hard-copy form available at our reception desk that we regularly monitor and use to develop our future goals and initiatives.
9. In 2013, we created a new website that meets many of the WCAG 2.0 Level A standards for accessibility to ensure it is user-friendly for all individuals.
10. In 2013, we created our first multi-year accessibility plan, amended our internal accessibility policy and developed emergency response plans for our Firm members with identified disabilities.
11. In 2017, our multi-year accessibility plan was reviewed and updated outlining our Firm's goals through to 2020.
12. In December 2017, we submitted our Annual Report to the Ministry to demonstrate our ongoing compliance with the accessibility standards.
13. In 2019, a new website was built to meet the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards to ensure the site is user-friendly and accessible for all individuals.
14. In 2021, our accessibility policy and training plans were reviewed.
15. Training on *AODA* and customer service accessibility standards continues to be a part of all orientation programs and completion of training is documented.
16. In 2021, our employee and recruitment accommodation processes were reviewed.
17. We continue to develop individual accommodation plans for members with disabilities.
18. Any final renovation plans for BLG's leased premises are to be reviewed to ensure they are in compliance with *AODA* requirements.
19. In May 2021, our Annual Report to the Ministry was filed to demonstrate our ongoing compliance with the accessibility standards.

Looking Forward: Continued Initiatives for BLG's Toronto and Ottawa Offices in 2021-2025

| Organizational | Information & Communications | Employment | Infrastructure | Ongoing |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Review and approve internal policy on accessibility at minimum every five years.</p> <p>Review multi-year accessibility plan every five years and make this plan available through the BLG website (www.blg.com).</p> <p>Ensure firm members are aware of BLG's new statement of commitment to providing accessible services.</p> | <p>Review feedback procedures to ensure that we are able to provide accessible formats for all individuals.</p> <p>Investigate methods of providing accessible formats and communication supports.</p> | <p>Review current employee and recruitment accommodation process.</p> | <p>Communicate with the designers of BLG Toronto's and Ottawa's leased premises regarding <i>AODA</i> requirements and ensure BLG's reception areas continue to meet all <i>AODA</i> requirements.</p> <p>Continue monitoring the Ministry's progress on upcoming accessibility standards for the built environment.</p> | <p>Annual Accessibility Report is available through the BLG website (www.blg.com).</p> <p>Ensure firm members and clients remain updated regarding all <i>AODA</i> developments and the impact they have on BLG's service offerings, policies, practices and procedures.</p> |
| <p>Updated training will be given to all Firm members, volunteers and those providing services on our behalf on new accessibility standards and the <i>Ontario Human Rights Code</i>.</p> | <p>Ensure feedback procedures are accessible and known to all firm members so that they can appropriately direct clients.</p> <p>Provide accessible formats and communication supports.</p> | <p>Continue employee and recruitment accommodation process.</p> <p>Continue to develop individual accommodation plans for members with disabilities.</p> | <p>Review any final renovation plans for BLG's leased premises to ensure they are in compliance with <i>AODA</i> requirements.</p> | <p>Provide training to firm members, contractors and others who deal with the public or third parties on its behalf in respect of any changes to policies.</p> |
| <p>Monitor any Ministry required changes to the policy or multi-year plan.</p> | <p>Review and address any feedback received internally or externally.</p> <p>Monitor any Ministry required updates to external communication standards.</p> | <p>Monitor any Ministry required enhancement requirement to accessibility in recruitment and accommodation processes.</p> | | |

Conclusion

This plan will be available through BLG's website (www.blg.com) and information about its release will be communicated by internal memorandum and posted on our intranet. BLG is committed to Ontario's goal of creating a barrier-free Ontario by 2025 and will work diligently to ensure we meet our targets. If you have any feedback regarding the accessibility of our services at BLG, please visit our website and submit a feedback form.