



Accessibility Plan 2023 - 2028

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Message from Bruno Suppa, CEO



At BDO Canada, we aspire to bend the arc of possibility for our people, our clients, and our firm. We strive to be an inclusive and welcoming environment for people of all abilities.

Fostering an inclusive environment and ensuring equal access for all individuals is paramount to our values. By embracing accessibility, we are taking significant strides in our journey towards creating a workplace that celebrates diversity and wholeheartedly supports our people and clients alike.

We have aligned our Accessibility Plan with the federal government's [Accessible Canada Act](#) (2019) to ensure we uphold the highest standards when it comes to accessibility.

Our Accessibility Plan serves as our guiding document, driving our actions and propelling us towards the goal of our firm becoming more inclusive and accessible for all. Our plan outlines steps that we will be taking to enhance how we interact with our people and businesses employing persons with disabilities.

The Accessibility Plan marks an important milestone for our firm. By working together and embracing accessibility, we will strengthen our organization, amplify our impact, and create a more equitable firm.

I am appreciative of our people who have shown ongoing excitement and willingness to learn and implement the plan within their day-to-day roles and responsibilities. I am proud of our commitment to accessibility and look forward to continuing our efforts.



Bruno Suppa
CEO
BDO Canada LLP

About BDO Canada

BDO Canada LLP (“BDO Canada”) is a member of BDO International Limited, which is a network of independent member firms. BDO Canada is a Canadian limited liability partnership, while BDO International Limited is a UK company limited by guarantee. BDO Canada provides accounting, tax, consulting, and business advisory services across Canada. The firm is made up of 484 partners and 4,882 staff.

Accessibility at BDO Canada

BDO Canada is on a journey to become fully accessible by 2040. While the firm has many promising practices in place, we recognize that fostering an inclusive and accessible workplace is an ongoing journey. We consistently strive to stay up to date with best practices and are compliant with laws such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and other relevant legislation.

BDO Canada’s strategy focuses on demonstrating a commitment to diversity and this includes ensuring diversity within senior roles. Additionally, our commitment to accessibility is aligned with our diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) frameworks. By embracing accessibility and inclusivity, we create an environment that fosters innovation and collaboration. This environment better serves the needs of our people, our clients, and the communities we serve.

Our commitment to accessibility is also demonstrated through the work that is completed by our highly skilled Accessibility Consulting Team (“ACT”). ACT is a leader in accessibility consulting and has become a trusted partner and ally to organizations nationwide. ACT completed accessibility assessments for over 40 Canadian organizations in 2022 and 2023. This included consulting with well over 1,000 individuals, including many persons with lived experience of disability across the country.

Contact information

BDO Canada values and appreciates feedback regarding our Accessibility Plan. If you require an alternative format of this plan or would like to provide feedback, we invite you to contact us through the following channels:

Email: accessible@bdo.ca

Phone: 416-865-0111 (National Head Office)

Mail:

BDO Canada LLP
Accessibility Team
180 Kent Street, Suite 1700
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 0B6

We are pleased to offer alternative formats upon request, including:

- Print
- Large Print
- Braille
- Other electronic formats that are compatible with adaptive technologies

Accessibility Plan development process

The BDO Canada Accessibility Consulting Team was hired by the firm to conduct a fulsome accessibility assessment of the firm. This assessment was the largest accessibility review in the firm's history and the team conducted a deep analysis of existing accessibility practices.

First, they completed a thorough review of its documented processes and policies. They examined accessibility in the seven priority areas outlined in the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA).

Types of documents and data reviewed

The following types of documents and information were reviewed in the documentation review phase of the project:

- HR policies, procedures, and directives
- Current Accessibility Policy and Workplace Accommodation Policy
- Recent corporate strategic initiatives
- Any documents relating to the ACA priority areas
- Announcements related to events and meetings
- Materials used for recruitment
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Policy
- Persons with Disabilities Pillar Action Plan
- Organizational charts

Consultations

Persons with disabilities must be consulted, included, and informed during the creation of accessibility plans. Their experiences and perceptions are vital to creating accessibility plans that lead to meaningful change.

ACT conducted consultations and interview sessions with our people with disabilities, allies, managers, leaders, and others who contribute to accessibility at BDO Canada. An accessibility survey was created to provide all firm partners and staff the opportunity to provide feedback. Partners and staff also had the opportunity to reach out to ACT to set up one-on-one confidential interviews.

In total, the accessibility assessment included the following stakeholder engagements:

- 149 completed surveys (51 partners and staff identified as a person with a disability)
- 18 stakeholder interview sessions
- Eight one-on-one partner and staff interviews

Over 250 hours were spent on the BDO Canada Accessibility Assessment and on development of the BDO Canada Accessibility Plan. Based on the important feedback received from our people, we identified specific barriers and created the actions in this plan.

The principles of the ACA

The Principles of the ACA are set out at [Section 6](#) of that Act. They are:

1. all persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities;
2. all persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities;
3. all persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities;
4. all persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;
5. laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons;
6. persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures; and
7. the development and revision of accessibility standards and the making of regulations must be done with the objective of achieving the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The principles of the ACA are embedded in our Accessibility Plan. They are also reflected in our strategic framework which defines our vision for moving forward as a firm and highlights BDO Canada's most important resource, our people. We aim at having a culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and want everyone to have the same opportunities and to feel welcome and included. Our goal is to have a workplace culture where our people can bring their best self to work.

BDO Canada is committed to continuous improvement. Our Accessibility Plan demonstrates how we aim to achieve the highest level of accessibility possible for persons with disabilities. We will work towards becoming a barrier-free organization by 2040.

Priority areas

There are seven priority areas described under [Section 5](#) of the ACA. These areas include:

- Employment
- The built environment
- Information and communication technologies
- Communication, other than information communication technologies
- The procurement of goods, services, and facilities
- The design and delivery of programs and services
- Transportation

As transportation is not currently relevant to the work at BDO Canada, it has not been included in this plan. An additional barrier—culture—has been added to draw additional attention to the importance of this factor in the success of accessibility at the firm.



Commitments



Culture

- We will continue to build accessibility into our positions, structures, and metrics.
- We will establish more opportunities for input and feedback from partners and staff with disabilities.
- We will build accessibility awareness and expertise across the firm.
- We will work to enhance the accessibility of our firm's policies.



Employment

- We will improve our data collection processes, metrics, and key performance indicators related to disability.
- We will continue to enhance the effectiveness of our accommodations processes.
- We will continue to make our hiring, recruitment, and onboarding processes more inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- We will ensure that all internal training is accessible.



The built environment

- We will update and refresh our emergency response information and procedures for our people with disabilities.
- We will create a plan to regularly assess the accessibility of our office spaces.
- We will develop mechanisms to communicate with our people and clients about the accessibility of our physical spaces.



Information and communication technologies

- We will look for ways to incorporate feedback from our people and clients with disabilities into the web accessibility process.
- We will improve communications about accessibility-related tools available to our people.
- We will further embed accessibility in our IT strategies and processes.



Communication other than information communication technologies

- We will expand our consideration of accessibility within communication guidelines.
- We will continue to enhance the accessibility of our templates.
- We will improve processes for providing documents, events and social media posts that are accessible.



The design and delivery of programs and services

- We will seek feedback from our clients on the accessibility of our programs and services.
- We will ensure that our clients with disabilities are aware of available accommodations.



The procurement of goods, services, and facilities

- We will continue to develop our knowledge and expertise into best practices in accessible procurement.
- We will consider how we can better incorporate supplier diversity into our process for choosing vendors.

Reporting and implementation

BDO Canada commits to diligently acting on this Accessibility Plan and publishing progress reports. These progress reports will share the work we are doing to implement the actions described in the Plan. We will involve persons with disabilities in the creation of progress reports and new accessibility plans, continue to identify barriers to accessibility at the firm, keep taking action to remove and reduce barriers, and become barrier-free by 2040.



Definitions

Accessibility

According to the Government of Canada's [Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology](#), accessibility is the quality of an environment that enables a person to access it with ease.

It refers to how services, technology, locations, devices, environments, and products are designed with persons with disabilities in mind. Accessibility means giving people of all abilities equal opportunities to take part in life activities. The term implies conscious planning and effort to make sure something is barrier-free for persons with disabilities. Accessibility benefits everyone.

Barrier

According to the ACA, a barrier is “anything - including anything physical, architectural, technological, or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice - that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.”

Accommodation

According to the Government of Canada's [Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology](#), accommodation is, in the context of work, a measure taken by management based on the personal circumstances of an employee that is designed to enable them to carry out their duties and fully participate in work-related activities. Some examples of accommodations are acquiring or modifying equipment, software, or devices, modifying work schedules, or providing assistance through support services.

Disability

According to the ACA, disability is “any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.”



At the time this document was written and designed it was fully accessible.

BDO is a leading provider of professional services, delivering a range of assurance & accounting, tax, and advisory services. Complemented by continuously advancing technology expertise, ESG focus, and 100+ years of being connected to local communities, we're proud to cultivate ongoing relationships with clients and employees across Canada and beyond.

Our people-first approach to our talent experience has earned us multiple awards, including a spot among Canada's Top 100 Employers for 2024.

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