

# THE CANADIAN REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATION MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN



## Statement of Commitment

CREA is committed to providing goods or services that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. We believe in integration and equal opportunity to enable customers with disabilities to obtain, use and benefit from quality goods or services in a timely manner, and employees with disabilities to participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment. We will ensure that information and communications are available in accessible formats to all CREA staff and customers, and we are committed to identifying barriers to accessibility and actively seeking solutions to preventing or removing barriers, in accordance with requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

## Accessibility Strategic Road Map

CREA has established an Accessibility Working Group to advise about the requirements and implementation of AODA accessibility standards and preparation of accessibility reports, including access for persons with disabilities to CREA services and premises.

CREA has also partnered with AODA compliance experts who have provided:

- Assistance with producing or updating accessibility policies and report compliance with the customer service standard accessibility regulations
- Training for staff and volunteers to equip them with the knowledge, skills and tools needed to provide accessible customer service; and
- A proposal for website review to be proactive and to provide accessible web information to customers (including members, the public, and other stakeholders).



## Strategy Roadmap:

	2009-2012	2013	2014-2016
<b>Accessibility in policies, programs and review of legislation</b>	Update of human resources, policies, programs and review of legislation	Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, technology infrastructure and training	Accessibility is part of all of CREA's business
<b>Ensure accessibility included in all core business</b>	Staff trained on accessibility	Increased awareness in CREA's accessibility best practices in customer service and workplace	Communications, websites, technology solutions and documents employ accessibility best practices  Staff provided with training required under the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR)
		Review accommodation for employees with disabilities	Best practices on employment accommodation and return to work implemented
<b>Accessibility shown as an organizational priority</b>	Inclusion and accessibility commitments built into management performance contracts	Continue to publish accessibility plans and remove and prevent barriers	Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment



	<b>2009-2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014-2016</b>
	Incorporate accessibility into strategic plan and department plans	Management has accessibility performance commitments	Managers and staff have regard to accessibility in the performance process
			Staff and customer feedback obtained on accessibility accommodation

## CREA Compliance Deadlines

<b>Year</b>	<b>Description - (all section numbers referring to IASR)</b>
2012	Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information s. 13 Workplace emergency response information s. 27
2013	No new requirements
2014	Accessibility policies s. 3; Accessibility plans s. 4; All new Internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A s. 14
2015	Training s. 7; Feedback processes s. 11
2016	Accessible formats and communication supports s. 12 All Accessibility Standards for Employment s.22-32
2017	All applicable Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces s.80
2018 and beyond	2018 New Multi- Year Accessibility Plan and every subsequent five years; 2021 : All Internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA (excluding live captioning and pre-recorded audio descriptions) s. 14



## Our progress on the AODA regulations:

The following outlines CREA's commitments and progress in meeting accessibility standards in five key areas:

- Policies, Processes and Practice
- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Design of Public Spaces

### Policies, Processes and Practice:

Policies and practices help staff embed accessibility into everyday activities and help ensure compliance activities are communicated and delivered in a consistent way across CREA.

The following steps have or will be taken:

- New refreshed policies to reinforce accessibility considerations;
- Published Service Standards will be posted in CREA's office and on CREA's website;
- New and existing tools and guidelines will embed accessibility criteria into day-to-day business practices;
- Policy, program and legislative reviews take place to find and fix barriers to accessibility; and,
- Performance will be monitored against these standards and against feedback from CREA customers and staff

### Customer Service:

CREA is committed to provide products and services in various formats depending on the needs of their customers. In order to meet this requirement:

- Information about our products and services will be accessible, accurate and up to date and made available in CREA offices and on CREA's website;
- Alternative formats of CREA documents will be made available upon request and in accordance with the accessible service standard;



- A feedback process will be in place through which customers can make comments, suggestions and complaints. The feedback process will allow comments in person, by telephone, in writing or be delivering an electronic text by email, or otherwise;
- A complaints procedure will be in place where CREA will offer the customer a full explanation of the circumstances and take appropriate action;
- Accessibility information is widely available through corporate communications and events; and,
- A notice of service disruption shall be provided in advance and will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities and services that may be available.

CREA has developed the following in order to assist in meeting our commitment to customer service:

- Customer service policy which outlines our commitment to service;
- Accessibility Business Plan which clarifies mandatory requirements under the standard; and
- Accessibility Training including:
  - Elearning for all new employees as part of orientation
  - Experiential training for all employees
  - Management training
  - Elearning for volunteers

## Information and Communications:

Our goal is to achieve compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines-based (WCAG) commitments in the Information and Communication section of the ISAR to ensure websites are accessible for all. In addition we want to ensure that communication materials, telephone communications and face-to-face interactions meet the requirements of the Act. To date we have:

- Developed guidelines and best practices for creating accessible documents for common desktop applications such as MS word, excel and powerpoint.
- Ensure that information, including emergency procedures, plans, and public safety, is readily available in a variety of alternative formats such as large print, HTML and tagged PDFs.
- Developed a training strategy to ensure that staff and partners have the knowledge, tools and technical advice to create accessible materials.



We still have some work to do in order to create communications standards and implement to ensure information is accessible to all users, such as:

### *Written Materials:*

- Communications staff to receive training on developing or revising materials with accessible content in alternate formats.
- Key staff trained to create, evaluate and enhance accessible PDF documents using adobe acrobat professional.
- Provide publications in alternate formats on request.

### *Email:*

- Email messages should be sent using best practices to make communications more accessible including:
- Avoiding the constant use of PDF attachments to relay information and placing content in the body of the email when possible;
- When using attachments, ensuring the content – if brief – is also copied into the body of the email; and
- Providing context and further information with a link to the HTML version of the full document.

### *Websites:*

Given that the IASR has staggered timelines to comply with the WCAG Guidelines, CREA is working on building accessibility into its website re-fresh cycles in order to ensure full compliance by January 1, 2021. These steps include:

- Developing internal standards for the development of new websites to ensure the alignment with WCAG 2.0 AA standards and the IASR;
- Developing standards, resources and technical specifications to support the refreshing of websites so they will meet legislated obligations for accessibility; and
- Train staff on how to use these systems.

Steps have already been taken to ensure compliance with the ISAR. In particular, CREA's Request for Proposal and Master Services Agreement (MSA) templates have been updated to ensure that suppliers submit proposals that will



result in deliverables that comply with the regulation. The cost of compliance is thus built into every MSA and subsequent Statements of Work relating to new CREA Internet websites.

## Employment

We are committed to ensure that the process of recruitment and retention is inclusive and accessible for everyone. CREA will accomplish this by:

- Identifying and removing barriers in the workplace for staff and customers;
- Understand and accommodate various types of disabilities and their impact on work performance;
- Understand employer obligations to provide employment accommodation;
- Understanding CREA's obligations and leadership under AODA regulations;
- Enhancing workplace emergency responses through individualized emergency response information and assistance as required;
- Revising individual work plans and developing a manager's guide, tools and templates to remove barriers from screening practices.

### *Recruitment:*

CREA will inform employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities during the interview process;

- CREA will make every effort to ensure job postings are available in a variety of formats when requested and access points to ensure that potential applicants with accommodation needs are aware of posting, including ensuring that recruitment agencies are in compliance with these standards;
- CREA will inform successful candidates of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when offering employment. This notice will be included in the letter of offer to the successful candidate
- CREA is committed to fair and accessible employment practices and as such has a policy for accommodating employees with disabilities

IASR, sections 23 and 24



## *Informing Employees with Disabilities of Supports Available to them:*

- CREA will inform all employees of its policies for supporting employees with disabilities, including providing employment-related accommodations. Information will be provided through newsletters, email and staff meetings;
- New employees will be informed during orientation process;
- All employees will be provided with updated information whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations; and
- Employees will be assured that their privacy is respected and that any sharing of information about their accommodation needs will be discussed with them and plans for communication made with their consent.

IASR, section 25

## *Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees:*

CREA will consult with employees who have disabilities to provide them with the accessible formats and communication supports they require to do their jobs effectively.

IASR, section 26

## *Individual Accommodation Plans:*

CREA will develop written individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities including:

- The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan;
- The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis;
- The manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist the employer in determining if accommodation can be achieved;
- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from the workplace, in the development of the accommodation plan;



- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee; and
- The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Individual accommodation plans shall include, as required:

- Information on accessible formats;
- Workplace emergency response information;
- Other accommodation.

IASR, section 27 and 28

### *Return to Work:*

CREA has a return to work process that is not yet formally documented on an individual basis. Throughout the process, the human resources team works closely with the employee, his or her manager. CREA will ensure that managers understand the accommodations being made as well as the privacy/communication concerns and agreements around return to work accessibility requirements. CREA will document this process in compliance with section 29 of these standards.

IASR, section 29

### *Performance Management and Career Development:*

- CREA will review the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities with regard to: performance management and career development – in ways that take their accessibility needs into account, including performance plans in accessible formats as well as coaching and feedback.
- CREA will update its existing performance management process to ensure that accessibility is built into the process.
- CREA will develop a list of considerations/questions concerning accessibility that each manager will include in performance management and career development, including with respect to redeployment.



IASR, section 30 and 31

## Design of Public Spaces

CREA is committed to identifying, removing and preventing barriers when constructing and maintaining new or redeveloped elements of its public spaces, including exterior paths of travel, accessible parking, service counters, fixed queuing guides, and waiting areas. CREA will meet all of its accessibility requirements under the Design Of Public Spaces Standards by **January 1, 2017**.

### We would like to hear from you:

Do you have any thoughts or feedback on what has been accomplished so far? Ideas on how plans or projects can be improved? Do you need any other information to move forward with your own plans? Please contact us with your questions and ideas. We would be pleased to hear from you.

Phone : Member Support: 1-888-237-7945

Mail: Debra Cowan, CFO  
600-200 Catherine Street  
Ottawa, ON K2P 2K9

E-mail: [info@crea.ca](mailto:info@crea.ca)  
[support@crea.ca](mailto:support@crea.ca)



The Canadian Real Estate Association  
200 Catherine St., 6th Floor  
Ottawa, ON K2P 2K9  
Tel: 613-237-7111 Toll Free: 1-800-842-2732

L'Association canadienne de l'immeuble  
200, rue Catherine, 6e étage  
Ottawa (Ontario) K2P 2K9  
Tél. : 613-237-7111  
Sans frais : 1-800-842-2732



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