

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2028



INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Catholic Crosscultural Services

Catholic Crosscultural Services (CCS) is a national non-profit organization based in the Greater Toronto Area. CCS aims to empower immigrants and refugees of all religions, ethnicities, countries of origin, immigration status, sexual orientation, or political affiliation to develop the skills and acquire the necessary knowledge to settle, integrate and succeed in Canada.

Founded in 1954, CCS believes in the power of diversity and inclusion to foster change, nurture progress and move society forward. Newcomers need linguistically appropriate assistance and culturally sensitive support. Thus, CCS delivers programs and services in thirty languages to address these gaps, assisting clients to confidently navigate the labour market, school, and health care system.

We have eight locations across Scarborough, Mississauga, and Brampton and collaborate with numerous partners and settlement and social services sector organizations throughout the Greater Toronto Area.

Our Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) works with private sponsors across Canada to assist them in successfully sponsoring refugees through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

Message from the Executive Director

At CCS we recognize that planning for accessibility helps us create a more vibrant and inclusive organization for our clients, employees, volunteers, and visitors. Our 2023-2028 Multi-Year Plan highlights the actions that we have taken towards accessibility and outlines our continued commitment to identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers.

This plan demonstrates how CCS will comply with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* as well as similar legislation in the other provinces in which CCS operates.

I look forward to implementing this important plan and am committed to ensuring that accessibility is a priority for CCS.

Claudio Ruiz
Executive Director

Statement of Commitment

CCS is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion and equal opportunity and are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and by meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

Accessibility Plan

CCS strives to meet the needs of its employees and customers with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. We are committed to fulfilling our requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and associated regulations, including O. Reg. 191/11 *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. We will also align our accessibility practices with the similar legislation in the other provinces in which CCS operates.

This accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to meet these requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. It covers the following areas:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Training

CCS will monitor changes to legislation and make updates to this plan as required. This plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years.

PAST ACHIEVEMENTS TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS

CCS has made significant progress to identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers in the areas of Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, and Training.

Customer Service

CCS is committed to providing services that are accessible to and inclusive of employees and clients with disabilities. We have taken the following steps:

- Communicated in ways that take into account the needs of people with disabilities
- Notified the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports
- Arranged for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for people with disabilities, upon request
- Ensured people with disabilities who use assistive devices are able to obtain, use or benefit from our services
- Ensured that people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal or support person are able to enter the premises with the animal or support person
- Provided notification in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities
- Provided information about emergency procedures, plans or public safety in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request
- Implemented a customer service feedback process

Information and Communications

CCS is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities by providing accessible information. We have taken the following steps:

- Ensured our public website and web content conforms with the required standards of WCAG 2.0 Level AA
- As required, arranged for the provision of documents in an accessible format, or with communication support, to people with a disability in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other people

Employment

CCS is committed to supporting the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities and has taken the following steps:

- Notified its employees and job applicants about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes by including this information on job postings
- Notified job applicants that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used during the recruitment process
- Notified successful applicants of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities
- Informed its employees of its policies that support employees with disabilities
- Provided individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if required
- Accommodated the needs of its employees with disabilities as required by the Ontario accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Maintained a documented return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodations and support in order to return to work
- Considered the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as their individual accommodation plans when conducting performance reviews, providing career development and advancement to employees, and when redeploying employees

Training

CCS is committed to ensuring that its employees are aware of their responsibilities to foster an accessible and inclusive environment with and for people with disabilities. We have taken the following steps:

- All employees have taken the required AODA training
- All new hires are trained on AODA and accessible customer service
- Provided refresher training when changes are made to the policies or practices

PLANNED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

During the course of this plan, CCS has set the following priorities:

Customer Service

CCS is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. We will continue to provide services to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others by.

- Evaluating existing programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of people with disabilities
- Making available different channels for employees to provide feedback including telephone, email, written, or in person
- Making available different channels for clients to provide feedback including telephone, email, written, or in person
- Continuing to use the feedback mechanisms as a means for improving services to people with disabilities
- Continuing to focus on accessibility in the development of any new programs or services

Information and Communications

CCS is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. We will continue to ensure digital accessibility and the availability of accessible formats and communication supports by:

- Making our Statement of Commitment and Multi-Year Plan publicly accessible and in an accessible format upon request
- Conducting regular reviews of compliance and best practices in order to identify ways to improve accessibility
- Continuing to evaluate and remediate website content and ensure it meets or exceed accessibility compliance requirements
- Ensuring any future digital services or computer programs are designed for accessibility so that all users have equal access to information and functionality
- Continuing to use the feedback process as a means for people with disabilities to request accessible formats or communication supports

Employment

CCS is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We will continue to ensure and to support the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities by:

- Identifying and working to remove any existing barriers for people with disabilities
- Reviewing employees' accommodation plans to understand their needs and whether any adjustments are needed in order to help them succeed
- Making documents, such as performance appraisals, available in accessible formats upon request
- Considering what accommodations employees with disabilities may need in order to learn new skills or take on more responsibility
- Fostering a culture of employee engagement and inclusion through an Employee Engagement Survey

Training

CCS is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as it pertains to people with disabilities. We will continue to support ongoing awareness by:

- Training new hires on AODA and accessible customer service
- Providing refresher training when changes are made to the policies or practices
- Maintaining training records

CONCLUSION

CCS is committed to meeting accessibility requirements and continuously taking steps to improve its services to comply with the AODA and its regulations. As we continue to identify, prevent, and remove accessibility barriers we will monitor the progress of the items contained within this multi-year plan.

CCS will provide information in an accessible format, or with communication supports, to people with disabilities in a manner that takes into account their disability. Standard and accessible formats of this document, and our accessibility policies, are available upon request.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

We welcome your inquiries and feedback about accessibility. If you have questions, or would like further information please contact our People & Culture department:

In Person: 55 Town Centre Court, Suite 401, Toronto ON M1P 4X4
By Telephone: 416-644-0816
By Email: hr@ccscan.ca