



WESTERN MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (2021-2025)

Background

Western is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (the "Act") and its associated regulations.

Western Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how we will ensure we meet these requirements and improve opportunities for persons with disabilities in the following areas:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Built Environment and Design of Public Spaces

This Multi-Year Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years.

Section One: Ongoing Initiatives to Remove and Prevent Barriers

Western has made progress to identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers in the areas of Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, and establishing a Feedback Process.

Customer Service

Western is committed to maintaining an accessible environment for persons with disabilities in the delivery of its goods and services and will continue to:

- Communicate in ways that take into account the needs of the persons with disabilities
- Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports and, upon request, Western will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities
- Ensure persons with disabilities who use assistive devices are able to obtain, use or benefit from our services

- Allow a person with disabilities who is accompanied by a service animal or support person to enter the premises with the animal or support person.
- Provide notification in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities.
- Provide information about emergency procedures, plans or public safety in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports upon request.

Information and Communications

Western is committed to providing accessible information and will continue to:

- Upon request and in consultation with the person making the request, arrange for the provision of documents in an accessible format or with communication support to persons with a disability in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.
- Ensure that our public websites and web content conforms with the required standards.

Employment

Western is committed to supporting the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities and will:

- Notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.
- Notify job applicants that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used during the recruitment process.
- Notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.
- Inform its employees of its policies that support employees with disabilities.
- Provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and Western is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.
- Accommodate the needs of its employees with disabilities as required by the Ontario accessibility laws and Ontario Human Rights Code by developing providing accommodations for its employees with disabilities as Western is made aware.
- Maintain 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.
- Consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as their individual accommodation plans when conducting performance management reviews, providing career development and advancement to employees, and when redeploying employees.

Feedback Process

Western is committed to meeting accessibility requirements and continuously taking steps to improve its services and website to comply with the Act and its regulations. Western will continue to welcome feedback regarding the manner in which it provides goods, services, or facilities to persons with disabilities. Feedback can be provided by contacting the HR Business Partner Manager:

- by telephone at 1-866-843-9378
- in writing to:

HR Business Partner Manager
Western Financial Group
1010 - 24 Street SE High River, AB T1V 2A7
or

- by email to accessibility@westernfg.ca

Training for Staff

Western is committed to training its employees and other individuals who provide services to the public on our behalf on accessible customer service and communications. Training will continue to occur within 6 months of employees' commencement of their duties and records will be maintained.

Western provides additional training when material changes are made to its Accessibility Policy and related practices.

Section Two: Planned Strategies and Actions

Customer Service

Western will continue to strive to provide services that are accessible to and inclusive of employees, licensees, and members of the public with disabilities by:

- Evaluating existing programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of persons with disabilities.
- Continuing to consider accessibility issues in the provision of services.

Employment

Western will continue to support the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities by:

- Identifying and working to remove any existing barriers for persons with disabilities
- Fostering a culture which supports persons with disabilities through its diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy
- Monitoring and increasing employee engagement and inclusion through its Employee Engagement Survey and associated programs.

Information and Communications

Western will continue to provide digital accessibility for services and information provided to customers and members of the public, and the availability of accessible formats and communication

supports by:

- Ensuring all its public websites and web content conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA, except where this is not practical or there is an exception by law
- Conducting 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 exceeds accessibility compliance requirements

Feedback Process

Western will continue to accept feedback on its accessibility practices by developing a revised process for receiving and responding to feedback using an online form to filter inquiries and issues.

Feedback will continue to be accepted in-person, by phone, and in writing.

Design of Public Spaces

Western recognizes the importance of accessibility in its public spaces. Western will:

- Continue to implement required accessibility improvements when renovating or modifying existing interior and/or exterior public spaces
- Ensure accessibility considerations are incorporated when using temporary event spaces

Conclusion

Western is committed to the prevention, identification, and removal of accessibility barriers.

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact the HR Business Partner Manager at 1-866-843-9378 or accessibility@westernfg.ca.