



United Services Group

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

2012 - 2023

Update : AODA Committee
January 2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

United Services Group is fully committed to the new Accessibility legislation. We have already begun looking at our practices and policies and how we can make our organization more accessible. And we will continue to do so to meet all the requirements of AODA.

As we move towards compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), we will be reviewing and improving our policies and procedures to embed the processes that lead to a more accessible physical and work environment.

As United carries forward into the future and its traditions become further established as an employer of hundreds of employees and subcontractors, we are committed to continuing to find ways to better meet the needs of all people with disabilities who come into contact with our company, whether they are employees, subcontractors, customers or vendors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Kroupa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MICHAEL KROUPA
Chief Executive Officer

Accessibility at United Services Group

In 2005, the province introduced the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), which seeks to ensure a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. This law moves from the concept of accommodation, where we make alterations on a per-person basis depending on that person's disability, to one of accessibility where process, procedures, and policies are designed to improve access to United's people, goods and services.

In 2010, the first phase of the AODA was implemented with the Customer Service Standard. As of July 1, 2011, work began on the implementation of phase two of the AODA, which includes accessibility standards for employment, information and communication, and transportation. Accessibility at United is seen as everyone's responsibility.

When we recognize barriers to access, we can be more proactive in removing those barriers, and ensure a workplace environment where all have the opportunity to succeed.

Multi-year Accessibility Plan

As part of the mandate to improve accessibility at United, we have developed a multi-year plan that is available on United's Website and in alternative formats as necessary. The primary goal is to develop a multi-year plan that lays out a roadmap to meet the obligations of the Integrated AODA standards.

It incorporates existing and new initiatives into one overarching accessibility strategy. It includes the legislative requirement, the United deliverable to meet that requirement, and a status update. This multi-year plan will be updated on a yearly basis.

United's Accessibility Committee:

- Stephanie Daviau – HR Director
- Lila Deonaraine - Regional Human Resources - Ontario/West
- Marcela Restrepo – Legal Manager
- Richard Cowper – IT Manager
- Larry Kroupa – Building Maintenance Manager

United has established an accessibility committee whose mandate is to put plans into action; United's Accessibility Committee is comprised of key decision makers and other representatives. The Committee will meet at least four times per year to review and recommend changes to United's policies and procedures. This will include reviewing the Accessibility Policy that will provide the foundation for United's compliance with the AODA.

AODA Customer Service Standard

United will strive to meet its obligation under the AODA Customer Service Standard with a training module for all new employee and contractors. The result is a growing awareness that we all play a role in ensuring an accessible learning and working environment.

Information and Communications

As United moves towards meeting its obligations under the Information and Communications standard, new processes will be established to help ensure accessibility of both print and online content.

For example:

- Word documents will be made available for web content to ensure easier conversion to alternative formats;
- Accessibility will be included in the development of the new company web site on and any new web content;
- Alternate forms of training and communication made available

Training

United Services Group will provide training for its employees and subcontractors regarding the Integrated Accessibility Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code as they pertain to individuals with disabilities. Training will also be provided to individuals who are responsible for developing United's policies, and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Company.

Training will be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than the Compliance Deadline. Training will be provided on an ongoing basis to new employees and as changes to United's accessibility policies occur.

Feedback Process

United Services Group will ensure that all feedback processes (both internal and external) are made accessible to customers, employees, subcontractors and other visitors upon request.

In accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, United will make the availability of accessible feedback formats publicly known.

United has available a Feedback/Suggestion Box and Feedback Form located at our Reception area. An electronic version of this feedback form is located on the company's website www.unitedservicesgroup.ca

Emergency Procedures

United has Emergency Procedures in place that consider accessibility. This plan is available in a variety of accessible formats including online and in print. All employees who require accessibility will be provided with a copy of this procedure and it will also be posted on the Information board.

Employment

Employment is addressed in the AODA legislation with the Employment Regulations of the Integrated Standard. United's Workplace Accessibility Policy will be available by January 1, 2016 and will outline the company's obligations to its employees with disabilities from recruitment to retirement.

This policy will set the foundation for a series of procedures to assist employees such as individual workplace accommodation plans, individualized workplace emergency response information, as well as performance management and career development plans that take individual accessibility needs into account.

Services for Employees, Subcontractors, Vendors and Tenants

United will ensure employees, subcontractor and vendors with documented disabilities, and who are requesting support, are provided accommodations to assist in the removal of barriers. These accommodations can include alternative formats, captioned videos, specialized software and equipment, counseling and advising and more.

New Construction

United will ensure any new construction has the appropriate accessibility features. New construction will consider accessible washrooms, offices configured for wheelchair; as well as automatic door entry. Work will continue within the building to identify and address barriers to accessibility. United is preparing for the AODA Built Environment Standard and will be including those requirements into its processes.

Looking Ahead

The requirements under phase two of the AODA are extensive and will affect most aspects of our operations at United. The goal is to have accessibility as an integral part of our strategic planning and operational processes. This will include accessibility as a consideration in procurement, a revised feedback process, training, policies and procedures.

AODA COMPLIANCE

January 1, 2012

Legislative Requirement	Deliverable	Progress to date
Individualized workplace emergency response information	Policy, processes and plans developed for employees with disabilities	Policy and processes developed and posted as required
Emergency procedures available to public in accessible formats	Update emergency procedures and ensure information available in accessible formats upon request.	General emergency procedures updated. Materials available in accessible formats upon request.

January 1, 2013

Legislative Requirement	Deliverable	Progress to date
Develop policies outlining how United will implement legislation	Rewrite United's accessibility policy	Completed and posted on company website
Statement of organizational commitment	Develop statement that will guide United's accessibility mandate.	Completed and posted on company website
Multi-year accessibility plan and annual status report	Develop and post online a multi-year plan for achieving accessibility. Include a yearly update.	Completed and posted on company website
Provide resources in accessible formats as required	Continue usual practice of providing accessible formats.	Include information about accessible formats in AODA training

January 1, 2014

Legislative Requirement	Deliverable	Progress to Date
Training on accessibility standards for all employees, and subcontractors, etc. Record all training	Expand Customer Service module to include all AODA standards. Records kept at Head office	Completed. Will be completed for new employees by May, 2016
Feedback processes	Develop feedback processes for persons raising concerns regarding accessibility	Completed and posted on company website. Suggestion/Feedback box and form also located at Reception.
Internet sites to conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A	All external websites are to conform to WCAG 2.0 Level upon redesign. Communication required to inform those outside of United.	United corporate site is complete.
United shall inform public about information available in accessible formats upon request	Include as part of feedback process. Develop guidelines as part of online training re: accessible documents Inform staff through training.	AODA committee to develop accessible guidelines material.

January 1, 2015

Legislative Requirement	Deliverable	Progress to Date
Provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request	Development of Accessible Communication policy	Completed on company website.
Publicize availability of formats and support	Formalized processes to be developed	On main AODA page on website, and included in policies

January 1, 2016

Communicate availability of accommodation in recruitment and hiring processes	Develop workplace accommodation policy and procedures	Complete
Accessibility becomes part of performance management, career development and redeployment	Include as part of Workplace Accommodation policy and procedures	Complete

January 1, 2017

Make Exterior Paths of Travel Accessible		Complete
Make Parking Accessible - Off-Street Parking		Complete
Make Service Counters, Queuing Guides and Waiting Areas Accessible	Get a quote for automatic main door and washroom doors	HR to talk to Larry and IT-Marcela to look into this
Maintain the Accessible Parts of your Public Spaces		Not applicable

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARD

Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment

1. This standard applies to public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped on and after the timelines outlined above. Unplanned changes to existing public spaces to meet the standard are not required (includes emergency repairs or forced changes that were not anticipated or planned for in advance).

December 31, 2017

Submit accessibility compliance report by Dec 31, 2017	HR to complete and submit	Complete
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January 1, 2019

Update Accessibility Plans	AODA Committee	Done May, 2018
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December 31, 2020

File Accessibility compliance report	HR to complete and submit	
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January 1, 2021

All websites and web content accessible	Richard	
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December 31, 2023

File Accessibility compliance report	HR to complete and submit	
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In conclusion, United is committed to creating a community that is inclusive of all individuals and ensures equal opportunity among its members to achieve success. The company recognizes that successful service and employment outcomes are the result of a shared responsibility and commitment on the part of management, employees and contractors, and expects that all members of the community will advance and contribute to the ongoing development of an environment that is accessible and inclusive, while actively working to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.