

Ontario Real Estate Association

2023-2028 MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Date Approved: December 12-13, 2023, Board of Directors	Policy ID:
Review Date:	Status: New
Remarks:	

Message from the CEO:

At the Ontario Real Estate Association (“OREA”), we believe in fostering equal access and opportunities for all. Whether you’re an OREA Member, a part of our dedicated staff, a key stakeholder, or a member of the community – your unique needs and perspectives matter to us. For those with limitations and disabilities, we strive to create an environment that promotes dignity, respect, and independence.

We remain unwavering in our commitment to equality, equity, diversity, and accessibility, and we’re working diligently to meet the needs of those with disabilities by actively eliminating barriers and ensuring we’re aligned with Ontario’s accessibility standards.

To read more about the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work we've done, and to review the 19 recommendations the OREA Board of Directors has committed to implementing by the end of 2025, please read our Fighting For Fair Housing report accessible here: <https://www.orea.com/~media/Files/Downloads/2022-09-27%20Fighting%20for%20Fair%20Housing%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>.

Statement of Organization Commitment:

OREA is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration 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 meeting our accessibility requirements under the AODA and other applicable accessibility laws.

Introduction:

OREA strives to meet the needs of its employees, members, customers/clients, volunteers, interns, students, and other stakeholders with disabilities, and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

OREA is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Ontario *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, S.O. 2005, c. 11 (“AODA”), as amended or any successor legislation, and its regulations, specifically, the *Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11* (“IASR”). This multi-year accessibility plan (the “Plan”) outlines the steps we are taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Our Plan demonstrates our commitment to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. Our Plan focuses on integration and equal opportunity by identifying, preventing and removing barriers to accessibility.

OREA reviews and updates this Policy at least once every five (5) years. This process entails consultation with OREA’s employees and members, members of the public, government officials, and other stakeholders including the Board of Directors.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the within Policy, which includes training on Ontario’s accessibility laws, including the requirements under the IASR, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19 (the “Code”), as it relates to people with disabilities.

We also maintain records of the training provided, including but not limited to the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

Past and Current Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers:

OREA has completed the following accessibility initiatives:

1. Member Service

In alignment with the relevant regulations made pursuant to the AODA, OREA is dedicated to ensuring that all individuals have access to and can effectively utilize its services, products, and facilities. To fulfill its obligations and commitments, OREA has established the following measures:

- OREA has an “Accessibility and Accommodations Policy” in place, as required by the regulations, to provide services to people with disabilities.

- All OREA-hosted public events are conducted at venues that are accessible, or on virtual platforms that are accessible. OREA takes steps to ensure that each physical and virtual event space is fully accessible before confirming any event.
- Standard language in all event invitations encourages people to contact OREA in advance if they require additional accommodations related to the Code.
- OREA has established a feedback process to gather feedback on its services and better understand customer expectations.
- OREA routinely inquires if individuals require disability-related accommodations and examines potential barriers for visitors with disabilities when accessing OREA's offices or virtual activities/communications.
- OREA regularly reviews and updates its policies and standards to ensure high quality, accessible customer services.
- OREA will continue to give notice of any service disruptions that may impact those with disabilities in accordance its Accommodation Policy.
- OREA studied potential challenges faced by individuals using mobility devices within OREA's office premises and along internal paths of travel.
- OREA is committed to continually enhancing its accessibility measures to better serve individuals with disabilities in accordance with the applicable standards and regulations.

2. Information and Communications

- The OREA website (<http://orea.com>), and content therein conforms to WCAG 2.0, Level AA.
- Existing feedback processes and supports are accessible to people with disabilities upon request.
- OREA's Accessibility and Accommodation Policy is publicly available on the OREA website.
- All publicly available information is made accessible upon request.

3. Employment Standards

- OREA is committed to systematically integrating an equity analysis into all aspects of our recruitment processes to proactively identify and eliminate any unintentional accessibility barriers. Job candidates, including those who are chosen for an interview and/or testing will receive notification about the availability of accommodations if needed. OREA has set up procedures to engage in a consultative process with any candidate requesting an accommodation, considering their individual capabilities.
- Job postings, including those posted on OREA's website or online, encourage applicants who are living with disabilities to apply for jobs at OREA, and notify

both prospective employees and the public about the availability of reasonable accommodation(s) for those seeking to participate in OREA's recruitment processes.

- Upon extending offers of employment, we inform successful candidates about our Accessibility and Accommodations Policy for accommodating employees with disabilities.
- To uphold our unwavering commitment to equity and accessibility, we periodically review our people services procedures. This review is designed to pinpoint, prevent, and eliminate any obstacles that could impede employment and professional growth opportunities. Importantly, this diligent examination also ensures that our practices consistently align with the requisites of relevant legislation.
- As part of our dedication to fostering an inclusive workplace, we place significant emphasis on employee engagement. To gauge and enhance this engagement, we regularly analyze the feedback received through our Employee Surveys.
- OREA places a high priority on accessibility in the design and procurement of spaces owned or leased by our organization. In this context, we actively seek input from our employees, including their invaluable suggestions during building renovations. Our objective is to incorporate accessibility features that cater to the needs of all employees, thereby promoting a workplace environment that is truly inclusive and accommodating.
- OREA has and will continue to take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are taken into account if OREA is using performance management, career development and/or redeployment processes.
- As part of its performance management, OREA has and will continue to assess current performance review, career development and/or redeployment processes to ensure accessibility features are incorporated and accessibility needs are considered.
- OREA has and will continue to consult with any individualized accommodation plans when performing assessments of performance, managing career development or redeploying employees.
- Ensure promotion criteria, practices and processes take into account individualized accommodation plans.
- Ensure equal opportunities for employees with disabilities to undertake professional development, such as attending courses or seminars.
- OREA assesses individual requests for accommodation on a case-by-case basis, and implements reasonable accommodations up to the point of undue

hardship. OREA reserves the right to adopt a flexible accommodation process with respect to any individual accommodation-seeker's request. As no two accommodation-related requests are the same, an individualized, holistic approach is adopted in each case to ensure that the organization is appropriately considering the requests and documenting the accommodation process. OREA's individual accommodation policies are available for review upon request.

4. Training:

- OREA has successfully provided the required AODA and IASR training to all its employees, ensuring that everyone is well-informed about their responsibilities regarding accessibility.
- AODA and IASR training has been seamlessly integrated into OREA's onboarding and orientation processes for new employees. This commitment to accessibility starts right from the beginning of their employment journey.
- OREA provides AODA and IASR training to Board Members as well.
- OREA has ensured that its employees, including managers and senior managers, are equipped with the necessary skills to interact with customers of varying abilities. This training promotes inclusive and accessible customer service throughout the organization to ensure those with disabilities have the same opportunity to access OREA's services and allowing them to benefit from the same services.
- OREA regularly generates organization-wide compliance reports to assess training compliance across the board. This proactive approach helps identify any areas that may require additional attention and further training, allowing OREA to continuously improve its commitment to accessibility and inclusivity.

These actions collectively demonstrate OREA's unwavering commitment to ensuring AODA and IASR compliance. By integrating accessibility training into various facets of the organization and implementing robust compliance monitoring mechanisms, OREA is better positioned to meet its obligations under AODA and IASR and to foster a more inclusive and accessible environment for all its stakeholders.

5. Design of Public Spaces

OREA is committed to ensuring that accessibility principles, standards, and features are seamlessly integrated into the procurement or renovation processes of spaces under our organization's ownership or lease.

- When developing and renovating public spaces such as service counters and waiting areas, we meticulously follow the guidelines as stipulated in the IASR - The Design of Public Spaces Standards and adhere to Ontario's Building Code,

being Ontario Regulation 332/12, made pursuant to the *Building Code Act, 1992*, S.O. 1992, c. 23 (“Ontario Building Code”).

- In our last head office, we first had an outside lift and then replaced it with a ramp as the lift kept getting stuck in cold weather. We also had an accessible elevator at the main entrance as our floor was not level with any of our working floors. We had accessible washrooms on all 4 levels.
- At our current head office building, we have installed ramped curves at both entrances to allow for accessible access and since we are a one floor building at street level, we do not require any elevators or accessible lifts. Both main entrance doors are wheelchair accessible by width.
- We adhere to the accessibility requirements outlined in the Ontario Building Code, the ISAR, the Guide to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and all other pertinent regulations established by the Ontario government concerning accessibility.

Strategies and Actions

1. Member Services

OREA is committed to providing accessible service to Members with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

As set out in our Accessibility and Accommodations Policy, we are committed to training all OREA staff and volunteers in accessible Member service, Ontario’s accessibility standards and aspects of the Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

OREA will continue to assess its programs and services to guarantee the inclusion and equitable engagement of both employees and visitors with disabilities at OREA’s office and events, whether it be in-person or virtual.

2. Information and Communications

OREA is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

In this regard, OREA is committed to providing all Members, employees, agents and contractors with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.

OREA will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary. OREA will work with these individuals to

develop an individualized workplace emergency response plan, and will establish regular intervals for review and updating of each emergency response plan on a case-by-case basis.

3. Employment

OREA is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Further to our Accessibility and Accommodation Policy, we will continue to notify the public and staff that, when requested, OREA will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired.

OREA has a process in for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability and we will continue to improve the program for effectiveness.

OREA will prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified, in recognition of its obligations under the Code and applicable legislation.

4. Procurement

OREA is committed to fair and accessible procurement practices and incorporating accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities.

Therefore, OREA aims to provide employees with training to encourage them to consider and, as needed, integrate accessibility standards when acquiring goods, services, or facilities. Also, OREA recognizes and rewards employees who contribute to improving accessibility in procurement. OREA will identify accessibility requirements in project terms of reference, requests for proposals and contracts with third-party service providers. Where necessary, staff with disabilities will be consulted about any accessibility considerations at the outset of the procurement, so that they are included in the contract.

In consultation with people with disabilities, OREA will review and make any necessary changes to improve the accessibility of its procurement practices.

5. Training

OREA is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Code as it applies to people with disabilities.

OREA will continue to utilize the accessible eLearning template for AODA online learning modules. Furthermore, OREA will implement a recurring refresher training

schedule, either every two years or in response to any pertinent changes, to guarantee that individuals' knowledge stays current and in accordance with the most recent requirements.

OREA ensures that employees, volunteers, and staff members receive comprehensive training on Ontario's accessibility laws and the Code. This training will be tailored to the specific responsibilities of each individual.

6. Design of Public and Virtual Spaces

In our ongoing renovation efforts, we are dedicated to inclusivity and accessibility. As part of these endeavors, we are adding a fully compliant new accessible washroom to our facilities, ensuring that individuals with disabilities can comfortably and conveniently use our services.

OREA remains dedicated to the ongoing enhancement of physical and virtual accessibility within our offices and event spaces. We will consistently explore opportunities for improvements to our facilities, both physical and virtual, ensuring that they are increasingly accessible for all.

OREA also continues to regularly review its virtual space applications to ensure that such applications can be accessed by individuals with disabilities and to communicate issues promptly and effectively, to maintain the safety and inclusivity of such applications.

For More Information

This Plan is publicly posted at: <http://orea.com>

Standard and accessible formats of this document are available free upon request.

For further information on this Accessibility Plan, please contact:

Alison J. Berne
General Counsel and Chief Privacy Officer
Ontario Real Estate Association
15 Kern Road
Toronto, Ontario
M3B 1S9
E-mail: aberne@orea.com
Telephone: (416) 445-9910 x 621