

**Accessibility Plan**

General

DependableIT Group Inc. is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for all stakeholders, including clients, employees, job applicants, suppliers, and any visitors who enter the premises, access information provided by the company, or use the company’s goods and services.

This accessibility plan contains details of the company’s policies, practices, and services in relation to the identification and removal of barriers. This plan is also used to establish prevention measures against new barriers emerging to ensure a barrier-free environment at the company.

This accessibility plan is offered in any of the following formats upon request:

* Print;
* Large print;
* Braille;
* Audio; and
* Electronic.

The company welcomes any feedback from the general public. Any feedback or questions regarding this plan or requests for copies of the accessibility plan in an alternative format can be addressed to the following designated company representative:

Human Resources Department

Telephone: 1-365-602-2641

From Monday to Friday, 8:30a.m. to noon and from 1:00p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Mailing address: 100 King Street West, Suite 650, Hamilton, ON, L8P 1A2

Email address: ditpayroll@dependableit.com

Feedback can be provided anonymously if desired. Feedback can be received in the following formats:

* Telephone;
* E-mail;
* Mail;

Employment

DependableIT Group Inc. understands that improving workplace accessibility and ensuring an accessible recruitment and selection process for applicants with disabilities can contribute to a more diverse and welcoming workplace culture.

The company has implemented the following policies, programs, practices, and services to identify, remove, and prevent new and existing barriers in relation to employment:

* Where necessary, accommodations are being made during the recruitment and selection stages, and throughout the employment lifecycle.
* All training and development programs provided will consider an employee’s barriers and abilities, and are provided in alternative formats, such as large print.

The company remains committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing new barriers in employment. After a thorough review of the policies, programs, practices, and services, and through feedback and consultations, the following barriers were identified that continue to exist in employment at the company:

* Our current number of job applicants and employees hired with disabilities is lower than labor market availability.
* Applicants are not aware of our accommodation for person with disabilities during interview/selection process.

The company will take the following actions in the short term to address these identified barriers.

* Educate hiring managers on accessibility and how they can ensure a barrier-free hiring, selection and accommodation process.

The company will take the following actions in the long term to address these identified barriers

* All job postings for employment opportunities at DependableIT Group Inc. shall include a statement notifying employees and external applicants that the company provides accommodations for external applicants with disabilities during all stages of the recruitment process.

The Built Environment

DependableIT Group Inc. will work to ensure that elements of the built environment, including building interiors and exteriors, are designed to facilitate barrier-free access to goods or services. The company has implemented the following policies, programs, practices, and services to identify, remove, and prevent new and existing barriers in relation to the built environment:

* Entrance ramp located at the front of the building;
* Regularly maintained elevators;

The company remains committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing new barriers in the built environment. After a thorough review of the policies, programs, practices, and services, and through feedback and consultations, the following barriers were identified that continue to exist in the built environment at the company:

* The unit lacks automatic door openers.

The company will take the following actions in the short term to address these identified barriers, with ongoing efforts to be executed after the publication of this plan:

* Given that DependableIT is a tenant in its office building, it does not have full control of its building environment. To help reduce the possibility of negative experiences for its employees, DependableIT will continually review the built environment to ensure that It meets all accessibility best practices.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

DependableIT Group Inc. understands that communication to and with the company is vital to an individual’s access to the company’s goods or services. The company has implemented the following information and communication technologies to allow individuals to communicate with the company:

* Accessible formats including: print, large print, Braille, audio, and electronic;

To help ensure compliance with these services, the company has implemented the following policies, programs, practices, and services to identify, remove, and prevent new and existing barriers in relation to information and communication technology:

* Upon request, the company provides or arranges for accessible formats and communication supports for employees, applicants, or persons accessing the company’s goods or services. Such accessible formats and communication supports are conversion-ready and are provided in a timely manner and at no additional cost.
* The company consults with the individual to determine the specific barrier and the best way to provide support.

The company remains committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing new barriers in relation to information and communication technologies. After a thorough review of the policies, programs, practices, and services, and through feedback and consultations, the following barriers were identified that continue to exist in relation to information and communication technologies at the company:

* Employees are not aware of existing policies on job accommodations with respect to disabilities.
* Some social media posts are missing accessibility features

The company will take the following actions in the short term to address these identified barriers, with ongoing efforts to be executed after the publication of this plan:

* Informing current employees and new hires of DependableIT’ s policy supporting employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that consider an employee’s needs due to disability.
* Create official DependableIT social media posts with accessibility in mind.

Communication Other Than ICT

DependableIT Group Inc. understands that communication to and with the company can take many forms and requires a variety of options to be inclusive of all individuals. The company has implemented the following information and communication technologies to allow individuals to communicate with the company:

* American Sign Language;
* Quebec Sign Language; and
* Indigenous sign languages.

To help ensure compliance with these services, the company has implemented the following policies, programs, practices, and services to identify, remove, and prevent new and existing barriers in relation to communication other than ICT:

* Upon request, the company provides or arranges for accessible formats and communication supports for employees, applicants, or persons accessing the company’s goods or services. Such accessible formats and communication supports are conversion-ready and are provided in a timely manner and at no additional cost.
* The company consults with the individual to determine the specific barrier and the best way to provide support.

The company remains committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing new barriers in relation to communication other than ICT. After a thorough review of the policies, programs, practices, and services, and through feedback and consultations, the following barriers were identified that continue to exist in relation to communication other than ICT at the company:

* Most employees have not been trained on how to create accessible documents

The company will take the following actions in the short term to address these identified barriers.

* Provide training to employees to aware with the accessibility when creating documents.

The company will take the following actions in the long term to address these identified barriers

* Incorporate consideration for accessibility needs in the development of marketing and advertising materials.

The Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

DependableIT Group Inc. is committed to ensuring that all individuals can obtain the company’s goods, services and facilities. The company has implemented the following methods to allow individuals to obtain our goods and services:

* Online
* Telephone

The company remains committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing new barriers in relation to the procurement of goods. After a thorough review of the policies, programs, practices, and services, and through feedback and consultations, the following barriers were identified that continue to exist in relation to the procurement of goods at the company:

* Existing procurement practices may not consistently meet accessibility requirements.

The company will take the following actions in the short term and continue efforts to address this identified barrier.

* Continue to evaluate current procurement policies, processes and tools to improve accessibility.

The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

DependableIT Group Inc. is committed to ensuring that all its programs and services are designed in a manner accessible to all individuals. The company will take reasonable steps to ensure this accessibility:

* Company website meets Level AA conformance set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, except where meeting the requirement is not practicable.

To help ensure compliance with these methods, the company has implemented the following policies, programs, practices, and services to identify, remove, and prevent new and existing barriers in relation to the design and delivery of its programs and services:

* Upon request, the company provides or arranges for accessible formats and communication supports for employees, applicants, or persons accessing the company’s goods or services. Such accessible formats and communication supports are conversion-ready and are provided in a timely manner and at no additional cost.
* The company consults with the individual to determine the specific barrier and the best way to provide support.

The company remains committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing new barriers in relation to the design and delivery of the company’s programs and services. After a thorough review of the policies, programs, practices, and services, and through feedback and consultations, the following barriers were identified that continue to exist in relation to the company’s design and delivery of the company’s programs and services:

* Employee have gaps in knowledge of how to serve individuals with disabilities or accessibility needs

The company will take the following actions in the short term to address these identified barriers, to be achieved in 12 months after this plan is published:

* Provide training to employees on how to better serve individuals with accessibility needs.

Transportation

We have not identified barriers related to transportation, this area is irrelevant to our operations.

Consultations

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DependableIT Group Inc. recognizes that persons with disabilities are equal participants in all areas of life. The company is guided by the recognized principles of the *Accessible Canada Act*:

* All persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities;
* All persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they can and want to have regardless of their disabilities;
* All persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities;
* All persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;
* Policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments, and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination persons face;
* Persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of policies, programs, services, and structures; and
* The development and revision of accessibility standards and the making of regulations must be done with the objective of achieving the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Accordingly, the company is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities are involved in all decision-making regarding its policies, programs, practices, and service delivery. In preparation of this accessibility plan, the company consulted with 6 persons with disabilities (in the following manner:

* In 2023, we consulted persons identified themselves as disabilities through online survey.
* In 2023, we conducted an online survey to gather insights from supervisors due to the limited number of identified employees with disabilities. Their input will assist us in comprehending potential barriers or needs in our day-to-day operations.

These individuals were asked several questions regarding the company’s policies, programs, practices, and service delivery. A summary of these questions and answers received are the following:

* Do you believe that the current employment policies and practices, such as the recruitment and selection process, are inclusive and accessible for individuals in need? If not, what improvements would you suggest?

*The consensus in response to this question is positive, with an overall affirmation.*

* In your experience, how accessible is the built environment (for example: office entrance/exits) for individuals in need? Have you encountered any specific barriers?

*33% of respondents found that there are barriers in the built environment.*

* When it comes to information and communication technologies (for example: availability of accessible formats), do you feel that they are sufficiently accessible for individuals in need? Please provide any example of challenges you have faced.

*The consensus in response to this question is positive, with an overall affirmation.*

* Have you encountered any communication barriers (other than information and communication technologies) while working at home or in a hybrid working mode? If so, could you share some details?

*17% of respondents found that there are barriers in the communication.*

* How would you rate the procurement of goods, services, and facilities in terms of accessibility for persons in need? Are there any areas that need improvement?

*The consensus in response to this question is positive, with an overall affirmation.*

* Do you feel that the design and delivery of programs and services adequately consider the needs of persons in need? If not, what changes would you recommend?

*The consensus in response to this question is positive, with an overall affirmation.*

Through this consultation process, the company has identified areas for improvement in both the built environment and communication aspects concerning accessibility. The company intends to address these issues on a short- and long-term basis, as identified in each respective section of this accessibility plan.

Industry-Specific Requirements

DependableIT Group Inc. is regulated under the Telecommunication Act. In addition to the information outlined in the sections above, the company is committed to ensuring accessibility through the following:

* Conditions under section 24 or 24.1 of the Telecommunications Act
* Provisions of any Regulations made under the Telecommunications Act

The company remains committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing new barriers in relation to these specific areas. After a thorough review of the policies, programs, practices, and services, and through feedback and consultations, the following barriers were identified that continue to exist in relation to the company’s specific obligations under the Telecommunications Act:

* Blind or partially sighted participants noted barriers to websites, service support and equipment.
* Service representatives were not aware of the type of equipment for customers with disabilities and or how to adjust equipment in order to make it accessible.

The company will take the following actions in the short term and ongoing to address this identified barrier.

* Continue to evaluate current policies, processes and tools to improve accessibility.
* Training of sales/customer services representatives regarding rights and responsibilities under the Internet Code must cover accessibility needs.
* A regulated telecommunications entity must make available, upon request, its accessibility plans, progress reports and descriptions of feedback processes under the ACA in print, large print, braille, audio format, electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities, or any other format that the person and the entity agree upon and for which there is proof of the agreement.
* Telecommunications service providers (TSPs) must make their general call centers accessible to the point of providing a reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities by training customer service representatives in handling enquiries from persons with disabilities, and familiarizing them with the service providers' products and services for persons with disabilities.

Glossary

Barrier: Anything physical, architectural, technological, or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications, or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment, or a functional limitation.

Disability: Any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, and sensory impairment, or functional limitation that is either permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature. It can be evident or not in interaction with a barrier to hinder a person’s full and equal participation in society.

Date: December 11, 2023

Accessibility Plan completed by: Human Resources Department