



Banyan Community Services ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2020 - 2023

Updated June 2021





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Banyan Community Services Accessibility Plan

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INTRODUCTION

Banyan Community Services is committed to working towards full compliance with all standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) as they are introduced. In doing so, we affirm our commitment to providing quality services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

This Multi-year Accessibility Plan, developed with our AODA Planning Committee, provides an overview of Banyan Community Services commitment to accessibility planning and outlines the policies, achievements and actions that Banyan Community Services have put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and those actions we will undertake to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

The current plan covers a three year period (2020-2023).

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Banyan Community Services is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The goal of health equity and inclusion is underpinned by two key pieces of legislation, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) and the 2005 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). These two acts establish principles of inclusion and minimum standards organizations must comply with. The ODA is intended to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province, and mandates that all organization prepare annual accessibility plans. The long-term goal of the AODA is the creation of a barrier-free Ontario for people with disabilities by 2025 through the implementation of accessibility standards for the private and public sectors including not-for-profit organizations.

Banyan has developed policies, procedures, and practices consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. All documents are available upon request from Banyan Community Services.

Our accessibility plan is designed to ensure we meet legal requirements and increase inclusive and equitable treatment of people with disabilities.

To facilitate this commitment, Banyan Community Services will establish, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, that will be reviewed and updated every year to identify progress made in addressing barriers and it will be posted on the Banyan Community Services website.



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Section: 1

Item: Objectives of the Banyan Accessibility Plan

The objectives of this plan will be to:

- Describe the process by which Banyan identifies, removes and prevents barriers to people with disabilities;
- Describe the measures that Banyan has taken to fulfill the accessibility requirements within the Customer Service Standard and IASR;
- Describe the measures that Banyan will take within the next three (3) years to meet the minimum requirements set out within the IASR legislation;
- Describe Banyan's strategy related to the training, awareness, communication and integration of accessibility into the culture of the organization;
- Describe the ways that Banyan will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

Section: 2

Item: AODA Committee

Mandate

Banyan Community Services' Committee is comprised of senior leaders representing all programs (AYC, PYC, GRF, SNAP, Grocer Ease), HR and Information Technology. The objective of the Banyan Community Services' Accessibility Planning Committee is to ensure that the Organization complies with AODA by identifying and facilitating the removal of barriers to equal access among persons with disabilities, including clients, their families, visitors, employees and volunteers.

This committee is responsible for reviewing the annual status report which will address the outcomes of the deliverables and activities as stated in this plan and contribute to changes of this plan as required. Following the review, the updated plan will be placed on our website and made available on request.



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Section: 3

Item: **Methods used to identify Barriers at Banyan**

Barriers have been identified by the Banyan Community Services AODA Planning Committee. Feedback can be received through our AODA feedback form, via email, telephone, mail, fax or in person. Compliments/complaints are welcomed to ensure we are continuously improving our processes and services, doing so in a manner which is equitable and accessible for all.

The Program Managers will be notified of any complaints received and logged by Human Resources related to accessibility issues and will be responsible to request action be taken by the appropriate functional area within the organization. Such feedback will also form part of the content of the Accessibility Plan, within the following areas: Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation and Built Environment.



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Section: 4

Item: Actions Taken

What we accomplished - Actions taken to Date			
Category of Barrier	Barrier within BCS	Means to prevent/address Barrier	Status
Employment	Accommodation in recruitment process (Sec. 22-24)	During recruitment must notify employees and the public about availability of accommodation for applicants and successful candidates with disabilities; ensure HR integrate the standard into practice, revise relevant HR policies.	Completed
Employment	Accommodation in return to work (Sec. 29)	Have a written return to work strategy implemented which outlines the steps the employer takes to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan. Currently provide accommodation plans for employees with disabilities and Return to Work Policy updated.	Completed
Employment	Individual Emergency Plans (Sec. 27 & 28)	Language describing these forms and how they are completed will be integrated into existing policies: Health & Safety and Recruiting policy	Completed
Employment	Meet new Integrated Standard (Sec. 7 & 36)	Continue offering current Accessibility e-learning; HR keeps records of training/participants/ dates	Completed
Employment	Offer of employment (Sec. 22-24)	Notify successful applicants of Banyan's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when offering employment – to add blurb to the initial offer via email/phone	Completed
Employment	Recruitment notification re: accommodation (Sec. 23)	Automatic response provided to all candidates relating if selected for an interview and accommodations are required for any aspect of the recruitment process to contact HR. Accommodation for disabilities available upon request.	Completed
Information / Communication	AODA plan (Sec. 4)	AODA plan was created. Accessibility Plan 2015-2018 completed and posted on website.	Completed



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Information / Communication	AODA policy to be issued to staff and posted (Sec. 3)	Copy of AODA will be issued out to all staff, volunteers, board members etc. and posted at each facility.	Completed
Information / Communication	Services are provided only in English. Have few staff who are fluent in sign language (Sec. 12)	Ensure BCS employees are informed and can access interpretative language services upon request for clients or welcomes a support person to assist client.	Completed
Information/ Communication	AODA guiding statement (Sec. 3 & 12)	Statement to be added to website	Completed
Physical Environment (Built Environment)	Accessible pathways	Accessible way finding; review and create a list of accessible parking, entrances, meeting rooms and washrooms	Completed
Physical Environment (Built Environment)	GRF Lift or elevator (Sec. 80)	Porch lift installed. Accessible rooms and amenities are on the main floor, so no need for elevator.	Completed
Technology	Improve access to www.banyancommunityservices.org for a range of disabilities (Sec. 14)	Review legislative requirements and how to apply to website.	Completed
Training	AODA Training sessions (Sec. 7 & 36)– mandatory e-learning and accessible multiple modalities including Ontario Human Rights	Provided AODA and Human Rights Code training to all employees, managers and supervisors, consultants, students and volunteers. Training provided as mandatory training.	Completed and Ongoing



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Barriers Banyan will address in 2020-2023					
Category of Barrier	Identified Barrier	Means to Prevent/Address Barrier	Lead	Target Date	Status
Employment	Individual Emergency Plans (Sec. 27 & 28)	Language describing these forms and how they are completed will be integrated into existing policies: Health & Safety and Recruiting policy	HR and Managers	December 31, 2021	Ongoing
Employment	Individual Emergency Plans (Sec. 27)	To depict how a new hire or existing employee will be able to notify of the opportunity to develop an individualized emergency response plan, we will add a segment to our Operational training. Employees with disabilities may need assistance when evacuating workplace during an emergency. Develop a plan for individuals who have identified a disability to their manager and are existing employees of Banyan.	HR and Managers	December 31, 2021	Ongoing
Employment	Accommodation in employment processes (Sec. 25, 26, 30, 31, 32)	Reviewing existing Occupational health and HR policies on accommodation and return to work and integrate any new changes from this regulation. Includes; a written process regarding development and documentation of individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities; how employees are consulted; means by which employer will assess; manner in which employer can request external medical or expert advice etc; Performance review, career development and redeployment must take into account accessibility needs and individual accommodation.	HR and Managers	December 31, 2021	In progress
Information / Communication	AODA plan (Sec. 4)	Accessibility Plan updated and posted on website.	HR & IT	July 2021	In progress