



# Accessibility Plan

2023-2025

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# 1. Introduction

## Message from our CEO

“We are building a culture that makes inclusion the way we do business and is an essential part in helping our clients achieve their ambitions. Our efforts to reduce barriers to access and intentionally practice inclusion stem from wanting to do what is right for our employees and clients. We remain committed to creating access to opportunities and making ambitions more attainable for all, including those who have historically faced barriers to employment and banking.”

- Victor G. Dodig, President and CEO, CIBC

## Our commitment to accessibility

We are committed to our purpose to make the ambitions of all employees and clients a reality, including those who live with disabilities. We offer inclusive banking products and services and support accessibility requirements consistent with the principles of independence, dignity and equal opportunity. We value the lived experience of our employees and clients and will continue to understand and learn from their feedback so we may prioritize actions needed to enhance the experience for people

with disabilities. We are proud to have people, processes and activities underway to find, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities and will continue this important work.

## 2. General

### Alternate formats

Our Accessibility Plan and a description of our accessibility feedback process is available on [cibc.com](http://cibc.com) using your web browser. It is also available in English and French audio formats and sign language: American Sign Language (ASL) and Langue des signes Québécoise (LSQ). To access an audio version of this document, you may leverage the built-in technology in Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Large print, print or braille formats are available on demand:

- We will provide Print and Large Print alternative formats within 15 days of initial request
- We will provide Braille format as soon as possible, within 45 days of initial request

To request one of these formats:

- Contact the Program Manager for Accessibility by email at [mailbox.accessibility@cibc.com](mailto:mailbox.accessibility@cibc.com)
- Call CIBC at: [1 800 465-2422](tel:18004652422) or [1 800 465-7401](tel:18004657401) (TTY)
- Or, if you use sign language you may contact us using Canada video relay service (VRS) and our phone number [1 800 465-2422](tel:18004652422)

## Feedback process and contact information

We welcome your feedback on our Accessibility Plan, our feedback process and any other feedback you'd like to provide regarding the accessibility of our products and services.

## Designated person to receive feedback

The Program Manager, CIBC Accessibility Centre of Excellence, is responsible for receiving feedback from the public.

# Feedback from clients and the community

There are several ways you can submit your feedback.

If you would like to submit anonymous feedback, complete our digital feedback form. This form can always be found by clicking the Feedback tab on the right-hand side of our [cibc.com](http://cibc.com) and [simplii.com](http://simplii.com) websites. As this form is anonymous, please do not include any personal information.

If you would like to discuss any concerns or ask questions, please use one of the options below:

Email us: [mailbox.accessibility@cibc.com](mailto:mailbox.accessibility@cibc.com)

Call us: [1 800 465-CIBC \(2422\)](tel:18004652422) or TTY [1 800 465-7401](tel:18004657401)

Use IP Relay (web-enabled message device) or Video Relay calls from Canada Video Relay Service (Canada VRS)

Mail us:

CIBC Client Care

c/o Program Manager Accessibility Centre of Excellence

P.O. Box 15, Station A

Toronto ON M5W 1A2

# Feedback from employees of CIBC

We welcome feedback from employees on the CIBC Accessibility Plan or any issue related to accessibility at CIBC. While nothing prevents an employee from using the feedback channels described above, employees can also submit feedback using the email address or digital forms available on CIBC's Intranet site, under 'CIBC and Me' - Work Environment.

## Acknowledgement

We will acknowledge receipt of all accessibility feedback we receive, except feedback that is sent anonymously.

## How we will use your feedback

Accessibility feedback will be used and shared for the following purposes:

- Improving accessibility at CIBC
- Developing future accessibility plans
- Meeting our legal and regulatory obligations, including reporting on the CIBC Accessibility Plan



Information used for reporting purposes is aggregated and will not include your name or any other information that could identify you. Please see the CIBC [Privacy Policy](#) for information on how CIBC collects, uses and shares personal information.

## Our Accessibility Plan

This plan outlines CIBC's strategy to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. This plan includes our commitments for 2023-2025. We will have policies, programs, practices and services in place to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the areas of focus set out in the Act:

- Employment
- The built environment
- Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- Communication, other than information and communication technologies
- Procurement of goods, services and facilities
- Design and delivery of programs and services
- Transportation

We will report on progress annually and publish an updated version of the plan every three years.

# 3. Consultations

## Overview

CIBC is committed to understanding and learning from those who have lived experience with disability. Our Centre of Excellence for Accessibility, embedded in our enterprise Client Experience team, has always been focused on client understanding. It's these insights that drive decision-making to improve the Client Experience.

We utilize our internal surveys to gain real-time client feedback on the banking experience at CIBC. These insights that include accessibility related key words are filtered to an Accessibility dashboard for ongoing analysis, reporting and action.

In 2021, we partnered with a leading data-driven insights firm that specializes in understanding persons with disabilities. In the past year alone, this firm conducted 30+ qualitative and several quantitative studies with persons with disabilities. On an ongoing basis, we benefit from their quarterly syndicated research reports focused on understanding persons with disabilities (PWD). With a respondent pool of 600-1000 people, this partnership has enriched our understanding of persons with disabilities alongside other similar member organizations.

In addition, we completed proprietary research to learn from more than 1,300 clients with disabilities to understand service and financial needs gaps impacting our underserved clients. These insights were leveraged to inform future targeted strategies and initiatives.

In 2022, we engaged a third party to gather deep insights regarding the experience of our clients with disabilities (sensory, neuro-diverse, mobility, mental health and cognitive disabilities).<sup>1</sup> We also partnered with CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind) to conduct research with people who are blind or partially sighted to understand inclusive design opportunities for our bank cards.<sup>2</sup> Insights from research will continue to guide our strategy and roadmap.

In preparation for developing the Accessible Canada Act plan, in 2022 and 2023 we consulted employees and clients with disabilities. Going forward, we will continue to consult with persons with disabilities and are committed to ongoing learning to guide the actions we take to meet their needs.

# The following sections outline how people with disabilities were consulted in the preparation of this plan

## Consultation with employees

We conducted research in two phases (1) To understand barriers: Employees with a range of disabilities (blind, deaf, hard of hearing, mobility, neurodiversity/learning, pain-related/flexibility and mental health) were consulted by a third party researcher. (2) To receive feedback on our Accessibility Plan: Employees with a similar range of disabilities per above were consulted by a third-party researcher to provide feedback on our plan. We invited participants to identify their accommodation needs in advance. Accommodation was provided to participants as requested. Most participants reside in Ontario.

## Consultation with clients

We conducted research in two phases (1) To understand barriers: Clients with a range of disabilities (blind, deaf, hard of hearing, mobility, neurodiversity/learning, pain-related/flexibility and mental health) were consulted by a third-party researcher. (2) To get feedback on our Accessibility Plan: Clients with a similar range of disabilities per

above were consulted individually to provide specific feedback with a third-party researcher. We invited participants to identify their accommodation needs in advance. Accommodation was provided to participants as requested. Participants included representation from coast to coast, with most residing in Ontario.

Feedback from the employee and client consultations are included in this plan within each focus area under the headings of “We have identified some barriers” and “Ongoing plans.”

## 4. Areas of focus

### 4.1 Employment

#### Overview

At CIBC, inclusion is a cornerstone of our bank’s culture. We embed equitable talent management practices into our human capital strategy while removing barriers to access in a timely manner, consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, and equal opportunity. This ensures our teams reflect the clients and communities we serve and helps create conditions where everyone can achieve their full potential.

# Recruitment

CIBC is committed to providing an accessible recruitment and onboarding process for persons with disabilities.

- We advise candidates through our job postings that we are committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels like they belong, with individualized accommodations available upon request.
- We have policies and other resources in place to support our recruitment processes. We consult with job applicants so that accommodations are provided based on individual accessibility needs.
- Throughout our recruitment and onboarding processes, we notify successful job applicants about our policies, programs and other offerings for supporting employees with disabilities. This includes providing links to our People Networks as well as 'Workplace', our internal social networking platform.

We have made long-term investments in building a workforce that reflects the clients and communities we serve, and it remains a top organizational priority to close gaps where they exist.

In 2019, CIBC was the first Canadian-headquartered bank to join the Valuable 500 campaign, dedicated to unlocking the business, social and economic value of people living with disabilities. In 2022, we achieved our publicly-disclosed goal of at least 9%<sup>3</sup> of our workforce in Canada identifying as living with disability ahead of our 2024 target. For board-approved executives in Canada, this figure rises to 11%.<sup>4</sup>

To continue to transform our teams, advance representation of persons with disabilities across our bank, and ensure an inclusive pipeline of talent, we maintain a number of strategic partnerships. These include Lime Connect, the largest network of high-potential university students and professionals with disabilities, and Specialisterne Canada Inc., an international leader in harnessing neurodiverse talent.

## Employment

At CIBC, we are committed to creating an accessible workplace for everyone by promoting equitable talent practices and working collaboratively to remove barriers and make accommodations available. To demonstrate our commitment:

- We have policies, programs and other resources in place to promote accessibility and inclusion. These help ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are considered throughout performance management, career development and redeployment processes.

- We have a dedicated and centrally managed workplace accommodation program that proactively promotes accessibility, addresses barriers in the workplace, raises awareness regarding available supports within our bank, and helps develop and document individual accommodation plans (including for those returning to work following an absence due to disability).
- We ensure the health and safety of everyone in our workplace by preparing individualized emergency plans for employees that require assistance or accommodation in the event of an emergency or evacuation.

At CIBC, inclusion is a priority from the top down. Our Inclusion & Diversity Leadership Council (IDLC), chaired by our President and Chief Executive Officer, oversees the implementation of CIBC's global inclusion strategy, with the support of a dedicated Inclusion team, Inclusion & Diversity Action Committees (IDACs), and People Networks that bring together more than half of our global workforce.

Through our WorkAbility People Network, we connect nearly 3,000 employees with disabilities and their allies. The Network supports our goal to create fully accessible and inclusive work environments through the removal of attitudinal, systemic, technological, physical and other barriers. We also host listening exercises to understand barriers faced by several talent segments, including persons with disabilities, with resulting action items leveraged to enhance our human capital strategy.



CIBC continues to proactively provide enhanced supports for persons with disabilities, including ergonomic furniture and equipment, as well as standard technology that includes accessibility features such as dictation, screen magnification and read aloud, and technology peripherals such as headsets that can be self-selected based on individual needs. We also have dedicated webpages and accessible accommodation request forms to help our team navigate the accommodation process and secure accommodation solutions in a timely manner. Over the past few years we have introduced in-house support services, including American Sign Language interpretation and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) writer captioning for our Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing team members, attendant and reader assistant services, as well as a dedicated Assistive Technology team that helps to identify, implement and support specialized technology solutions.

To further our commitment to accessibility and inclusion, CIBC partnered with MaRS Discovery District and the disability community to investigate the main societal challenges and barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. The results of this investigation helped us create a series of Inclusive Design Challenges – with a focus on four key areas: Access to Work, Support at Work, Career Advancement and Future of Work – to identify and overcome the most pressing employment barriers faced by persons with disabilities and ensure identified solutions help persons with disabilities achieve and sustain meaningful employment.

# Training

We are committed to building our teams' capabilities to act and lead with intentional inclusion. We leverage multiple accessible learning formats and continue to explore ways to enhance our culture of accessibility through transformative learning. To demonstrate our commitment:

- We require our team to complete ongoing training regarding acting with integrity and respect in the workplace.
- We established an **Accessibility Learning Strategy** to ensure that everyone recognizes the importance of inclusivity and can champion accessibility in their role.
- We took steps to ensure all mandatory training is accessible, and developed inclusive learning design, inclusive imagery and accessibility standards to ensure that all future learning experiences at CIBC are inclusive and accessible.
- We curated short videos for an Accessibility Learning Hub to help our team learn how to be inclusive in the workplace and to break down barriers for persons with disabilities, including providing tips for accessible virtual meetings, inclusive presentations and inclusive interviews.

- We introduced training modules – ‘Practicing Intentional Inclusion’, ‘Inclusive Client Interactions’ and ‘Leading for Equity and Inclusion’ – to help our team understand how unconscious bias and assumptions influence decision making and create biased outcomes that impact members of underrepresented groups. These modules equip leaders with knowledge and tools to lead important conversations about equity and inclusion.
- We launched two additional people leader training modules to normalize discussions regarding mental health in the workplace and help leaders best support the mental health of their teams.

## **We have identified some barriers in employment**

During the recruitment process, accommodations may not always be proactively offered. There may also be varying levels of awareness of the supports CIBC makes available for persons with disabilities, and the workplace accommodation process could be simplified. We also understand that opportunities for career development and advancement may be dependent on the support and expertise of individual leaders, and that there are additional opportunities to promote belonging for persons with disabilities within our bank.<sup>5</sup>

## Ongoing plans

- We will continue to build a workforce that reflects the clients and communities we serve. We are committed to growing the share of employees who identify as persons with disabilities in our Canadian workforce through targeted recruitment, intentional retention strategies and by increasing self-disclosure through education and activities focused on belonging.
- All job postings will continue to set out CIBC's commitment to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels like they belong, as well as instructions for candidates to follow if they need accommodation during the recruitment process.
- We will strengthen the partnership between our workplace accommodation program and talent acquisition partners, and provide ongoing training for those involved in the recruitment process regarding best practices for supporting candidates with disabilities.
- During the recruitment and onboarding process, as well as throughout the employment relationship, CIBC will continue to raise awareness regarding our People Networks, including WorkAbility, as well as Workplace, our internal social networking platform, to help persons with disabilities seek out relevant networks, build a sense of belonging, and develop relationships across our bank.

- CIBC's WorkAbility People Network will continue to create and promote ways for employees with disabilities to stay connected and help remove attitudinal, systemic, technological, physical and other barriers in the workplace.
- On a quarterly basis, our workplace accommodation program will continue to review metrics, trends and feedback to identify opportunities for improvement.
- We will continue to ensure that all new training initiatives are designed to be inclusive and accessible.

## **2023**

- CIBC will strengthen existing processes and update onboarding materials to ensure information regarding accommodation supports are made available to all new employees.
- To complement our existing policies, programs and resources regarding accommodation in the workplace, we will create additional virtual and accessible training modules to ensure leaders understand our accommodation processes and available resources and offerings at our bank, as well as best practices for supporting employees with disabilities.

- We will explore enhancements to our internal processes, as well as our HR systems, to ensure appropriate accommodation information is shared when an employee transitions to a new role or a new leader.
- As we enable professional development, support individual career growth, and help our team build their skill sets, we will take steps to ensure our talent development initiatives are accessible and that we remove barriers to success for persons with disabilities.
- We will explore creating an enterprise-wide mentorship initiative for advice, guidance, and coaching on career development within our bank that is inclusive and accessible.
- We will continue our partnership with MaRS Discovery District with the third and fourth phases of the Inclusive Design Challenge: Career Advancement and Future of Work. These challenges seek solutions to support inclusive work environments and career advancement, as well as solutions to emerging areas of opportunity in the future of work for persons with disabilities. Innovative solutions presented as part of this challenge will be reviewed internally to determine how they can be applied to support career advancement for persons with disabilities at CIBC.

## 2024

We will launch digital training modules to help employees and leaders understand the basics of accessibility to effectively support and work with team members and clients with disabilities.

## 2025

As part of our 'Accessibility Learning Strategy', we will continue to ensure that new training initiatives as well as all remaining learning assets are accessible.

# 4.2 The built environment

## Overview

At CIBC, all new real estate projects are designed following the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards, O. Reg. 191/11* (collectively "AODA") for Design of Public Spaces Standards. It is important to meet or, where possible, exceed local accessibility standards.

## Existing retail and corporate networks

- CIBC developed an 'Inclusive Design' strategy with the participation of employees who have lived disability experience that extends above building code or AODA requirements and is reflected in the design of our new CIBC headquarters, CIBC Square, and where possible and appropriate, in our newly constructed banking centres and renovations.
- We have included barrier free ramps/lifts into the building where possible, automatic doors into vestibules, and access-for-all ATMs, including features such as wheelchair accessibility, volume controls and Braille.
- CIBC has completed a preliminary accessibility review of all Canadian premises (retail and corporate).
- CIBC's partnership with AccessNow maps accessibility features of CIBC banking centres in the AccessNow app and empowers clients with accessibility information on our banking centre locations so they can prepare for their visit.
- We have standard operational emergency and exit procedures to assist people with a disability. Our Business Continuity Plans use different methods of communication to meet employee needs.



# CIBC Square

- CIBC and the landlord at CIBC Square have adopted CIBC's Inclusive Design strategy throughout the buildings aiming to provide an accessible end-to-end visitor, client and employee experience.
- CIBC has increased the use of tactile and Braille signage for improved wayfinding, including a room booking system that will identify accessible spaces making it easier for persons with disabilities.
- We have optimized elevator travel through destination dispatch, whereby groups of passengers going to the same floor travel in one elevator, reducing wait and travel times.
- CIBC Square offers wider, clear widths at all entrances, with additional power door operators at all main paths of travel.
- We provide a service animal relief area for all employees or visitors with service animals.
- CIBC Square provides accessible parking that is above building code.

# We have identified some barriers in the built environment

There are some inconsistencies in the accessibility of the built environments across the Canadian retail and corporate portfolios.

## Ongoing plans

CIBC strives for improved accessibility across its real estate portfolio. Over the coming years, CIBC is committed to continuously improving best practices and accessibility guidelines. We ensure that feedback and lessons learned are systematically integrated into documented standards, along with future builds and renovations. As ACA standards are published for the built environment CIBC will update relevant policies, guidelines, and standards accordingly.

Annual proactive programs will continue to be undertaken to identify and remove physical barriers location by location, to accommodate clients and staff with disabilities.

### 2023

- Develop a central database of information from the accessibility audits. It will help us monitor progress in creating a more accessible network, and to prioritize facilities for accessibility upgrades. We expect the database to be completed in 2023.

- Create a high-level plan based on customer service, employee support areas and multi-level impact for the Canadian real estate portfolio based on the accessibility review completed to date. An accessibility plan will be incorporated into the strategic roadmap for real estate.

## **2024**

- Continue holistic revitalization program including the removal of all barriers to access at specific locations where possible.
- Continue to execute component-based programs to remove accessibility barriers such as emergency exit challenges, barrier free customer service counters, etc.
- Review data annually obtained through partnership with AccessNow to compare feedback to existing CIBC Inclusive Design strategy and standards.

## **2025 +**

CIBC will have established criteria to help guide and prioritize the planning and execution of barrier removal across the portfolio.

## 4.3 Information and communication technologies

### Overview

CIBC understands that accessible technology is an enabler for employees and clients with disabilities and is committed to delivering inclusive and accessible information and communication technologies for our employees and clients. In 2014, we founded an Enterprise Digital Accessibility team (EDA) with a mandate to leverage technology and inclusive design frameworks to enhance the employee and client experiences.

To achieve this mandate, we equip the bank with project consulting, accessibility audits and knowledge resources needed to deliver digitally accessible experiences while simultaneously finding and addressing standard gaps. In addition, we also have a User Experience Accessibility (UXA) team that supports identifying accessibility gaps within personal banking and frontline employee applications.

In 2018, we established CIBC's Inclusive Design Standard for Application User Interfaces. This standard is based on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and is reviewed yearly so new published versions of WCAG can be considered for adoption. This standard defines the requirements for making digital applications and communications accessible and currently points to WCAG 2.1.

We have developed and implemented an audit assessment methodology that aims to identify our employee, client, and vendor digital accessibility gaps. These assessments are conducted by professional testing experts and real users of assistive technologies to capture both technical and user experience issues.

CIBC is committed to its journey to become inclusive by design and provide an inclusive banking experience. We invest in building our team's knowledge and inclusive leadership capabilities, and practice inclusive talent management.

## **We have identified some barriers in our information and communication technologies**

While using some digital applications, employees and clients may have a poor experience or experience challenges when using assistive technologies.

## Ongoing plans

- CIBC is committed to enhancing our technology and workforce skills so that we have the tools and knowledge to deliver accessible digital applications and communications.
- Our EDA team is equipped with accessibility training experts that deliver our online digital accessibility knowledge portal, conduct live digital accessibility training and develop online learning programs.

## 2023

- Provide role specific digital accessibility training to all employees that deliver digital applications. Training will focus on what each role needs to do to meet WCAG 2.1 and our CIBC internal Inclusive Design Standard for Application User Interface. Training is tailored for design, content, development and testing on both web and mobile applications.
- Socialize our CIBC Inclusive Design Standard for Application User Interface and make the organization aware of our standard for all new digital applications.
- Provide organization-wide access to tools and training on how to create internal and external accessible digital communications (Microsoft documents, emails, presentations, Portable Document Format [PDFs], media etc.)

- Provide organization-wide access to an online support tool to reference all digital accessibility related topics.

## **2024**

Develop an Inclusive by design methodology to drive inclusive digital experiences. Build a process to incorporate user experience testing with persons with disabilities to incorporate their feedback into the designs.

## **2025+**

Begin to deploy Inclusive by design methodology.

# **4.4 Communication, other than information and communication technologies**

## **Overview**

We are striving to build an inclusive culture that makes accessibility business as usual. If employees require support in serving our clients with disabilities through non-digital communication, there are several internal resources available to guide them.

We have an Accessibility Intranet Hub and employees may contact the Accessibility Centre of Excellence (COE) in the enterprise Client Experience Team for expertise. In addition, we have accessibility training courses for employees. All frontline employees are required to take our “Supporting Clients with Disabilities” course and they are guided by our Customer Service Policy which communicates our approach with respect to promoting an accessible environment and removing barriers for persons with disabilities.

## **We have identified some barriers in our communication, other than ICT**

Some of our documents and/or policies are not written in clear, straightforward plain language and include undefined acronyms, jargon, idioms or expressions.

### **Ongoing plans**

- Bolster our Centre of Excellence intranet hub with tools and resources to guide employees.
- Maintain our Customer Service Policy.



## 2023

- Expand reach of existing “Supporting Clients with Disabilities” course, which was originally developed to meet AODA requirements.
- Update and promote “Inclusive language” internally to educate employees.
- Centralize vendor capabilities information for employee access for alternate format requests, for example, Braille.

## 2024

- Scale existing small group frontline accessibility training to reach a broader audience.
- Review Plain Language standards when published to update CIBC policies, guidelines and programs as needed.
- Develop and promote a Plain Language checklist to guide employees in their communications.

## 2025

Scope comprehensive organization-wide accessibility training options to execute against the established Accessibility Learning Strategy so all team members recognize the importance of inclusivity and can champion accessibility in their role.

# 4.5 Procurement of goods, services and facilities

## Overview

CIBC understands its responsibility to align itself with third party suppliers that respect the dignity and diversity of all people regardless of their abilities and foster a fair and inclusive workplace. CIBC currently informs suppliers of our expectations in several ways:

- Our Supplier Code of Conduct sets out the principles, standards, and behaviours we expect our suppliers to follow.
- Language within our contractual agreements protects the accessibility rights of our clients and employees by requiring compliance with applicable laws.
- Encourage supplier adherence to global accessibility standards, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), when sourcing new products and services.

We are updating our framework for selecting suppliers and solutions to better promote our established Accessibility Standards. This includes:

- Updating our contractual agreements to include language requiring the supplier to provide products and services that are accessible for our employees and clients.
- Advising potential suppliers of their contractual requirements initially and throughout the contracting process.

## **We have identified the following barrier in our procurement of goods, services and facilities**

Some existing agreements may not contain clauses specific to accessibility, which would set out clear expectations on our accessibility standards for clients and employees.

### **Ongoing plans**

- Deliver updated contractual agreements (with accessibility language) to current suppliers upon the natural renewal of their contract and when a material change to the contract is negotiated (as appropriate).
- Continually provide information sessions to new CIBC Procurement employees and current employees who wish to refresh their understanding of the updated contract language.

- Regularly review/update our Procurement Policy, Methodology and Supplier Code of Conduct to address opportunities to improve accessibility for our clients and workforce beyond our current baselines.

## **2023**

- Develop/launch information sessions to help our sourcing professionals better understand and operationalize the updated contract language.
- Incorporate an accessibility review into CIBC's third-party risk management program.

## **2024**

Review the Supplier Code of Conduct and provide updated language defining our accessibility standards (where applicable).

# **4.6 Design and delivery of programs and services**

## **Overview**

We are on a journey to build an inclusive culture that makes accessibility and inclusive design the way we do business. We have policies, programs, practices and services in place to govern our processes.

The Accessibility Action Committee (AAC) is comprised of leaders across the bank and is responsible for accelerating our progress to become a leader in accessibility. They are accomplishing this through implementation of CIBC's 5-Year Accessibility Roadmap, which has four workstreams and ten strategic initiatives. The Roadmap is underpinned by quantitative targets and reports quarterly to CIBC's Inclusion & Diversity Leadership Council, chaired by our President and CEO.

In 2021, we established a Centre of Excellence (COE) for Accessibility within our Enterprise Client Experience team. The COE is comprised of subject matter experts with lived disability experience and team members are engaged by stakeholders across the bank to provide guidance on accessibility related matters. The COE is also focused on building a culture of accessibility and improving client experience through strategic client initiatives. For example, in 2022, the COE created an Accessibility and Inclusive Design training module for Retail Banking Product Managers, and this is a required course within their Masterclass Training Series.

We've also established an Enterprise Digital Accessibility Team. For more information, please see the Information and Communication Technology focus area.

In 2022, we made it easier for our clients to access the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) by reducing processing time, and we introduced braille and large print card sleeves available upon request

for credit cards, debit cards and prepaid cards, helping to provide a more inclusive experience. In 2016, we began a partnership with MagnusCards, a free app that teaches life skills through storytelling. The CIBC Card Decks offer a step-by-step approach to help autistic and neurodiverse people gain independence in activities including assistance for banking and money management.

To ensure that accessibility remains embedded in our business as usual process and that our design and delivery of programs and services are accessible, we have several processes established at CIBC:

- Our governance process includes a Client Experience Assessment (CEA) for all new initiatives at CIBC to ensure we deliver the best client experience possible. Within the CEA, there are questions specific to accessibility. Our requirements state that components must comply with applicable regulations, and all digital components must comply with the CIBC's Inclusive Design standard for Application User Interfaces.
- Our Enterprise Delivery Framework maps a single common approach for delivering projects within CIBC and itemizes the processes, associated work products and the 'How to' guidance required to complete a project successfully, which include conforming to CIBC's internal Inclusive Design Standard for Application User Interfaces.

- To support our employees in serving our clients with disabilities, there are several internal resources available, including the Accessibility Hub at CIBC, a Client Resource Hub, and employees may contact the Accessibility COE for expertise. In addition, we have accessibility training courses for employees. All frontline employees are required to take our 'Supporting Clients with Disabilities' course.
- The COE regularly monitors accessibility comments and feedback from our client survey data. Regular reviews of our Accessibility Dashboard provide insights into areas of opportunity for us to focus on continuous improvement of products and services for persons with disabilities.
- CIBC digital and telephone banking channels incorporate the latest accessibility features, such as advanced speech recognition for identification purposes, and we also offer Video Relay Services (VRS).

## **We have identified some barriers in our design & delivery of programs and services:**

There are varying levels of awareness and understanding of the importance of designing for accessibility which is key within teams responsible for product and service development; for example, there remains some complexity for our clients in opening a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). In addition, participants in research

and consultations shared that in some instances, there is a lack of understanding from frontline employees of how best to serve a client with a disability.<sup>6</sup>

## Ongoing plans

- Continue to create a culture of accessibility by executing against our Accessibility Communication Strategy to drive awareness of the importance of Accessibility. Tactics include internal social media campaigns, celebrating days of opportunity for example; International Day of Persons with Disabilities (#IDPD), planning events for Global Accessibility Awareness Day (#GAAD) and Disability Employee Awareness Month (#DEAM).
- Identify our clients with disabilities within our client surveys to understand their feedback and continue to learn how to improve our products and services.
- Simplify the ability for employees to locate accessibility tools, training and resources.



## 2023

- Continue efforts underway to improve the client experience to open a RDSP, including the ability for clients to apply for a RDSP digitally to modernize the client experience.
- Update and simplify employee resources to make it easier for them to use so they may better serve clients with disabilities.
- Centralize all existing accessibility learning into our 'Accessibility Learning Hub' to make it easier for employees to find.

## 2024

- Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees in the design and delivery of accessible and inclusive digital documents for internal or external use.
- Build awareness among employees and develop a communications plan to inform employees of the tools and training available to help them design and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and services.
- Expand accessibility training into roles that require accessibility knowledge (product development, service design, process engineering).

**2025**

Scope comprehensive organization-wide accessibility training options to execute against the established Accessibility Learning Strategy so all team members recognize the importance of inclusivity and can champion accessibility in their role.

## 4.7 Transportation

This priority area does not apply to CIBC. For this reason, we have not developed a plan for transportation.

# 5. Conclusion

This plan is an ongoing evolution of CIBC's accessibility journey. We seek to understand and learn from our employees and clients who have historically faced barriers to employment and banking. With these insights, we are striving to increase accessibility to enhance our employee and client experience. At CIBC, we are committed to our purpose, to make the ambitions of all employees and clients a reality.

Read more about how CIBC is contributing to a more secure, equitable and sustainable future for everyone in CIBC's [Sustainability Report](#).

- <sup>1</sup> Foundational Qualitative Learning of PWD Segment, April 2022 n=15.
- <sup>2</sup> Bank Card Survey Report, June 2022 n=101 and Bank Card Qualitative Focus Groups, August 2022 n=15.
- <sup>3</sup> All data is based on self-identification voluntarily disclosed by employees and reflects the percentage of regular employees. Regular employees refers to our regular (full-time and part time) employees, who are working or on paid leaves, as at October 31st, 2022. Excludes temporary employees, retirees, employees on unpaid leaves, and contingent workers. Representation and changes therein are influenced by hiring, retention and changes in self-identification.
- <sup>4</sup> Board-approved executive roles include Vice-Presidents and above appointed to their role as of October 31st, 2022. All data is based on self-identification voluntarily disclosed by employees as of October 31st, 2022 and excludes temporary employees, contingent workers and retirees.
- <sup>5</sup> Feedback gathered through multiple sources as outlined in section 2. Consultations.
- <sup>6</sup> Feedback gathered through multiple sources as outlined in section 2. Consultations.

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