



Accessibility Plan Progress Report for Bridgewater Bank

2024





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General

Bridgewater Bank is pleased to present its first Accessibility Plan Progress Report. It outlines the progress we are making in implementing the concrete actions identified in our 2023-2026 Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Plan forms part of Bridgewater Bank's compliance with the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA). The ACA is a new law that aims to make Canada barrier-free by 2040. The law recognizes that individuals should have their needs accommodated without discrimination and, in particular, discrimination on the basis of disability.

Bridgewater Bank is owned by the Alberta Motor Association (AMA). The AMA encourages its employees to treat everyone as they would like to be treated, regardless of disability. We do not make assumptions about a customer or employee's disability based on physical appearance or behaviour. We listen and respond to customers to improve accessibility and support our employees with accommodations and training to deliver the best possible customer experience.

Our priority is to provide a barrier-free environment for employees, customers, and third parties. Over the past year, Bridgewater Bank has made significant progress in improving accessibility. We have reviewed our hiring practices and training and we have made strides in ensuring our facilities are accessible to all.

Our Accessibility Plan remains an ongoing commitment and work will focus on embedding it into every part of our organization. As we continue this work, we will rely on feedback from employees and customers. We remain committed to preventing and eliminating barriers to accessibility.

Contact Information and Feedback Process

We have designated our Director, Employee Engagement and Chief Accessibility Officer, to receive feedback on behalf of Bridgewater Bank.

Accessibility Officer: Jennifer Leonard, Director, Employee Engagement

By Mail: 926 5 Ave SW, Suite 150, Calgary, Alberta T2P 0N7

By Phone: 403-718-1733

By Email: JLeonard@BridgewaterBank.ca

By Form: [Bridgewater Bank Accessibility Act Feedback](#)

We will confirm we have received your feedback.

You can ask for a copy of our Accessibility Plan Progress Report or a description of our feedback process in one of these alternate formats: Print, Large Print, Braille, Audio Format.





We will send you the document, or braille and audio formats within 12 business days.

Areas described under Section 5 of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA)

Employment

Bridgewater Bank is committed to being accessible to all employees and potential employees and all aspects of employment. In the last year, we worked on improving our employment practices and processes to ensure accessibility for all.

- We have reviewed our accommodation process to ensure it is clear, efficient, and effective.
- Our team of talent scouts are committed to continuous learning about accessibility in hiring processes and improving hiring practices. The team presented a session for all hiring leaders on unconscious bias in recruitment to ensure hiring leaders place values on candidates with unique abilities.
- We used our Employment Equity Action Plan to establish a partnership with an external agency to support the hiring of adults with disabilities.
- We encourage candidates to request accommodation measures throughout the hiring process and have a dedicated phone number for potential candidates to call if they require assistance.
- We have reviewed all online employee training and identified accessibility gaps. These gaps include key stroke access, closed captioning, text size, audio capability, and colour contrast. We plan to rectify these gaps over the next year and further develop diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging training.

We will continue to develop processes and practices for accommodating all the needs of our employees. AMA, our parent organization, has recently partnered with an external consultant on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and will incorporate a plan on further addressing accessibility across Bridgewater Bank and AMA.

The Built Environment

Over the past year, improving Bridgewater Bank's facilities for better accessibility has been a top priority. Completed actions include:

- Installing power-operated door buttons on the main floor and three more on another floor after reviewing building entry for employees. Enhancing emergency evacuation procedures to better assist those in need. Confirming the placement of alarm strobe lights and horns with the property management company.
- Providing sit/stand desk for employees who need ergonomic accommodations.
- Introduced a dedicated, bookable prayer space for all employees.



Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Bridgewater Bank ensures everyone can access information and services. We use Microsoft Office 365 with available accessibility features. We focus on making our website, documents, software, and hardware barrier-free for people with disabilities.

We will ensure all external documents are available in accessible formats and a process is created to request and receive those documents. Internally, any system or specific technology that is required for an employee, is made available.

Communications, other than ICT

Accessible communication is now a permanent part of our process and culture, ensuring we reach all our employees and diverse audiences.

We will provide accessibility services and alternate forms of communication to employees, customers, and brokers.

Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

As Bridgewater Bank integrates accessibility into our policies, processes, and practices, we will include accessibility criteria in our procurement of goods and services to ensure compliance with accessibility requirements.

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Bridgewater Bank specializes in competitive residential mortgages and deposit products through a select network of brokers. We specialize in Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs), High-Interest Savings Accounts (HISAs), and alternative mortgages. We primarily communicate with our employees through our internal website, email, and videos. We communicate with our customers primarily by phone, website, mail, and through mortgage and deposit brokers. The goals outlined above will help Bridgewater Bank comply with the ACA. Currently, no additional barriers related to our products and services have been identified. We are committed to improving accessibility in our processes, ensuring accessibility is built into our products and services from the beginning.

Transportation

As Bridgewater Bank is not in the transportation business, this section does not apply.

Consultations

To connect with the disabled community and understand the barriers they face in daily life, Bridgewater Bank reached out to Progressive Alternative Society of Calgary (PASC) to support engagement in recruitment of individuals with disabilities.

We have actively sought feedback from employees with disabilities regarding their experiences. Bridgewater Bank is a small organization (approximately 110 employees) with a small percentage who





identify as a person with a disability. As part of our consultation, we asked employees to provide feedback on their experiences with our facilities, large team events, and desk set ups. The feedback provided supports actions taken in the past year and will inform future actions.

Employees can also give feedback in semi-annual engagement surveys.

Feedback

As part of Bridgewater Bank's Accessibility Plan, we established a feedback process for individuals to share comments and ideas. This includes an external form posted on our website. We have not received any feedback through this process.

Internal feedback from employees highlighted various barriers they face when coming into the office, such as room setup for large team events and desk design. These suggestions have been integrated into our setup, and accessibility components will play a significant role in upcoming office redesigns. Furthermore, the feedback helped guide discussions with the property management company, leading to the installation of several new power-operated door buttons.

