

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the actions that Fairstone Financial Inc. (“Fairstone”) will put or has put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Fairstone 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 (AODA).

ACCESSIBLE EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Fairstone is committed to providing the customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

TRAINING

Fairstone provides training to employees, volunteers and other staff members on Ontario’s accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training is provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members.

Fairstone ensures all employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario’s accessibility laws as follows:

- Provide training to new employees as soon as practicable.
- Provide training on an ongoing basis in connection with any changes to the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.
- Training includes the following:
 - A review of the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards which combines the following three standards: Information and Communications, Employment, and Customer Service.
 - How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
 - How to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices, service animals, or support persons.

- How to use equipment or devices available on the premises or provided by the business that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing a particular good or service offered by the business.
- The processes that businesses in Ontario must follow to create, provide, and receive information and communications in a manner that is accessible to people with disabilities.

KIOSKS

Fairstone does not currently use self-service kiosks in the provision of its services to customers. However, in the event Fairstone should look to introduce self-service kiosks to its future business plans, Fairstone will be sure to consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring any self-service kiosks.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Fairstone is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with individuals with disabilities to determine their specific information and communication needs.

The [Fairstone.ca](https://www.fairstone.ca) website and its content conform to WCAG 2.0, Level A requirements.

Fairstone ensures existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request:

- Current feedback processes allow for multiple communication channels such as email, telephone, or regular mail.
- Accessibility section of the [Fairstone.ca](https://www.fairstone.ca) website has been expanded to include additional contacts for people with disabilities.

Fairstone ensures all publicly available information is made accessible upon request. Information about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports is posted on the Accessibility section of the [Fairstone.ca](https://www.fairstone.ca)

Fairstone will take the following steps to make its website(s) and content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA by January 1, 2021:

- Continue to conduct regular accessibility reviews of its website(s).
- Identify accessibility features and functions during planning stages.
- Identify all accessibility non-compliance during User Acceptance Testing phases.
- Conduct thorough accessibility review of website(s) prior to January 1, 2021

EMPLOYMENT

Fairstone is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Fairstone accommodates people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired as follows:

- Fairstone fosters an environment of respect and inclusivity and our recruitment practices at every level mirror this commitment. All job postings include the following statement: “Fairstone is an equal opportunity employer. Accordingly, we will make reasonable accommodations to respond to the needs of people with disabilities. Individuals who view themselves as Aboriginals, members of visible minorities, and disabled are encouraged to apply in confidence.”
- The following statement is included in the Candidate Application Form: “I understand that Fairstone will provide accommodations required by law for a qualified applicant or employee unless it would cause an undue hardship. I understand that it is my obligation to request reasonable accommodation if needed.”

The Fairstone Careers website includes the following statement: “The Fairstone Careers website includes the following statement in each job description: “Fairstone is an equal opportunity employer.

Accordingly, we will make reasonable accommodations to respond to the needs of people with disabilities. Individuals who view themselves as Aboriginals, members of visible minorities, and disabled are encouraged to apply in confidence.”

- Candidates who are invited for an interview, receive the following statement in the email interview confirmation: “Fairstone is an equal opportunity employer. Accordingly, we will make reasonable accommodations to respond to the needs of people with disabilities. Please inform me prior to your interview date if you require any accommodation throughout this process.”
- We will notify all employees of our accommodation policies and practices as soon as possible after they are hired, by providing a copy of our Canada Employee Handbook. The following statement is also included in the onboarding email from Fairstone Human Resources: “For employees with disabilities, Fairstone is committed to providing accommodation up to the point of undue hardship. Please let me know should you require any accommodation in the workplace. For more information about Fairstone’s accommodation and accessibility policies, please refer to the attached Canadian Employee Handbook.”

Fairstone has a process in place for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability:

- Fairstone has a documented process “Return to Work and the Development of Individual Accommodation Plans” that details the process to request an accommodation as well as the responsibilities of each party (employee, manager, and third party benefits partner).
- Fairstone partners with a third party benefits provider to deliver a proactive, high communication disability management program that facilitates individualized return-to-work plans
- Requests for individual accommodation plans are reviewed by our benefits provider in a collaborative manner that includes the employee, manager, and health care professionals. Fairstone is committed to ensuring that such accommodation is made available to the point of undue hardship.
- We review all of our accommodation and return to work policies and plans to ensure that they are compliant with all applicable laws, including AODA.

We take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are

taken into account if Fairstone is using performance management, career development and redeployment processes:

- Fairstone reviews its employment systems, policies, and practices on an ongoing basis for the purpose of identifying and eliminating, where possible, employment, promotional, or training barriers.
- Where employment barriers are identified, Fairstone takes corrective action to ensure reasonable accommodation of employees' needs, up to the point of undue hardship.

Fairstone has taken the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

- Fairstone defines accommodation as, however does not limit it to, the removal of physical barriers or the provision of technical devices, and changes to policies and procedures and changes in work schedule. Where employment barriers are identified, Fairstone takes corrective action to ensure reasonable accommodation of employees' needs, up to the point of undue hardship.
- An individual employee may at any time request accommodation for reasons identified in applicable human rights and employment equity legislation. Fairstone is committed to ensuring that such accommodation is made available to the point of undue hardship.

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

Fairstone will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Public spaces include service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas.

Fairstone has put the following procedure in place to prevent service disruptions to the accessible parts of its public spaces:

- Fairstone is advised by property management (as/if applicable) any time there is a disruption to access/other services at the building(s) where the public has access to its offices. Fairstone provides temporary arrangements where necessary to accommodate public access to our business offices during times that accessibility is impacted.

In the event of a service disruption, we will notify the public of the service disruption and alternatives available.

For more information on this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, please contact Lynn Horvath at:

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Accessible formats of this document are available at no cost, upon request.