



# Multi- Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2028



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## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

The 2023-2028 accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that Meyers will put into place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be modified as needed and reviewed at least once every 5 years.

## **Statement of Commitment**

Meyers is committed to service excellence and always strives to provide products and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. The organization is 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 Disability Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#).

## **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations**

This regulation sets out general standards as well as the standards for information and communications, employment, and transportation. Please note that transportation standards are not applicable to Meyers.

### **General Standards**

Meyers will:

- establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan;
- give regard to incorporating accessibility features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, where applicable.
- give regard to incorporating accessibility features when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-service kiosks where applicable; and
- provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards as referred to in the regulation 191/11 and on the Human Rights Code, as it pertains to people with disabilities.

## **Customer Service Standard**

Meyers will ensure compliance with the AODA to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility by developing, implementing, and enforcing accessibility standards as outlined below.

Ongoing reviews of accessible customer service requirements and changes thereto will be implemented to improve the delivery of accessible customer service.

The following are the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service as outlined in the AODA:

1. Establish policies, practices, and procedures to provide products or services to people with disabilities.
2. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity.
3. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that considers their disability.
4. Train employees, contractors and other people who interact with the public on Meyers' behalf on requirements outlined in the Customer Service Standard.
5. Train employees, contractors and other people involved in developing policies, practices and procedures related to the provision of products or services as outlined in the Customer Service Standard.
6. Establish a policy on the use of personal assistive devices to access Meyers' products and services, including equipment and services provided by Meyers.
7. Allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises Meyers owns or operates that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, other measures are used to provide services to the person with a disability.
8. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to escort that person while accessing products or services in premises open to the public or third parties. If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Meyers shall ensure that both people are permitted to enter the premises together and, that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises. Meyers may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability, or the health or safety of others on the premises.
9. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use Meyers' products or services are temporarily disrupted.
10. Establish a process to enable people to provide feedback on methods used to provide products and services to people with disabilities, as well as how responses to feedback will be managed and improvements implemented on any complaints, and to make this information readily available to the public.

## **Communication with people with disabilities**

Meyers employees will communicate with people with disabilities in a manner that considers their disability for the purpose of using, receiving, and requesting products and services.

Meyers will provide enough space in seating areas to accommodate service animals or support persons or provide accessible meeting rooms to communicate with people with disabilities.

Meyers' Information Services department will provide electronic information externally and internally in accessible formats, as required.

### **Service Delivery**

Meyers is committed to providing people with disabilities the opportunities to and benefits of accessing products and services in the same place and similar manner as others.

Meyers employees are trained to communicate with customers in clear language that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

**Assistive Devices:** A customer with a disability may use their own assistive device(s) for the purpose of obtaining and using our products and services. Meyers will ensure employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities to obtain or use products and services.

**Service Animals:** Service animals are permitted in public access areas in all Meyers offices, and adequate space/seating arrangements are made available for people with disabilities and their service animals.

Meyers will ensure all employees are trained to identify a service animal and to effectively interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

Service animals must always be under the care and control of the person with a disability.

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, service animals are permitted access to public areas within Meyers locations.

**Support Persons:** Meyers will ensure any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be permitted access to that support person while on Meyers' premises. Adequate seating arrangements will be made available.

In situations where confidential information of a customer with a disability is to be discussed, Meyers may require a signed statement of permission and/or consent from the customer with a disability to allow their support person to be present.

**Notice of Temporary Disruption in Services and Facilities:** Meyers will make reasonable efforts to provide notice of a temporary disruption to public access, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternate facilities or services, if any, that may be available.

Procedures for temporary service disruptions will be posted on Meyers' internal and external websites.

### **Document Requirements**

Meyers' customers have been notified that all documentation relating to the Accessibility Standards for Ontarians with Disabilities is available upon request and will be provided in a format that considers a person's disability.

### **Accessibility Training**

- Training on all aspects of the Accessibility Customer Service Standards, the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities will be provided to employees, volunteers, managers/persons who participate in developing Meyers' policies and all other persons or third parties who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of Meyers.
- Training is provided to all new employees as soon as practical after they have assumed applicable duties and on an ongoing basis when changes to the policies, practices and procedures occur that require additional training.
- Training is provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees and all people acting on behalf of Meyers. Participants and dates of training are tracked and provided to human resources.

## **Employment Standard**

### Workplace Information for Employees

Our employment practices will include notification of the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities, as well as supports for staff with disabilities. Where employee needs dictate, we will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability. Our performance management and career development and advancement processes will consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities. Meyers will continually strive to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified.

### Recruitment and Selection

Upon request, Meyers will notify its employees and the public on the availability of accommodations for all applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process. This process includes accommodations in relation to materials or processes to be used during the assessment and/or selection phase, as well as consulting with the applicant to ensure the accommodations provided are appropriate and effective. This will also ensure accommodations are in place for applicants with a disability, to support their participation in the recruitment process.

For new hires and existing employees with disabilities, Meyers will provide options for accommodation as required. This includes provisions of job accommodations, considering the employee's accessibility needs, and is provided as soon as practical upon employment.

### **Workplace Health & Safety and Emergency Response Information**

If accommodations are requested and are not already included in the Emergency Response Plan (ERP), ERPs can be updated to include requested accommodations. Or, an ERP will be developed in cooperation with the individual requesting accommodations.

With employee consent, Meyers can assign a designated person to an employee who requires assistance due to disability during an emergency. This process is provided whenever Meyers becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to an employee's disability. This information is updated when:

- there is a change in employment for either the employee with a disability or the designated employee (e.g. the employee moves to a different location within Meyers);
- there are job changes;
- the employee accommodation needs are reviewed and changed; and/or
- the employer reviews its general policy on emergency response.

The personal information of an employee seeking accessibility services is subject to the privacy protection of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). Meyers may only access and use this personal information to deliver services as permitted by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, *O.Reg.191/11* and [O.Reg.429/07](#).

### **Individual Accommodation Plans**

Meyers documents accommodation requirements in the form of Modified Work Agreements, where both the manager and employee develop and sign-off in agreement of the accommodation plan. Accommodation plans are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with a specific review date in the agreement to ensure plans are up to date and meeting the accommodation requirements.

Our process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans includes:

- How we include the employee in the development of the plan
- How we consider the employee on an individual basis
- How other representatives or agents may or may not be involved
- How the employee's personal information will be protected
- How often the plan will be reviewed and how it will be done

### **Return to Work Process**

Our process for the development of a return-to-work process for employees with disabilities who have been absent due to their disability and require accommodation to return to work will:

- Outline the steps we will take to facilitate the employee's return to work.
- Use their individual accommodation plan – as part of the process



## Information and Communication Standards

Meyers strives for continuous improvement in this area and has established a process to solicit and respond to feedback from employees and customers/stakeholders. Where required, action is taken on any complaint using an “**Accessibility Feedback Form**”

Information about the feedback process is available in accessible formats or with appropriate communication support, upon request.

Meyers receives and responds to feedback through:

- Submitting a completed “**Accessibility Feedback Form**” via email to [human.resources@meyersfruitfarms.com](mailto:human.resources@meyersfruitfarms.com);
- Phone: 905-934-3925;
- Mail to 1444 Irvine Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0

The personal information of individuals seeking accessibility services is subject to the privacy protection of *The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*. Meyers may only access and use this personal information to deliver services as permitted by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, O.Reg.191/11 and O.Reg.429/07*.

## Emergency Procedures, Plans and Public Safety Information

Meyers is committed to providing customers with publicly available emergency information in an accessible format upon request. This includes evacuation procedures in the event of emergency. Meyers also provides employees with disabilities individualized emergency response information where necessary.

When assisting someone with a disability during an emergency evacuation, Meyers employees:

- always ask someone with a disability how they can help them, before giving any assistance or attempting any rescue procedure;
- offer an "area of refuge", i.e. an area that offers a greater protection against fire, smoke and/or inclement weather;
- assist people using wheelchairs or scooters to "stay in place" or be assisted to an "area of refuge" to await rescue;
- provide emergency instructions for people with a hearing impairment where offices do not have fire alarms or strobe lights, or by writing a short explicit note to evacuate; and
- offer their elbow to people who are blind or visually impaired and guide them through the evacuation route.

Meyers' Emergency Response Plan (ERP) Corporate Directives and Information as it pertains to people with a disability can be provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication support, on request.

