



Accessibility Plan

Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Ltd.

April 2024

Prepared in accordance with the Accessible Canada Act

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the Accessible Canada Act is to make Canada barrier-free by January 2040. This involves identifying, removing, and preventing barriers in federal jurisdictions across several priority areas. A *barrier* is anything that prevents a person with a disability from participating fully and equally in society. A *disability* includes any physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment or functional limitation.

Federally regulated entities are required to develop an accessibility plan that addresses barriers in the following priority areas: employment; the built environment; information and communication technologies; communication other than ICT; the procurement of goods, services, and facilities; the design and delivery of programs and services; and transportation.

Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Limited is committed to creating a more inclusive environment for its employees. Improving accessibility is not only important for people with disabilities, but it also benefits everyone. We understand that creating a barrier-free environment is an ongoing process, and we are dedicated to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers as part of that journey.

This accessibility plan reflects our ongoing commitment under the Accessible Canada Act. It will help guide our efforts in meeting accessibility goals and building an inclusive environment for all.

Founded in Stratford in 1974, Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Limited has grown into a respected logistics provider with deep roots in Southwestern Ontario. Over the years, the company has expanded to offer customs clearance, transportation, and warehousing solutions across North America. While we've grown, we've never lost sight of the value of personalized service — every client has a dedicated account executive committed to finding the right solutions. Our values, grounded in family and community, continue to guide our work and our workplace.

Feedback Process and Contact Information

Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Limited values feedback on our accessibility plan from employees, clients, and the public. Your input is essential to us, as it helps us identify and eliminate barriers, and ensures we continue building an inclusive environment for everyone.

If you have any questions, feedback, or are experiencing any accessibility barriers, we encourage you to reach out. Your feedback can be provided anonymously, and we assure you that it will be kept confidential.

Contact Information:

Position Title: CEO or President of the company

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Modification to this or other Policies:

Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Limited is committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment for all. We continuously review our policies and practices to ensure they support the dignity, independence, and equal opportunity of individuals with disabilities. Any policy fails to meet these principles, it will be revised and modified accordingly to align with our commitment to accessibility.

Statement of Commitment

Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Limited is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible environment for all individuals, including clients, employees and the public. We believe that everyone has the right to access services and opportunities in a way that upholds dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. We are dedicated to identifying, preventing, and removing accessibility barriers and will continue to meet our obligations under the Accessible Canada Act and other applicable legislation. Our policies, practices, and procedures are designed to ensure accessibility is considered in all aspects of our operations.

Progress Reports and Review

Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Limited will publish an annual report to share updates on the actions taken and progress made toward our accessibility commitments. We will review and update our accessibility plan every three years to ensure it remains aligned with our priorities and efforts. As part of this process, we are committed to seeking input from individuals with disabilities to help guide future updates. Our progress will be shaped by ongoing feedback, internal reflection, and lessons learned from our experiences.

Section 1 – Employment

Our company is committed to fostering an inclusive and respectful work environment by removing barriers to employment based on the prohibited grounds of discrimination. As a small company, we strive to take proportionate and meaningful steps to support accessibility within our team.

Objective 1. Educate employees about accessibility and accommodation issues.

Actions:

- Integrate basic information about accessibility and accommodations into the employee onboarding process.

Timeline: Ongoing (as part of onboarding).

- Offer general sensitivity and inclusion awareness resources to existing staff.

Timeline: Medium-term.

- Provide internal guidance on how employees can access information regarding accommodation and accessibility support.

Timeline: Short to medium-term

Planned Approach:

Given our size and capacity, we aim to build awareness gradually through light-touch measures such as brief internal communications, policy references during onboarding, and informal discussions as needed.

Objective 2. Ensure that accessibility is considered throughout the recruitment and selection process.

Actions:

- Ensure that individuals conducting interviews are aware of the importance of offering candidates the opportunity to request accommodation.
- Promote inclusive hiring practices by removing potential barriers through the recruitment and selection stages, as applicable.
- Share general information with those involved in recruitment regarding accessibility principles and how to support equitable practices during candidate evaluation.

- Reiterate our commitment to accessibility in all employment related activities, including recruitment, through updates to job postings and informal communication.

Timeline: Ongoing incorporation into our recruitment efforts. As we continue to grow and refine our approach, accessibility will remain a key consideration in our hiring process.

Section 2 – Built Environment

The built environment section ensures that our workplaces and surroundings are accessible to everyone. People with disabilities may face barriers in everyday life, such as parking lots, entryways, and general access through many public and private facilities. We are aware of such barriers and committed to identifying, mitigating, and removing them whenever possible, within reasonable financial and structural constraints.

Objective 1. Ensure that all members of the public can access our facilities.

Actions:

- On an ongoing basis, accommodate individual accessibility requirements on a case-by-case basis to ensure equitable access to our main facility.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Objective 2. Ensure that any future property we rent or buy will be accessible to a wide range of people.

Actions:

- Consider accessibility requirements when planning for property allocation or acquisition.
- Prioritize accessible features in any future leasing or purchase decisions.

Timeline: Ongoing / Long-Term.

Objective 3. Plan and initiate improvements to washroom accessibility in our main facility.

Actions

- We are currently planning a renovation project aimed at improving the accessibility for our washroom facilities. The proposed updates include:
 - Adding a barrier-free washroom with wall-hung sink and accessible toilet.
 - Upgrading the men's and women's washrooms by replacing wall-mounted toilets with floor-mounted units and installing additional sinks.

- Completing necessary plumbing updates to support these improvements.
- This initiative reflects our commitment to providing inclusive and accessible facilities for all individuals entering our workplace.

Timeline: Short-term / Ongoing.

Objective 4. Consider the possibility of modifying entrance features for better accessibility.

Actions:

- Consider studying the entrance door widths to determine if larger mobility devices can be accommodated. This review may inform future facility updates if feasible and warranted.

Timeline: Long-term / Under review.

Section 3 – Information and Communication Technologies

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) include a wide range of tools used to access, create, and share information. Accessibility in ICT ensures that everyone, including people with disabilities, can effectively navigate and use digital platforms. We recognize the importance of creating accessible digital spaces and are committed to removing barriers where feasible, taking into account our organizational size and available resources.

Objective 1. Ensure the website and online materials are accessible.

Actions

- Maintaining general awareness of web accessibility best practices (e.g. WCAG standards) when updating or creating digital content.
- Consult with external IT support, as needed, to assess opportunities for improved accessibility within reasonable costs.
- Monitor basic accessibility features such as alternative text for images, clear navigation, and appropriate fonts in online materials.

Timeline: Ongoing; short- to medium-term.

Objective 2. Ensure new systems and tools meet general accessibility and security standards.

Actions

- Integrate accessibility considerations into the evaluation process when implementing or updating internal systems.
- As part of regular operations, consult with IT providers regarding accessible technological options where practical.
- Remain informed about evolving accessibility trends and tools that could benefit staff and users.

Timeline: Ongoing; long-term.

Section 4 – Communication, other than Information and Communication Technologies

Clear and inclusive communication benefits everyone, especially individuals with disabilities who may engage with information through different methods such as speech, writing, sign language, or visual aids. We are committed to promoting communication practices that are clear, adaptable, and responsive to diverse needs across our organization.

Objective 1. Ensure plain language is used in communications.

Actions

- Encourage all staff involved in internal and external communication to use simple and clear language when preparing written materials.
- Regularly review key public-facing materials (e.g., forms, notices, signs) to ensure they are easy to understand.
- Avoid unnecessary jargon or complex phrasing wherever possible.

Timeline: Ongoing- short to medium term.

Objective 2. Promote accessible in-person communication practices.

Actions

- Raise staff awareness of alternative ways people may communicate (e.g., individuals with speech challenges, use of interpreters, non-verbal communication methods).
- Accommodate communication needs during meetings or training sessions upon request (e.g., allowing extra time, providing written follow-up notes).
- Provide visual support where possible (e.g.: signage, icons, printouts) to supplement spoken communication.

Timeline: Ongoing- short to medium term.

Section 5 – Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Procurement decisions can impact accessibility both directly and indirectly. Although we are not a large purchaser of external goods or services beyond our core operational needs in transportation, warehousing, and brokerage, we recognize the importance of integrating accessibility considerations into procurement practices where applicable. This includes both evaluating the accessibility of both suppliers and external venues.

Objective 1. Consider accessibility when selecting suppliers and contractors.

Actions:

- As part of our general decision-making, we will aim to work with suppliers and contractors who demonstrate a commitment to accessible practices.
- Accessibility-related needs will be taken into account when engaging with external parties, where feasible within our operational requirements.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Objective 2. Encourage accessibility considerations when using external venues.

Actions:

- Encourage staff to consider accessibility features (such as parking, entrances, and washroom access) when organizing external events, including our annual holiday gathering.
- Informal evaluations may be carried out based on staff knowledge and prior experience with the venue.
- A formal checklist may be developed if future events needs to expand.

Timeline: As needed, based on the use of external venues.

Section 6 – Design & Delivery of Program & Services

The design and delivery of programs and services reflect the core values of our organization, which include equity, inclusion, and accessibility. We are committed to maintaining a workplace and service environment that is free of barriers to participation and performance. We recognize that removing systemic and long-standing barriers not only supports people with disabilities but also strengthens our overall vision by fostering a diversity of thought, experience, and voice.

Objective 1. Ensuring accessibility is considered in the development and delivery of programs and services.

Actions

- Update and enhance our internal accessibility policy to reflect current standards and best practices.
- Create guidelines to support decision-making processes that incorporate accessibility considerations at every stage.
- Ensure that feedback received through our website or other channels is collected, tracked and thoughtfully reviewed.
- Increase opportunities for both internal and external feedback on the accessibility of our programs and services.

Timeline: Ongoing/Short-term.

Section 7 – Transportation

Although our company does not provide transportation services as defined under the Accessible Canada Act (i.e. we do not transport passengers), we do operate logistics and delivery services for goods. While we do not currently have employees requiring transportation-related accommodation, we remain committed to identifying and removing potential barriers should the need arise.

Objective 1. Ensure that parking and loading areas remain barrier-free.

Actions

- Periodically review parking lots and loading areas to ensure they are well maintained, clearly marked, and free of physical barriers.
- Confirm that entrances connected to these areas remain accessible to both employees and visitors.
- Consult accessibility experts as needed for further assessment.

Timeline: annually or as needed.

Objective 2. Monitor accessibility needs related to fleet vehicles and delivery logistics.

Actions

- Remain flexible and prepared to accommodate any employee with a disability who joins the delivery or logistics team.
- Stay informed on vehicle safety standards and adaptive technologies.
- Periodically review policies and procedures with accessibility considerations in mind.

Timeline: ongoing, as required.

Section 8 – Consultations

As part of our commitment to accessibility, Jack Rutherford Customs Brokers Limited gathered internal feedback to help inform the development of this plan. Given the size and structure of our company, consultations were conducted informally through direct conversations with an employee who has lived through experience of disability. Her insights provided valuable input in identifying potential accessibility barriers within our workplace.

At this time, no other employees have disclosed a disability or requested accommodations. While we did not engage external organizations in the consultation process, we remain open to receiving input from employees, stakeholders, and members of the public.

We are committed to continuously improving our approach to accessibility as needs evolve and new perspectives emerge. Feedback on this plan - or on accessibility in general - is always welcome and can be submitted using the contact methods outlined in the *Feedback Process and Contact Information* section of this document.