

Office of the Employer Adviser Accessibility Policy

Purpose

In accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and Ontario Regulation 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards, the Office of the Employer Adviser (OEA) has established the following policy to provide persons with disabilities equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from its services.

Statement of Organizational Commitment

The OEA is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive environment that ensures equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

We believe in integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and by meeting our accessibility requirements under the AODA and its regulations.

Policy Application

This policy applies to all employees of the OEA.

This policy is available on the OEA website at www.employeradviser.ca and in alternative accessible formats. If you would like to receive a copy of the policy in an alternative format or a printed copy, please contact the OEA at 1 800 387-0774, by email at askoea@ontario.ca, or using the online [contact form](#).

Definitions

Assistive Devices – means an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (e.g., wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, hearing aides, oxygen tanks, portable chalk boards and electronic communication devices) to access and benefit from the services provided by the OEA.

Barrier – means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability including a physical barrier, architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, attitudinal barrier, technological barrier, and a policy or practice that serves as an obstacle.

Disability – as set out in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, means any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement including, but not limited to, diabetes, epilepsy, brain injury, paralysis, amputation, lack of coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; mental impairment or developmental disability; learning disability or dysfunction in understanding or

using symbols or spoken language; mental disorder; or injury for which benefits were claimed or received under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Guide Dogs or Service Animals – a “guide dog” means a guide dog as defined in section 1 of the *Blind Persons’ Rights Act*. For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal of a person with a disability:

- a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- b) if the person provides documentation from a regulated health in accordance with s. 80.45(4)(b) of O. Reg. 191/11 confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Persons – means, in relationship to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies them to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods, services, or facilities. A support person may be a paid support worker, a volunteer, a friend, or a family member; the support person does not need to have special training or qualifications.

Practices and Procedures

The OEA shall ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures, as amended from time to time, are consistent with the principles of providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities in a manner that respects their dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

Assistive Devices

The OEA permits persons with disabilities to use and keep with them assistive devices to obtain, use, or benefit from the services we offer. The OEA’s main

office at 505 University Avenue in Toronto is fully accessible to people with disabilities. Our field staff throughout the province will provide service to persons with a disability at their place of business or other suitable location as required to accommodate their disability.

If enquiries for telephone services are received for persons with hearing impairment the OEA staff will refer them to the Bell Canada Relay service operator to assist them in placing or receiving calls if they use a TTY (Teletypewriter). The Bell operator can also assist in placing Voice Carry Over (VCO) and Hearing Carry Over (HCO) calls. Information regarding this service is provided through Bell Canada by phone at 1-866-310-BELL (ask for the Accessibility Services Centre), using TTY at 1-800-268-9242, or by e-mail at accessible@bell.ca.

Service Animals

Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their guide dog or other service animal and keep it with them in areas accessible to the public. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their service animal is kept under control at all times.

Support Persons

If a person with a disability is accompanied by their support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises at our main office at 505 University Avenue in Toronto.

Our field staff located around the province will provide our services to people with disabilities at their place of business or other suitable location when, if needed, they are accompanied by a support person.

Notice of Disruptions

If there is a disruption of service or facilities that the OEA normally provides to persons with disabilities at our Toronto office, the OEA will provide notice of the disruption to the public as soon as it is able to do so. The notice of the disruption will be posted on the OEA's website when practicable and will outline the reasons for the disruption and the expected duration. The OEA will post notice of the disruption at our Toronto office and will include information on alternative facilities, services, or systems (if any) that may be available.

Training

The OEA will ensure that all staff members that provide service to the public receive training on the following topics:

- A review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards relating to customer service.
- A review of the Ontario *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities.
- A review of Ontario Government policies, practices, and procedures on the provision of services to persons with disabilities.
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.

- How to use the equipment or devices available on the provider's premises, or otherwise provided by the provider, that may assist with the provision of services to persons with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our services or facilities; and
- OEA policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

New staff, whether permanent or contract, will be trained as outlined above as soon as is practicable after starting with the OEA.

Feedback Process

Comments or complaints about the OEA's services, the accessibility of the OEA's services, or the accessibility of the OEA's feedback process may be made via the complaints form on the OEA website, by e-mail, by mail, or by telephone.

Accessible formats and communication support with respect to the feedback process are made available upon request. Please let the OEA know at the earliest opportunity if you would like something in an accessible format or require a communication support. Feedback is welcomed as it may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvement.

If a complaint is received, the OEA will strive to address the complaint immediately if possible. However, some complaints may require more time to address. In accordance with the Ontario Public Service Common Service Standards, customers can expect an acknowledgement of their complaint within one business day if made by telephone and two business days if made by e-mail or through the online form, with a response provided within fifteen business days. If the complaint is made by mail, a response can be expected within fifteen business days of

receipt of the complaint. A response to the complaint will be provided in a format that is accessible to the complainant.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The OEA will provide or arrange for communication supports and information in accessible formats of OEA-generated documents for persons with disabilities upon request. We will also consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the accessible format or the communication support.

Modification to this or other Policies

The OEA is committed to ensuring that their customer service policies, practices, and procedures respect and promote the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.

If it is determined that any of the OEA's operational policies affecting customer service do not respect persons with disabilities, any such policies will be modified or revoked as needed.

Questions about this Policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence for customers with disabilities. If you have a question about this policy or wish to receive a copy of it, please contact:

Office of the Employer Adviser
505 University Ave., 20th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2P1

Telephone: (416) 327-0020; Toll Free 1 800 387-0774

E-mail: askoea@ontario.ca

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