

## **ACCES Employment's Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy**

### **1.1 Policy**

ACCES Employment is committed to providing high quality standards of service that can be accessed in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. ACCES ensures that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities to access and benefit from the ACCES services in ways similar to others.

ACCES Employment policies and practices are based on the four underlying principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The implementation of this policy is a multi-year process. The timeline for the implementation of the commitments within this policy is outlined in Appendix A.

### **1.2 Statement of Commitment**

ACCES Employment 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 that ensures persons with disabilities (“PWD”) have the same opportunities to access and benefit from our services. ACCES Employment is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and do so by removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Ontario Regulation 191/11 (IASR) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

### **1.3 Definitions**

Disability – For the purpose of this Policy, the term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, is defined as:

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) a learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;

- d) a mental disorder; or
- e) an injury or disability, including a workplace injury or disability

Accessible Format, Communication Support and Assistive Devices:

– For the purposes of this Policy, accessible format, communication support and assistive devices may include:

Large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, brail and other formats useable by persons with disabilities; captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications; wheelchairs, walkers, and electronic communication devices and other devices.

Barrier For the purposes of this Policy, a barrier is defined as

Anything that keeps someone with a disability from participating fully in society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technology barrier, a policy or a practice.

## **2. General Standards**

### **2.1 Accessibility Plan:**

ACCES Employment's multi-year Accessibility Plan outlines a phased-in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to address the current and future requirements of the AODA. Progress on the Plan is reported on annually, is posted on the organization's website and is provided in accessible formats upon request. The plan is reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

### **2.2 Training:**

Training is provided to employees, volunteers and third party contractors on the Ontario's AODA Accessibility Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Human Resource maintains records on the completion of training.

### **2.3 Design of Public Spaces Standard**

The goal of the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces is to remove barriers in public spaces and buildings. ACCES Employment shall have regard to accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing new or making major modifications waiting areas and service counters in ACCES Employment public spaces.

## **3. Information and Communications**

ACCES Employment is committed to making organization information and communications accessible to persons with disability.

### **3.1 Accessible Information:**

ACCES Employment ensures its information and communications are accessible and provided in accessible formats that meet the needs of persons with disability. This is provided, upon request, in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability, and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. ACCES Employment consults with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

### **3.2 Accessible Websites and Web Content**

ACCES Employment shall make the public website and web content, conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA by January 1, 2021.

### **3.3 Accessible Emergency Information**

ACCES Employment provides emergency procedures and plan information available to the public in an accessible format, or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

### **3.4 Feedback Process**

ACCES Employment has established processes for receiving and responding to feedback on services. For persons with disabilities, the feedback processes are provided in accessible formats and with communication supports, upon request.

Feedback may be given to ACCES in several formats, including written, verbal and/or online. Forms are available in the Resource Information Centres and Reception Desks at each ACCES location; on-line feedback at [www.accesemployment.ca](http://www.accesemployment.ca) and provided in person to the individual's primary contact at ACCES Employment or the site/ program manager.

#### **4. EMPLOYMENT**

ACCES Employment is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

##### **4.1 Recruitment and Selection**

ACCES Employment provides notice to its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment and selection processes.

During the recruitment process, applicants are notified that accommodations are available upon request relating to materials or processes being used. Arranging suitable accommodation is determined by ACCES Employment in consultation with the candidate and takes into account the candidate's accessibility needs due to disability.

When making an offer of employment, the successful candidate is notified of ACCES Employment's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

##### **4.2 Supports for Employees**

ACCES Employment employees are informed of policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

This communication is delivered within 1 month of an employee's start date or as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

##### **4.3 Performance Management, Career Development, Advancement and Redeployment**

The performance management process, including assessment, goal setting, talent management (also includes office relocation) takes into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

#### **4.4 Accommodation Plans**

ACCES Employment maintains documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. As necessary and as requested, the individual employee plan could include information regarding accessible formats and communication supports.

#### **4.5 Return to Work Accommodation Plans following Disability Leave**

ACCES Employment's return to work process is for employees returning from disability leave who require disability related accommodation to facilitate their return to work. This may also include workplace emergency response information (see 4.4 of this policy).

#### **4.6 Workplace Employee Emergency Response Information**

ACCES Employment provides employees individualized workplace emergency response information as requested or when made aware of the need for accommodation due to disability. ACCES Employment provides this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation. Written emergency accommodation plans are documented for the individual and reviewed/assessed when:

- The employee moves to a new office,
- The employee's overall accommodation plan is being reviewed; and,
- ACCES Employment reviews overall emergency response policies.

Appendix A

AODA Integrated Accessibility Timelines “IASR”

Regulation/Topic	Target Date	Requirement	Status
Integrated Accessibility General	January 1, 2014	Develop Accessibility Policy for IASR including statement of commitment and post on website	Complete
	January 1, 2014	Develop multi-year accessibility plan and post on website	Complete
	January 1, 2015	Develop and deliver training program on IASR, Ontario Human Rights as it relates to disabilities	Complete
	January 2019, 2024...	Review accessibility plan every 5 years	
Build Environment Design of Public Spaces Standards	January 1, 2017	Examine service counters and waiting areas for accessibility for new builds or major changes	
Information and Communication	January 1, 2016	Provide accessible formats and communication supports	Complete
	January 1, 2014	New websites and significant refresh meet WCAG 2.0 Level A	Complete
	January 1, 2021	All websites and content meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA	
	January 1, 2012	Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information accessible to public	Complete
	January 1, 2015	Feedback processes available in accessible format with communication supports	Complete
Employment	January 1, 2016	Recruitment and hiring processes provide accommodation	Complete
	January 1, 2016	Accommodation plans, RTW, Performance Management and Career development	Complete
	January 1, 2012	Employee Emergency Response Plans (CSR)	Complete