

Developer: DPC	Division: Corporate Services	Category: AODA	Policy Number: C-AO-01
Effective Date: Apr 2021	Subject Name: Accessibility Policy for Employees and Volunteers		Approval: SLT
Reviewed/Revised Date: July 2025	Next Review Date: July 11, 2029	Supersedes: Accessibility Policy for Employees and Volunteers: April 2025	Page 1 of 4

POLICY

It is the Policy of the Centre that all volunteers and employees shall work in an inclusive working environment that acknowledges and promotes equal rights for all persons with disabilities as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005). The Centre also affirms its commitment to ensure equal access and opportunity in all employment, accommodation, the use of services or business dealings with the Centre.

The Centre embraces the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and is committed to expanding its access and support to all volunteers, employees and visitors with disabilities, by having as its goal a barrier-free working environment to enable employment success.

DEFINITION

1. Assistive Device – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of persons with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that clients/participants bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.
2. Disability – the term disability as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, refers to:
 - 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 for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

3. Service Animal – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:
 - a. 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 a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
4. Support Person – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.
5. Reasonable Accommodation - is defined as those accommodations which do not impose undue hardship on the Centre in the form of significant alteration to the fundamental nature of the service program; significant alteration to a work process that would disadvantage other employees; substantial economic hardship to a The Centre program or department that would affect its economic viability; significant adverse impact on engagement opportunities for other volunteers; the health and safety of other volunteers or employees and/or safety hazards to other persons or property; or significant disruption of The Centre operations.
6. Accessible Formats – include but not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

To ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and to enhance our commitment to all persons with disabilities, the Centre will:

1. Ensure all of its policies, procedures and practices comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and related Standards, guidelines, directives and/or legislation.
2. Maintain and create physical facilities and technology accessible safe and barrier-free environments at all premises for volunteers and employees within the limits of available human, financial and physical resources.
3. Ensure its facilities are accessible and compliant with the Ontario Building Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
4. Provide adequate information, awareness and training to foster a supportive and inclusive working and learning environment and remove systemic and attitudinal barriers.
5. Monitor recruitment strategies to ensure employment opportunities are being available to persons with disabilities.
6. Continue to make every reasonable accommodation for the particular needs of self-identified persons (volunteers and employees) with documented disabilities as per the Ontario Human Rights Code.
7. Ensure individual employee accommodation plans are finalized and agreed to at the time of employment offer.

8. Provide tailored emergency response plan or information for employees and volunteers with disabilities.
9. Implement early and safe return-to-work strategies with care and commitment to support the employee's well-being and ability to handle the essential responsibilities of the position.
10. Ensure prospective employees requiring accommodation will be assessed against the essential duties of the job.
11. Monitor volunteer engagement policies to ensure that volunteers with disabilities are considered for engagement in programs for which they are qualified.
12. Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to use their own assistive devices as required in accordance with the provisions of the Accessible Customer Service Policy.
13. Ensure that persons with disabilities who use a service animal or support person are permitted to bring that service animal or support person with them when accessing services and/or events at the Centre given that all the conditions of the Accessible Customer Service Policy are met.
14. Ensure that all current and future staff of the Centre is trained on regulatory customer service standards, including but not limited to, communication with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal and/or support person.
15. Provide adequate notice to persons with disabilities in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in services. The notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, length of disruption and any available alternative services (if any). Wherever possible, notices are to be placed in all publicly accessible areas/entrances and service counters, and where possible provided on outgoing telephone messages or by means of email communication.
16. Ensure that wherever possible, all the Centre produced documents are in accessible and multiple formats.
17. Review and amend, where required, policies, programs and services, to ensure persons with disabilities are not disadvantaged.

ADMINISTRATION

The Manager, People and Culture or designate will be responsible for the administration and communication of this policy. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

Manager of People and Culture
Abiona Centre
1102 Broadview Avenue,
Toronto, ON
M4K 2S5
Phone: 416-425-6348
Fax number: 416-425-4056
E-mail: aoda@abionacentre.ca

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as per the Centre's policies and procedures or as required in the event of legislative changes.

RELATED POLICIES

C-AO-02 Accessible Customer Service Policy

C-AO-03 Accommodation Policy

C AO-04 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read and understand the Accessibility Policy for Employees and Volunteers. I agree to adhere to this policy in whole. I understand that if I violate the rules set forth in this policy, I may face disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____