

PROCEDURE: AODA-001

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Policy

OCAPDD is committed to complying with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and all of the standards under it in order to create a barrier-free Ontario.

Background

The AODA was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating a barrier-free Ontario by 2025. Under the AODA, the government will develop and enforce specific standards to improve accessibility across the province. The standards will set requirements in a number of key areas. Five sets of standards are planned, including:

1. Customer Service
2. Transportation
3. Information and Communication
4. Built Environment
5. Employment

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, (O.Reg 429/07) is the first standard that has been developed and officially made law. It sets out specific and general requirements to ensure goods and services are provided in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

O. Reg 429/07 does not set accessibility requirements for the goods themselves, but rather the way in which they are provided to customers.

Definitions

“Alternative format” shall mean any other ways of publishing information beyond traditional printing (e.g. large print, audio format, etc.).

“Assistive devices” shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (e.g. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc.).

“Customers” shall mean any person who receives goods or services, including individuals supported by OCAPDD.

“Disabilities” shall mean the same as the definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code:

- (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 a 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.

“Employees” shall mean every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of OCAPDD, including:

- All direct care employees
- All outreach employees
- Administration employees
- Accounting employees
- Supervisors
- Managers
- Directors/Executive Director
- Board of Directors
- Students
- Third Party Contractors
- Volunteers.

“Persons with Disabilities” shall mean people with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Service Animals” shall mean any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

“Support persons” shall mean any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend, who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help

with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Application

The policies developed by OCAPDD in compliance with the Visitors & Public AODA and O. Reg 429/07 shall apply to every employee of OCAPDD as defined above

Exclusions

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, O. Reg 429/07 shall not apply during any period declared as a “State of Emergency” as defined under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

Review and Changes to Policies

No changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of OCAPDD that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

Questions about Policies

These policies exist to achieve service excellence for customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about a policy, or if the purpose of the policy is not understood, an explanation will be provided by contacting Human Resources.

Overview of Policies and Procedures

Under the AODA and O. Reg 429/07 OCAPDD is required, by law, to develop and maintain policies, practices and procedures specifically addressing:

- accessible customer service (the manner in which goods and services are provided to people with disabilities)
- assistive devices
- communication
- service animals
- support persons
- notice of temporary disruptions
- training
- customer feedback.