

# Accessible Customer Service (ACS) Policy

This policy is available to the public in alternate formats upon request.

This policy has been updated to reflect changes to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service effective July 1, 2016.

## Introduction

HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency (the agency) supports the full inclusion of persons with disabilities as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. This and related policies, procedures, and practices are designed to ensure that the agency continues to be accessible and to comply with the legal requirements under AODA.

## Our Accessible Customer Service Policy

Committed to the principles of respect, dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for persons with disabilities, the agency makes every effort to provide barrier-free access and services.

Accommodation and assistance will be customized to each person with disability according to individual disclosure, needs and joint discussion about potential alternative choices for accessibility.

The agency will include accessibility messaging in public communications to inform persons with disabilities that requests for accommodation are welcome.

## General Information and Procedures

The agency welcomes advance notice for any assistance that may be required when a person with a disability visits.

## **Facilities**

The building is wheelchair accessible; however, the agency will need to arrange for assistance at the building entrance as the doors are not automated.

The building has one elevator and there are accessible washrooms on each floor.

In selecting meeting rooms for functions held off site, preference will be given to accessible meeting rooms over traditional meeting rooms where possible and practical. In the event that a person with a disability cannot be accommodated at a specific meeting/event, alternative arrangements will be made.

Upon request, the agency will provide information on accessible restaurants in the area to persons with disabilities attending its functions. In the event that the agency intends to provide food or beverages other than water, identified dietary needs will be accommodated.

## **Use of Assistive Devices**

Persons with disabilities may use personal assistive devices (e.g., note taking devices, walkers, oxygen tanks, etc.) when visiting our offices or attending agency functions.

The agency will review the need to acquire assistive devices to meet client needs on an as needed basis.

## **Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animal or support person into the areas of the agency that are open to the public.

Where it cannot be easily identified that the animal is a service animal, the agency may ask the person to provide documentation from a regulated health professional. The documentation must confirm that the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A person with disability who is accompanied by a support person will have unlimited access to his/her support person while at the agency.

When support persons are required (e.g., sign language interpreters, real-time captioners, attendants, etc.) for agency-sponsored meetings, consultations or events, the agency will compensate support persons, in accordance with its Travel and Meals policy. Alternatively, the agency can consider other suitable options. Before making this decision, the agency must:

- Consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs;
- Consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence; and
- Determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

## **Communication**

The agency will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. Agency public communications will inform persons with disabilities that requests for accommodation are welcome.

The agency's Accessible Customer Service (ACS) policy is publicly available on our website.

## **Feedback Process**

Comments regarding how we provide service to persons with disabilities are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback can be provided in one of the following ways:

- Electronic mail to: [ACS@HealthForceOntario.ca](mailto:ACS@HealthForceOntario.ca)
- Telephone: 416-862-2200 or 1-800-596-4046
- TTY 416-862-4817
- Letter mailed to: 163 Queen St. E., Toronto, ON, M5A 1S1

Privacy will be respected and all feedback will be reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve agency services.

Where possible, feedback will be addressed immediately. Clients can expect an acknowledgement of verbal/telephone feedback within five business days or a response to a mailed/e-mailed complaint within ten business days of receipt. Responses will indicate how the matter will be addressed.

## **Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

The agency will provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in facilities or services used by persons with disabilities. The notice may include information about the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption is expected to last, and a description of any alternative facilities or services available (if any).

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notice will also be provided on outgoing telephone messages and/or on our website.

In the event that there is a planned temporary disruption in services that is expected to last for less than 48 hours, no advance notice will be given.

## **Training for Employees**

Within three months of hire, employees and volunteers (if applicable) will receive training on:

- The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service;
- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its regulations; and
- The agency's Accessible Customer Service policy.

## **External Resources**

[Link to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#)

[Link to Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Link to Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services](#)