

POLICY, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

NAME: Accessibility (AODA, 2005) and Integrated
Accessibility Standards (IAS)

MANUAL: General

CODE #: WE-SE-10

OF PAGES: 3

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 31, 2023

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To establish the accessibility standards for Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 (IAS) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 for Windsor Essex Community Health Centre (weCHC), in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07.
- 1.2. To provide an overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) and ensure employees, contractors, students and volunteers are informed and understand the legislation and the requirements under the regulations.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, sub-contractors, students and volunteers.

3. POLICY

weCHC believes in accessibility for all people under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA – 2005). weCHC is committed to excellence in serving all individuals and providing services and programs in compliance under this Act. In accordance with the AODA, weCHC will take the steps possible to ensure access to employment, student placement, volunteer opportunities, weCHC's facilities, programs and services for any individual with a disability. Further, weCHC will continuously improve its services and increase accessibility over time.

4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1 Accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life and maintain their dignity and independence.
- 4.2 The provincial government enacted the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in 2005 to make Ontario, (includes public, non-profit and private sectors), accessible by 2025.
- 4.3 The Act lays the framework for the development of province-wide mandatory standards on accessibility in all areas of daily life and allows the government to enforce them.
- 4.4 Ontario currently has accessibility standards in five areas:
 - 4.4.1 Customer Service
 - 4.4.2 Employment
 - 4.4.3 Information and Communications
 - 4.4.4 Transportation
 - 4.4.5 Design of Public spaces

The **Customer Service Standard** (*Ontario Regulation 429/07*) was the first standard introduced which sets out some of the below requirements. For additional legislative requirements and definitions refer to the Program Resource Guide.

- weCHC welcomes individuals with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.
- An individual with a disability who is accompanied by a support person can have that person accompany them on our premises and to their appointment.
- In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for individuals with disabilities, weCHC will notify individuals promptly by posting a notice at the location of the disruption, at public entrances and service counters which will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.
- weCHC will provide training to employees, students, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf. Training will be provided as part of the orientation to weCHC and reviewed on an on-going basis. Training information will include:
 - an overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
 - the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
 - weCHC's plan related to the customer service standard;
 - how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
 - how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
 - what to do if an individual with a disability is having difficulty in accessing weCHC's facilities, program and/or services.
- Opportunities will be provided for individuals to provide feedback on the accessibility of weCHC programs and services.

Accessibility Multi-Year Plan:

- weCHC will document, maintain and provide a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, including the identification, removal and prevention of barriers for all persons with disabilities from its sites and programs, to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities. The multi-year accessibility plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years and will be posted on weCHC's website. Upon request, weCHC will provide a copy of the plan in an accessible format.

Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulations, IASR (*Ontario Integrated Regulation 191/11*)

- The IASR is the second standard enacted on July 1, 2011. It includes the Employment, Information and Communication and the Transportation Standards.
- Under the IASR, weCHC is committed to:
 - Train staff and volunteers on Ontario's accessibility laws and on accessibility aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that apply to persons with disabilities;
 - Consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-serve kiosks;
 - Consult with people with disabilities and provide information and communications materials in accessible formats or with communication supports, as requested and based on legislated requirements;
 - Fair and accessible employment practices during an employee's work life-cycle, and accommodate disabilities during recruitment and assessment processes and upon hire, as requested;
 - Create individual accommodation plans and/or provide workplace emergency information for any employee who has a disability.

weCHC will work toward improving accessibility for all by following the guidelines outlined under the regulation, reviewing internal policies and practices, monitoring buildings and premises to ensure they are free of barriers and biases. In addition to the details outlined in weCHC's Program Resource Guide the following will also be upheld:

- weCHC will take the steps possible to ensure access for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces.
- Complaints related to the accessibility of weCHC facilities, programs and services will be addressed in accordance with weCHC's complaint management procedure.
- Any policies that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.
- weCHC Accessibility Plan will be reviewed, updated, and posted on the company's website, upon request weCHC will provide a copy of the Plan in an accessible format
- Ensure that all Internet website, including web content, conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA except where this is impracticable.
- weCHC will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process. weCHC will provide various supports to its employees with disabilities including:
 - notifying successful job applicants of its policies for accommodating those with disabilities
 - consulting with an employee to provide accessible formats and communication supports
 - documenting and establishing individualized workplace emergency response information if required due to a disability
 - develop a documented return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require a return to work plan.
- weCHC will take into account accessibility needs when conducting performance management, career development and advancement or when redeploying employees.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Program Resource Guide - Accessibility](#)

Original Policy Approval Date: June 26, 2012					
POLICY REVISIONS SUBSEQUENT TO ORIGINAL APPROVAL					
#	Initiator	Reason for Revision	Who Revised	Date of Revision	Approver
1	Dir, HR	Review and update policy format	Consultant	June 28, 2013	CEO
2	Dir, HR	Review and update policy format	Dir, HR	Feb 27, 2015	Dir, HR
3	Dir, HR	Review and update as required	Dir, HR	Sept 10, 2020	ED
4	Dir, HR	Review and update as required	Dir, HR	Oct 31, 2023	ED