



20 Queen Street West	Tel: (416) 322-6600
Suite 2700, P.O. Box 7	Fax: (416) 322-6618
Toronto, Ontario M5H 3R3	Toll Free: 1(800) 701-2362

## **Ontario Principals' Council**

### **Customer Service Accessibility Standards: Policies, Practices and Procedures**

In Accordance with Regulation 191/11, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*

## **Table of Contents**

1. Introduction
2. The OPC Commitment
3. Establishment of Customer Service Policies, Practices and Notice of Availability of Documents
4. Communication
5. Use of Assistive Devices
6. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons
7. Notice of Temporary Disruptions
8. A Feedback Process
9. Training for Employees
10. Questions About This Policy

# Customer Service Accessibility Standards Policies, Practices and Procedures

## 1. Introduction

### *The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities, 2005* ("A.O.D.A") is legislation that is intended to make Ontario accessible for persons with disabilities by 2025. The purpose is to make Ontario barrier-free by 2025 by developing, implementing and enforcing standards for accessibility related to goods, services, facilities, employment, workplace accommodations, information and communications, transportation and building structures. This goal is to be accomplished through the implementation of a series of accessibility standards regulations that prescribe a variety of policies, practices and procedures that organizations are to implement over a number of years.

The organizations subject to the *AODA* include "any agency, board, commission, authority, corporation or other entity established under an Act". As a result, the *AODA* and its subsequent regulations apply to the Ontario Principals' Council (established in 1998 by Letters Patent).

### *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*

Regulation 191/11 outlines compliance requirements under the Customer Service Accessibility Standards in the following areas:

- ✓ Establishment of policies, practices and procedures and notice of availability of documents
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Use of Assistive Devices
- ✓ Use of service animals and support persons
- ✓ Notice of temporary disruptions
- ✓ Notice of availability of documents
- ✓ Feedback process
- ✓ Training for Employees

This document outlines the Council's policies, practices and procedures to ensure compliance with the customer service regulation. The policies are intended to benefit the full range of persons with disabilities. Whether an individual has a disability or not, all persons are treated with courtesy and respect when they interact with the Council.

This policy is available in alternate formats upon request.

## **2. The OPC Commitment**

The Ontario Principals' Council ("OPC") supports the full integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities as outlined in the *AODA* and supports the Ontario government's overall goal to make the province barrier-free by 2025.

The OPC is committed to full compliance with the *AODA*, including Regulation 191/11 the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

The OPC is a professional organization committed to providing high quality service to its members and to the public. The OPC treats every person with courtesy and respect.

The OPC's employees deliver service in a manner that acknowledges the nature of an individual's disability and respects a person's desire for independence, dignity, and equal opportunity.

## **3. Establishment of Policies, Practices and Procedures and the Notice of the Availability of Documents**

### **Regulatory Requirements:**

Regulation 191/11, *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (henceforth 'the IASR'), specifically the customer service accessibility standards of sections 80.45 to 80.51 of the IASR, requires organizations to establish and document its accessibility policies, practices and procedures and, upon request, to provide a copy of the documentation to members of the public.

Every provider that has at least 20 employees is required to notify persons to whom it provides goods or services that the documents required by the regulation (policies, practices, procedures) are available upon request.

### **Compliance Measures:**

The OPC is committed to ensuring that its customer service policies, practices and procedures promote the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities.

- Posting its accessibility measures in an accessibility section of the OPC's website.
- Providing copies of the accessibility policies, practices, and procedures for distribution at the OPC's Reception desk.
- Producing documents in large print or other accessible formats, upon request.
- Notice regarding the Regulation and its compliance measures in the OPC's magazine, *The Register*.

The OPC reviews its accessibility policies, practices and procedures on an annual basis and makes adjustments when necessary.

Any OPC accessibility policy, practice or procedure that does not respect the needs of persons with disabilities is modified or revoked.

#### **4. Communication**

##### **Regulatory Requirements:**

The Regulation indicates that when communicating with a person with a disability, an organization shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

##### **Compliance Measures:**

The OPC communicates with its clients with disabilities in a variety of ways.

The OPC's Membership Services Department receives and responds to enquiries from members and from the public in person, on the telephone, and through e-mail.

The OPC provides an extensive amount of information available through its website.

The OPC has also created an area on its website to house information related to *AODA* and the OPC's commitments under the Regulation.

The OPC invites participants in OPC conferences, consultations, meetings, interviews, etc. to identify any accommodation needs before their arrival so that the OPC can better meet the service needs of all individuals.

All requests for interaction with the OPC include the following statement:

*"The OPC is committed to providing service that is accessible to all individuals. Please identify any accommodation needs you may have prior to your scheduled interaction with the OPC."*

#### **5. Assistive Devices**

##### **Regulatory Requirements:**

The IASR stipulates that organizations must enable the use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the provider's goods or services.

##### **Compliance Measures:**

The OPC permits and encourages persons with disabilities to use assistive devices while interacting with the OPC.

The OPC maximizes the services it provides by using its own assistive devices.

The OPC has designed its public spaces with accessibility needs in mind:

- wheelchair access to the building;
- wheelchair accessible washroom on the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor.
- elevator access to the OPC and each elevator has audible messaging; and
- meeting rooms have wide aisles to accommodate persons using a wheelchair.

## **6. Use of Service Persons and Service Animals**

### **Regulatory Requirements:**

The IASR requires that organizations permit the use of service animals and support persons when providing customer service to a person with a disability. (Organizations are to allow service animals in those areas of the premises open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law.)

### **Compliance Measures:**

The OPC welcomes individuals using guide dogs or service animals in all public locations of the OPC and at all OPC-sponsored public events.

As well, individuals requiring the assistance of a support person are permitted to do so.

All reasonable requests for the OPC to provide support persons to assist during interactions with the OPC are accommodated where possible, for example providing a sign language interpreter during an OPC-sponsored event.

The OPC may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when at the OPC, only if, after individual consultation with the person whom has the disability and through consideration of the evidence, that a support person may be necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability and the safety of others.

Fees, admission charges connected to OPC's service delivery to a person with a disability will not be charged for support persons.

OPC employees are trained in how to relate appropriately with persons with a disability, who are accompanied by service animals or support persons.

## **7. Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

### **Regulatory Requirements:**

The IASR requires that a notice of any temporary disruption in service that would specifically affect a person with a disability (e.g., elevator out of order) be posted in a conspicuous area or by any other method that is reasonable in the circumstances, when one occurs. The notice must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

### **Compliance Measures:**

The OPC has a section on its website that provides information about the OPC's policies, practices and procedures regarding the IASR. This section also includes notices about any temporary disruptions in services.

Notices are also placed at the Reception desk. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notices are provided through outgoing e-mail.

## **8. Feedback Process**

### **Regulatory Requirements:**

The IASR requires that a process for individuals to provide feedback about the organization's goods or services to people with disabilities be developed. The organization is to indicate how it will respond to any feedback. As well, information regarding this feedback process must be readily available to the public.

### **Compliance Measures:**

As the goal of this policy is to meet service delivery expectations while serving customers with disabilities, the OPC welcomes feedback regarding how well those expectations are being met.

The Accessibility section of the OPC's website encourages clients to send feedback with suggestions or concerns regarding the OPC's service delivery. As well, the OPC records any feedback regarding its accessibility policies, practices and procedures by e-mail, phone or in person.

Feedback that requires follow-up action is assigned to the appropriate staff to respond to the individual concerned.

When a response is required, a person can expect an acknowledgement of their feedback, within five business days, and a response within 15 business days. The OPC will make its best efforts to respond to the person in an accessible format, e.g., telephone, e-mail or letter.

A record of any concerns regarding the OPC's accessibility policies, processes or practices is maintained and is reviewed annually to ensure that the OPC is continuing to meet the spirit and compliance requirements of the customer service regulation.

## **9. Training**

### **Regulatory Requirements:**

The IASR requires training for all employees or contractors who have interaction with its members or the public who have a disability, and for all employees who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

## **Compliance Measures:**

The OPC is committed to ensuring that all employees have the skills and knowledge to deliver customer service to persons with disabilities with sensitivity and respect.

The OPC provides on-going training to all OPC employees and independent contractors regarding the IASR customer service accessibility standards.

As required, the training includes the following topics:

- A review of the purpose of the *AODA* and the requirements of IASR, Accessibility customer service accessibility standards.
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
- How to use equipment or devices available on the OPC's premises or otherwise provided by the OPC that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the OPC's goods or services.
- OPC employees will be updated on an ongoing basis about any future changes to these policies, practices and procedures, and any future compliance activities for this and the other regulations introduced under the *AODA* through electronic medium such as the OPC's intranet.

OPC employees will be updated on an ongoing basis about any changes to these policies, practices and procedures, and any future compliance activities for this and the other regulations introduced under the *AODA* primarily through electronic medium such as the Council's intranet, webcasts, and/or videos.

## **10. Questions about the Policy**

Questions regarding this policy may be directed to Judith Peden, Office Manager:

**E-mail:** admin@principals.ca

**Telephone:** 416-322-6600

**Toll-free telephone** (in Ontario): 1-800-701-2362

**Fax:** 416-322-6618

**Mailing Address:** 20 Queen Street West, Suite 2700, Toronto, Ontario M5H 3R3