



Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society Accessibility Policy – Statement of Organizational Commitment

Preamble

The Government of Ontario passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* in 2005 to support the full inclusion of persons with disabilities. It is the goal of the Government of Ontario to make Ontario fully accessible by 2025.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and addresses how the Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society will achieve accessibility in accordance with the timeframes established by the Regulation. It provides the overall strategic direction the Society will follow to provide accessibility supports to Ontarians with disabilities.

The requirements of the Regulation that apply to our agency include:

- Establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the Society's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulations;
- Training; and
- Other specific requirements under the IASR which includes the Information and Communication, Employment and Built Standards.

Policy

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society is committed to implementing, maintaining and enhancing accessibility in the areas of Information and Communication, Employment, and (as applicable) Built Environment, for all persons with disabilities in a timely manner. We are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

The requirements set out in this policy and the AODA Regulations are not a replacement or substitution for the requirements established under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the Code) nor do the standards or policy limit any obligation owed to persons with disabilities under any other legislation.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

By January 1, 2014, Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society shall establish, implement, and maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, including timelines, which outlines strategies to address, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. This plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years and progress will be reported on our website (www.h-pcas.ca). Information will be provided in alternative formats upon request.

Training

The Society will provide appropriate training when required on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and on the Code as it relates to people with disabilities to the following: employees, volunteers including Board Members, foster care providers, all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society.

Employees will be trained when changes are made to the accessibility policy. New employees will be trained as soon as practicable. This training may be delivered in a variety of different formats.

The Society will maintain a record of the dates when training is provided and the number of individuals who were trained.

Information and Communications

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society is committed to making our information and communications accessible to persons with disabilities upon request as soon as practicable. This includes emergency procedures, plans or public safety information, which are prepared by the Society and are made available to the public.

Accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities will be provided:

- Upon request, in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to a disability;
- If applicable, at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons;
- In consultation with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

If the Society determines that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications, or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available, that person who requires the information will be provided with:

- An explanation as to why the information or communications are not convertible; and
- A summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

The public shall be notified about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. In the following areas the Society will ensure a process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports, upon request. This is in addition to the Customer Service Standard Feedback Requirement.

Website Accessibility

The Society will ensure that our website is in conformance with level A of the **W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0**. We are continually striving to make this website fully accessible to persons with disabilities. If you would like more information on how this website is accessible, or if you have suggestions for improvement, please contact us at 519-271-2360 ext. 3242.

Employment Standard

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain employees with disabilities. This includes providing accessibility throughout all stages of the employment cycle.

Recruitment and Retention

The Society will:

- Notify internal and external job applicants about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities to support their full participation in the recruitment process;
- Notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used;
- Consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs when a selected applicant requests an accommodation;
- Notify successful applicants of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

Informing Employees of Supports

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society will inform employees of the policies (and any updates to those policies) used to support employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. This information will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

When an employee with a disability requests it, the Society will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports:

- For information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
- For information that is generally available to employees in the workplace (i.e., agendas, meeting minutes, newsletters, forms, etc.); and
- To determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

If the employee has an individual accommodation plan, then the accessible formats and/or communication supports that will be provided to the employee will be included in the plan.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society provides individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability:

- If the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the Society is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;
- With the employee's consent, to Human Resources and the employee to provide assistance to the employee, if required;
- As soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;
- And will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed and when the Society reviews its general emergency response policies.

Accommodation Process and Individual Accommodation Plans (IAP)

Huron-Perth Children's Aid will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the IASR to its disability accommodation and return to work policy and processes. Such processes will be documented and outline the steps the Society will take to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan. Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society will ensure that the process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans includes:

- The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan;
- The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis;
- The manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved;
- Timelines for the provision of accommodations;
- Union representative for the employee, upon request or another colleague, as appropriate;
- Steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- Frequency with which the IAP will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If an IAP is denied, the reasons for denial are to be provided to the employee;
- A format that takes into account the employee's disability needs;
- If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided;
- Individualized workplace emergency response information, if necessary;
- Identification of any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Return to Work

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the IASR regulations to its return to work policy and process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. Such processes will be documented and will outline the steps the Society will take to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan.

The return to work process is not intended to replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (*i.e. Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 1997*).

Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, and Redeployment

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities. This may include having performance plans available in accessible formats and/or the provision of feedback in a manner that takes into account an employee's disability.

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.

Built Environment Standard

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society is committed to incorporating barrier-free principles in the construction of new facilities. It is also committed to incorporating barrier-free principles during the renovation of existing structures, taking into consideration the constraints of the existing structures. This document is available in accessible formats upon request.

Effective Date: January 1, 2014