

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (AODA)

Hariri Pontarini Architects (HPA) is committed to fostering a healthy and positive work environment that recognizes and respects the personal worth, dignity and diversity of employees, clients, suppliers, business partners, third parties or any other persons encountered during the course of providing services.

This policy applies to all HPA employees and contingent workers (agency, independent contractors, third parties, joint venture employees, volunteers etc.), or any other persons providing services on behalf of HPA.

Purpose

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) was created to ensure that all people with disabilities are treated with respect, dignity and equity. HPA is committed to providing respectful care that focuses on the unique needs of the individuals.

This policy sets out to provide guidelines to employees or any other persons who interacts with clients, third parties or the public on behalf of HPA when providing services to people with disabilities in compliance with the AODA.

Definitions

Persons with Disabilities

Disability includes, but is not limited to:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury
- A birth defect or illness including diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment
- Physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability
- A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- A mental disorder
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed through an insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*
- Disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities of which the effects may come and go

Note: It is important to understand that information about a disability is personal and private and must be treated confidentially

Policy

Accessible Customer Service

All services provided by HPA will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

People with disabilities will be given an equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the services provided by HPA.

Accessible Information

Whenever possible, HPA will make every effort to assist or provide information in a variety of formats to support information dissemination. When providing documents to a person with a disability, HPA shall take every consideration of the disability into account when determining the format.

Assistive Devices

Personal assistive devices and technologies are permitted in all areas of the HPA office. Exceptions may occur when HPA determines that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or to others on the premises. In these situations, if a person with a disability is hindered from accessing services, HPA will endeavour to accommodate the individual by providing an alternative where possible. It should be noted that the provision, use and safety of personal assistive devices and technologies are the responsibility of the person with a disability.

Service Animals

HPA supports people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. When a person requires a service animal every effort will be made to accommodate and ensure that the surroundings will allow the individual to effectively maintain their relationship with the animal. If this is not possible due to health or safety concerns, a mutually agreed upon location for the animal may be identified for a limited time. In this instance, other provisions will be made to ensure that the individual receives the support otherwise provided by the service animal.

Support Persons

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have the support person present while on the premises unless it becomes a health or safety risk. In this instance, other provisions will be made to ensure that the individual receives the assistance otherwise provided by the support person. In some cases, it may be necessary to seek the consent of the person with the disability prior to discussing confidential information in front of the support person.

Service Disruption

HPA is aware that the operation of its services and facilities are important to its employees, clients or third parties. However, temporary disruptions of services may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within HPA's control or knowledge.

In the event of a disruption, HPA will make every reasonable effort to provide advance notice to its employees, clients or third parties, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that may be available. The notice will be made available by posting the information on the premises or by an alternative method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

In the event of an unexpected disruption, an advance notice may not be a possibility. In such cases, HPA will provide notice as soon as possible.

Training

All HPA employees, contractors or any other persons providing services on behalf of HPA will receive training on providing customer service to people with disabilities on the following:

- The purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with 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 a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our services
- HPA policies, practices, and procedures relating to the customer service standard

Specifically:

- New employees will receive customer service training through orientation
- All HPA employees, contractors or any other people who interact with clients or third parties on behalf of HPA will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices, and procedures.

The following records will be maintained by the Controller

- Employee training
- Orientation for all new hires, contractors and volunteers

Process for Providing Feedback

Feedback is welcomed in regards to the delivery of our services to persons with disabilities where it may identify areas to assist in continuous service improvement. Feedback can be provided by contacting HPA in person, email or fax:

Chair, Joint Health & Safety Committee
301-235 Carlaw Ave
Toronto ON,
M4M 2S1
Telephone No: (416) 929-4901
Fax No: (416) 929-8924

Internally, the feedback form will be available on the company server. The feedback form can be available in a variety of formats at the request of the individual.

HPA has a responsibility to address and respond to any feedback received and will respond to any requests within 30 (thirty) days of receipt.