



AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

PURPOSE

The Integrated Accessibility Standards (Regulation 191/11) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) came into force on July 1, 2011. The Regulation establishes Standards to address barriers that persons with disabilities face.

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that Job Skills complies with the Government of Ontario's Integrated Accessibility Standards as it relates to Information and Communication and Employment.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Job Skills Staff. The Job Skills community includes Staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants and Board of Directors.

POLICY

Job Skills is committed to creating an inclusive culture across the Organization by preventing and removing barriers for persons with disabilities. Where it is not possible to remove barriers, Job Skills will make efforts to accommodate persons with disabilities in a timely, effective and suitable manner.

Job Skills supports the principles of the AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Agency's goal is to ensure accessibility for all its Staff and clients served.

DEFINITIONS

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in one or more aspects of society, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communication barrier, attitudinal barrier, technological barrier, Policy or Practice.

Standard: According to the AODA, sets out what a person or organization must do to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities to whom the Standard applies.

Communication Supports: May include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communication.

Accessible Formats: May include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Feedback: Any comments, compliments, suggestions or complaints provided to Job Skills by its clients.

Disability: According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, as referenced by AODA, means:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or a visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or in a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.

- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.
- A learning disability, or 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 or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

(Disabilities may differ in severity, may be visible, invisible and have effects which may come and go.)

Website: Means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier and is accessible to the public.

Information: Includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Confidentiality of Information

Personal information concerning an individual's disability cannot be released without written consent of the individual and must be managed in a manner that is consistent with the Freedom of Information Guidelines and Personal Information Protection Guidelines, where appropriate. Where the accommodation process requires the release of confidential information to a third party (such as an external resource group), the third party, and any other person or department delegated by that third party, will be required to ensure that confidentiality is protected and that the information obtained is kept in a secure location, and used solely for the purpose that the release was required.

2. Accessibility Policies

Through this AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy and related Accessibility Policies, Job Skills confirms its commitment to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely, effective and suitable manner.

Job Skills will make these documents available and provide them in an accessible format upon request.

3. Accessibility Plan

- a. Job Skills will maintain a Multi-year Accessibility Plan and review and update it once every five years.
- b. Job Skills will make this Plan available and provide the Plan in an accessible format upon request.
- c. Job Skills will file an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement its Plan and provide the status report in accessible format upon request.

4. Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

Job Skills will incorporate accessibility features and criteria when procuring or acquiring contracted services, except where not practicable to do so. Where it is deemed not practicable to do so, Job Skills will provide an explanation upon request.

5. Training

Job Skills will provide training to Staff on the requirements of Accessibility Standards and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

6. Information and Communications

1. Feedback

Job Skills will ensure that its processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities and will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Comments and feedback are welcomed and appreciated and can be made in person, by telephone, through e-mail, in writing, on the Website or by other means as required. Feedback, questions and responses will be documented. If a response is requested or required, it will be sent within two (2) business days of it being received. If, as a result of the feedback, it becomes necessary to make changes to the way Job Skills provides goods and services to its clients with disabilities, such changes will be undertaken, as soon as practicable.

2. Accessible formats and communication supports

- a. Job Skills shall provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account each person's accessibility needs.
- b. Job Skills will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.
- c. Communication supports will be provided at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

3. Accessible Websites and web content

Job Skills will make its Website and web content conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA as per the required schedule, as outlined in Section 14 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, except where not practicable to do so.

7. Employment

Job Skills Policies and Practices are intended to build an inclusive and accessible work environment free from discrimination and harassment. Job Skills is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

8. References and Forms

- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11