AODA – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Information and Communications Policy

Intent

This policy applies to the provision of accessible employment services for persons with disabilities, in accordance with O. Reg. 191/11 *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (IASR) under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

All employment services provided by Autism Ontario will follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

Definitions

Accessible formats: Include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

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

Conversion-ready: An electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an acceptable format.

Kiosk: An interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products.

Guidelines

General Requirements

The following general requirements apply to the five standards: information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces, and customer service.

Establishment of Accessibility Policies and Plans

Autism Ontario will develop, implement, and maintain policies governing how it will achieve accessibility through these requirements.

Autism Ontario will include a statement of its commitment to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner in its policies. These documents will be made publicly available in an accessible format upon request.

Autism Ontario will establish, implement, maintain, and document a multi-year accessibility plan outlining its strategy to prevent and remove future barriers and meet its requirements under the IASR. Accessibility plans will be made available in an accessible format upon request and will be posted on our website.

Autism Ontario will review and update its accessibility plan once every five years and will establish, review, and update our accessibility plans in consultation with persons with disabilities or an advisory committee. Annual status reports will be prepared that will report on the progress of the steps taken to implement Autism Ontario's accessibility plan. This status report will be posted on our website. If requested, the report will be created in an accessible format.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods and Services, or Facilities

Autism Ontario will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities. The only exception is in cases where it is impracticable to do so.

Training Requirements

Autism Ontario will provide training on the IASR accessibility requirements and Ontario's *Human Rights Code* as they pertain to individuals with disabilities. This applies to all employees and volunteers, individuals who participate in developing Autism Ontario policies, and all other persons who provide goods, services, or facilities on Autism Ontario's behalf. Training will be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable. Training will be provided regularly to new employees and as changes to Autism Ontario's accessibility policies occur.

Records

Autism Ontario will maintain records on the training provided, when it was provided, and the number of employees who were trained.

Feedback Process

Autism Ontario will ensure that all feedback processes, both internal and external, are made accessible to the individuals and families we serve, and employees upon request.

In accordance with the customer service standards, Autism Ontario will make known the availability of accessible feedback formats.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Unless deemed unconvertible, Autism Ontario will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities upon request. Accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the individual.

Autism Ontario will account for the person's accessibility needs when customizing individual requests and will consult with the individual making the request to ensure suitability.

Autism Ontario will make the availability of accessible formats and communication supports publicly known.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

Autism Ontario will ensure that our website and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) as outlined in the IASR, and will refer to the legislation for specific compliance deadlines and requirements.

Exceptions

The Information and Communications Standards do not apply to:

- Products and product labels;
- Unconvertible information or communications; or
- Information that the organization does not control either directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

Unconvertible Information or Communications

If it is determined in consultation with the requesting party that information or communications are unconvertible, Autism Ontario will ensure that the individual who made the request is provided with an explanation and a summary of the information.

Autism Ontario will classify information or communications as unconvertible where:

- It is not technically practicable to convert; or
- The technology required to make the conversion is not readily available.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it reflects Autism Ontario's current practices and legislative requirements.