

<p><b>SECTION:</b> Human Resources</p> <p><b>DEPARTMENT</b> Human Resources</p>	<p><b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> May 2010</p> <p><b>DATE LAST REVISED:</b> January 2024</p>	<p><b>Approved by:</b></p>  <p><b>Chief Executive Officer</b></p>
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**POLICY STATEMENT:**

Kerry's Place Autism Services (Kerry's Place) is committed to providing accessible and inclusive services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Kerry's Place will take all steps necessary to comply with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and its regulations to ensure that our programs and services are accessible to everyone.

**Purpose:**


This policy outlines our commitment to fostering an accessible and inclusive environment, services and supports and employment by removing barriers for persons with disabilities.

**Scope:**

This policy is applicable to all employees, volunteers, contractors, third-party service providers, and people supported and served by Kerry's Place.

**Definitions:**

- **Accessibility:** refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people who experience disabilities. Ontario has laws to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, including the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Ontario Building Code
- **Accessible Formats:** refers to alternative versions of information or materials designed to ensure that individuals with disabilities can perceive, understand, and use the content effectively. These formats are created to accommodate various needs and disabilities, allowing equal access to information for everyone. Examples of accessible formats include, but are not limited to:
  - Large Print
  - Braille
  - Audio Format
  - Electronic Text
  - Accessible PDFs
  - Easy Read Format
  - Captioned Videos
  - Sign Language Interpretation

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- **Barrier:** a circumstance or obstacle that keeps people apart. For people with disabilities, barriers can take many forms including attitudinal, communication, physical, policy, programmatic, social, and transportation.
- **Disability:** The AODA adopts the definition for disability that is in the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#). It defines disability broadly as:
  - 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 visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or 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, or
  - an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.
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**Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Employee:**

- Behaving in a professional manner and treating others with respect;
- Refusing to participate in or tolerate inappropriate behaviour including discrimination and exclusion;
- Participating in accessibility training programs to enhance their understanding of the AODA and related policies and regulations;
- Supporting Kerry's Place in identifying, assessing and providing solutions to barriers found in organizational policies, practices, and decision-making processes by providing feedback or suggestions for improvement;
- Striving to communicate effectively with individuals with disabilities, taking into consideration diverse communication needs and preferences;
- Participating in discussions to determine reasonable accommodations when needed;
- Reporting knowledge of any current barriers at Kerry's Place for people with disabilities to management.

**Manager:**

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- Ensuring that employees participate in accessibility training and have access to the information and resources they need to support a culture of mutual respect;
- Addressing accommodation needs for their team members, working collaboratively with Human Resources when needed to implement reasonable accommodations;
- Ensuring accountability for employees who demonstrate inappropriate behavior;
- Addressing accessibility barriers and participating in the development and implementation of accessibility plans within their areas of responsibility;
- Receiving and addressing feedback related to accessibility, ensuring that concerns are reported, investigated and appropriate actions are taken;

**Kerry's Place:**

- Conducting an annual organizational self-assessment to measure how we are achieving the vision of an accessible and inclusive environment;
- Making reasonable accommodations to enable employees with disabilities to perform their job duties and providing necessary support throughout the accommodation process;
- Promoting human rights within the organization, preventing discrimination and setting out principles and standards for behaviour;
- Establishing accessible channels for employees, customers, and the public to provide feedback on accessibility concerns, and ensure that feedback is reviewed and appropriate actions are taken;

**Communication:**

This policy will be communicated during orientation and at team meetings as required.

**Standard/Procedure:**

***Press Ctrl+Click to follow link and quickly find the procedure you are looking for:***

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**Customer Service Standards**

All services and supports provided, as well as all interactions with persons with disabilities must honour the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity.

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**Assistive Devices**

We recognize the rights of all persons with disabilities to use assistive devices, services, or methods when they are interacting with us. The exception to this standard would be restricting the use of certain supports or methods (such as a service animal) in non-public areas of the organization where a person receiving support may experience a reaction that is beyond their ability to overcome. If an exclusion is made, we will make every effort to ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to enter the premises with support.

If Kerry’s Place charges an admission fee to an event, notice will be provided ahead of time if any amount would be charged for a necessary support person to accompany a person with a disability.

**Notice of Temporary Disruption**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, Kerry’s Place will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

**Feedback Process**


Kerry’s Place welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Our website states that feedback may be given to any member of management or the Human Resources department by:

- submitting the Service Accessibility Feedback Form;
- verbally or;
- by email or;
- by writing a letter or;
- by submitting a disk or mass storage device.

Feedback will be acknowledged with gratitude by the representative who receives it. When feedback can be used to improve service, steps to implement the recommendations will be taken. The person who provided the feedback will be informed of the action taken. Complaints will be processed through *Policy on Complaints/Feedback*.

**Integrated Accessibility Standards**

We are committed to incorporating accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practical to do so. In such situations, an explanation will be provided by request.

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**Information and Communication Standards**

We are committed to delivering information and communication in formats that are accessible to individuals with disabilities. We will respond promptly to requests for alternative formats and ensure that information is presented in a clear and understandable manner. The provision of accessible formats will be done in consultation with the person making the request at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. If this is not possible, an explanation will be provided. The feedback process will be followed as outlined in the above Customer Service Standards section of this document.

Emergency procedures, plans and other public safety information will be made available to the public in an accessible format with appropriate communication supports as soon as practical upon request.

Our website and web content will conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) as required by the *Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation O. Reg. 191/11*.

**Employment Standards**


Kerry's Place is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. This section outlines requirements for the accommodation of persons with disabilities during the recruitment process and throughout employment with Kerry's Place.

*Recruitment*

We will notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the recruitment processes. During the recruitment process, applicants will be informed 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 used. If an applicant requests accommodation, we will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that considers the applicant's accessibility needs. When making offers of employment, we will notify successful applicants of the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

*Informing Employees of Supports*

We will communicate the policies used to support employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that considers an employee's accessibility needs. This information will be provided to new employees during orientation and will be updated for all employees whenever there is a change to the existing policies.

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*Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees*

Upon request we will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of suitable accessible formats and communication support for information that is needed in order to perform the employee’s job and information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

*Workplace Emergency Response Information*


Upon becoming aware of the need for accommodation, we will promptly provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability if individualized information is necessary. The employee requiring an individualized workplace emergency response is responsible for notifying Kerry’s Place of the need for an accommodation.

If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, with that employee’s input and consent, Kerry’s Place will select another employee and provide the workplace emergency response information to that person so that they are able to assist in an emergency situation. Kerry’s Place will review the individualized workplace emergency response information if the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed, and when Kerry’s Place reviews its general emergency response policies.

*Documented Individual Accommodation Plans*

We have developed a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. This process includes:

- The ways in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the plan;
- The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis;
- The manner in which Kerry’s Place may request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at Kerry’s Place’s expense, to assist in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how to achieve accommodation;
- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where represented, or another representative from the workplace where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent;
- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee’s personal information;
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial are communicated to the employee;
- The means of providing the accommodation plan in a format that considers the employee’s accessibility needs.

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Individual accommodation plans will, if requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided; include individualized workplace emergency response information; and identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

*Return to Work Processes*

We have in place a documented return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work. The process outlines the steps we will take to facilitate the return to work of employees absent due to disability and include documented individual accommodation plans if required.

*Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, and Redeployment*

We consider the accessibility needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees with disabilities when using the performance management process, providing career development and advancement, and considering redeployment.

**Training:**

Employees, volunteers, students and contractors who are involved in providing services and supports or who interact with supported persons, the public, or other third parties on behalf of Kerry's Place must be trained by Kerry's Place in the purpose of *Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the associated Regulations. Training will be provided to all employees, volunteers, students and contractors who represent Kerry's Place as soon as practicable after the commencement of their service. Education includes:

- 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 assistive devices or provide assistance;
- How to address concerns from a person who is having trouble accessing our services.

Additional training will be provided as required by changes in policies, procedures, or practices. Training records will be maintained by the Human Resources Department.

**Evaluation:**


This policy will be reviewed every five years, or as needed by the Human Resources department. This document is publicly available. Accessible formats are available upon request.

**Related Documents, Forms and Tools:**



# Accessibility for People with Disabilities

## HR 435

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Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act  
Individualized Accommodation Emergency Response Plan  
Accommodations Process Guide  
Accessibility Standards eLearning - CLC