

DPNCHC's Compliance to the IARS requirements under AODA

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Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation establishes accessibility standards and introduces requirements for Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Built Environment. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation applies to all public, private and not-for-profit organizations, with at least one employee. DPNCHC falls under Large Private and not-for-profit organizations with 50+ employees' category.

A Statement of Commitment establishes the vision and the goals for an organization and it is a first step in the development of accessibility policies as it gives an organization purpose, clarity and direction. DPNCHC has written its Statement of Commitment and has made it available to the public by posting it on the agency website, in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page, and it is posted in the lobby of both 1900 and 1892 Davenport Road sites. We will also provide our Statement of Commitment in an accessible format upon request.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014 and we have met this requirement.

Accessibility Policies

In 2011, we developed and wrote the agency's Accessible Customer Service Policy and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Training Policy, to comply with the Customer Service Standard. Both of these policies were presented to the Policy Review Committee and approved by the Board in December 2011.

In January 2014, we developed and wrote the agency's Employment Policy and Information and Communications Policy, to meet the IASR standard. These policies describe what we do, or what rules and principles we will put in place to support achieving our accessibility goals to meet the requirements of the regulation.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014. The Employment Policy and Information and Communication Policy were presented to the Policy Review Committee and approved by the Board January 2014. Both policies were made public and are posted on the agency's website, in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page.

Availability of Policies

Public sector organizations, as well as private and not-for-profit organizations with 50 or more employees must make their accessibility policies available to the public.

- DPNCHC has posted signs on our accessibility policies at both 1900 and 1892 sites, so that the public is aware the information is available.
- We must also provide a copy of our policies to any person who requests one. As well, the copy must be provided in an accessible format, if requested.
- Policies are living documents and should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect current practices of the organization. It is DPNCHC's standard practice to review and update policies every 4 years, unless a major change/update is implemented. July 1, 2016, the Ontario Government announced 2 significant changes to the Customer Service standard. To this effect our policy was updated to include delivery of training on Accessible Customer Service to all staff,

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volunteers and Board Members, regardless of their interaction with the public and the list of professionals who are now authorized to provide documents indicating the need for a service animal has been expanded.

- DPNCHC provides clients with the opportunity to provide feedback on services provided to them. Information about the feedback process is made available by notice on the agency's website, located on the "About" menu, on the "Accessibility" page; "Customer Feedback Notice".

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014 and we have met this requirement.

Accessibility Plan

An accessibility plan describes the actions an organization will take to prevent and remove barriers. The plan creates a road map to increase accessibility and puts into action the organization's commitment to accessibility and its accessibility policies. To meet this requirement we must do the following:

- Establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the regulation.
- Post the plan on our website, and upon request, provide the plan in an accessible format.
- Review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.
- Establish, review and update our accessibility plans in consultation with persons with disabilities.
- Prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to meet the requirement.
- Post this status report on our website, and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014 and the Accessibility Plan is posted on the agency's website in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page. The 2018 Annual Status Report will be posted by March 31, 2018.

Training

The intent of this requirement is that all organizations train employees, volunteers, and those who participate in developing the organization's policies and all others who provide goods or services on behalf of the organization about the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.

DPNCHC is continuously meeting this requirement. Since February 2014, we have been using HRdownloads Training Systems to train staff on the Customer Service Standard, Employment and Information/Communications Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code AODA edition. Records of training for all staff are kept in the HR Coordinator's office. At same time, our accessibility policies were made available via internal memos and staff were asked to read them. Newly hired staff meet with the HR Coordinator before or within the first days at work for an orientation to the agency's accessibility policies and they must sign a waiver that they have read these policies. The HR Coordinator sets up all new staff for training on the AODA Standards by registering them with HRdownloads.

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Since they participate in developing DPNCHC's policies, Board members on the policy committee, were asked if they have already had AODA training. The few that had not been trained, were set up with HRdownloads and completed the training on Accessible Customer Service, Employment and Information/Communication Standards and Ontario Human Rights Code AODA edition. Committee members will review any changes to AODA policies at the beginning of the Board year and new members to the committee will receive the full on-line orientation.

Volunteers are trained on the Customer Service and Information/Communications Standard. The Volunteer Coordinator will train the volunteer on the 2 standards when meeting individually to complete the volunteer interview process, as this volunteer will be going through the process of becoming a volunteer at DPNCHC.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2015 and we have met and are continuously meeting this requirement.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

The intent of this requirement is that the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations, as well as private and not-for-profit organizations with more than 50 employees make their websites accessible to people with disabilities by conforming to international standards for website accessibility.

- As of January 15, 2018 the agency's website is at Level A. The agency is currently updating its website from the ground up to ensure it meets and exceeds Level AA compliance. As part of the update, legacy content will be either updated or removed. The site will be fully responsive for easy mobile, tablet, and desktop browsing. To make it easier for those with physical disabilities to view the website, we are looking to reduce the number of clicks and pages required to reach the user's end goal. The work underway will have the agency compliant at Level AA, well ahead of the 2021 deadline.
- We will ensure that going forward; all new web content for use by the public is checked for accessibility, our intranet; internal website that is used privately and securely by our employees is accessible and that our extranet; a controlled extension of the organization's intranet is accessible to outside users over the internet.

Feedback

Every obligated organization that has processes for receiving and responding to feedback shall ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communications supports, upon request. We have provided the public with a feedback method in the agency's website, located in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page; "Customer Feedback Notice".

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2015 and we have met this requirement.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The Information and Communications Standard outlines requirements for organizations to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities. This helps people with disabilities access sources of information and communications that many of us rely on every day.

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The intent of this requirement is that all organizations must provide information and communicate in an accessible manner about their goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities, on request. The information must be provided in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular price charged to others.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2016 and we have set up processes to meet this requirement. In the process of making accessible documents available to the public, a disclosure is posted on DPNCHC's website, in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page, "Customer Feedback Notice", "Notice of Documentation Availability", where it discloses who the contact person is and their contact information.

A general statement "Reasonable accommodation will be provided upon request." is included in the agency's flyers and registration forms that invites individuals to let us know about their assistance or accommodation needs when registering for a program or event.

This document has been created with accessibility in mind, checked with Word Accessibility Checker; a free tool available and was found to contain no issues.

Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

The intent of this requirement is that publicly available emergency and public safety information is provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

Organizations are not required to develop or create new emergency or public safety information.

Further, organizations are not required to convert this information into accessible formats or provide communication supports if they do not share the information publicly. Some organizations have confidential internal plans, such as those for security lockdowns that are not shared publicly. As we do not have emergency and public safety information available to the public, we do not have to develop or create this information. However, we have requirements under the Accessible Employment Standard to provide individualized emergency information to its employees.

The Human Resources Department sent out an anonymous survey to all staff in October 2013. The intent of this survey was to collect information on employees, to help us identify barriers that could arise in an emergency situation and provide suggestions on how to overcome them. Only one respondent self-identified as having a disability but chose not to fill out the Employee Emergency Information Worksheet.

The HR Coordinator meets with every newly hired staff for a Staff Orientation; at that time staff is made aware of agency's accessibility policies and are asked if they self-identify as having a disability and require accommodation. DPNCHC will work with anyone requesting an accommodation to create an Individual Accommodation Plan. A written section in the Staff Emergency Information Sheet form addresses this disclosure.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2012 and we have met this requirement.

Employment Standard

This standard requires employers to provide for accessibility across all stages of the employment life cycle. By pro-actively removing barriers across the employment life cycle, employers can help to create workplaces that are accessible and which allow employees to reach their full potential. This standard applies to paid employees and includes, but is not limited to, full-time, part-time, and

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seasonal employment. As good business practice, employers may apply the Standard to volunteers and other forms of unpaid work. The Employment Standard is a framework for integrating accessibility into regular workplace processes.

Requirements under the Employment Standard

The requirements covered in this section are:

- Recruitment, assessment and selection
- Accessible formats and communication supports for employees
- Workplace emergency response information
- Documented individual accommodation plans
- Return to work processes
- Performance management
- Career development and advancement
- Redeployment

The agency advertises in all job postings that “DPNCHC encourages applications from candidates whose background is diverse in terms of culture, race, language, religion, class, gender/sexual orientation. Reasonable accommodation or any other special needs will be provided in all parts of the hiring process. If you require any accommodation, please advise Human Resources”.

As well, job offer letters include the statement “DPNCHC has an accommodation process in place and provides accommodation for employees with disabilities. If you require accommodation because of a disability or a medical need, please contact HR, so that arrangements can be made for the appropriate accommodations to be in place before you begin your employment.” and in the process of conducting every “Staff Hire Orientation”, the HR Coordinator informs the newly hired employee that accommodation in the workplace will be provided upon request.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2016 and we have met the requirement.

Transportation Standard

The requirements in the Transportation Standard will help transportation providers as well as municipalities, universities, colleges, hospitals and school boards make their services and vehicles accessible to people with disabilities.

This standard does not apply to DPNCHC.

The Built Environment Standard

The Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment focus on removing barriers in two areas:

- buildings
- public spaces

In March 2014, DPNCHC was able to start improving the building's public access and use.

These improvements were made to:

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- The Centre's front doors were replaced to allow easier entry by large size scooters, wheelchairs and children's strollers.
- The men's and women's public washrooms on the main floor were fitted with accessible height sink counters and accessible handle style faucets and angled down mirrors.
- New push button door openers were installed in both Perth Hall door entrance and the bathroom, a Braille Washroom sign and inside with a new angled down mirror.
- New push button door openers were installed in the Manse front door entrance and Manse washroom on the first floor and in the main floor men's public washroom.
- A large display cabinet was removed from the floor of Main lobby to allow easier access by clients/participants in wheelchairs approaching the lowered, accessible Main reception counter.
- In February 2017, a pharmacy was built in the main floor of the Health Centre, located at 1892 Davenport Road. Taking the Built Environment Standard into account, a lower accessible counter is part of the design, as well as accessible seating area for clients in wheelchairs, scooters, etc.
- April 2017, the Early Years playground was resurfaced with artificial rubber playground turf as injury prevention and the raised wood deck was removed. The ground was leveled and wood chips were spread out for a softer, organic playground area for babies and toddlers. Parents and caregivers' feedback was included in the new design.
- January 2018, an automatic door opener was installed to the Youth Program space entrance.

In 2014, we started improvements, well ahead of the January 1, 2016 deadline. Since then and going forward, we will ensure that when building new or making significant alterations to existing public areas, accessibility is considered into these improvements.

In addition to the legislated requirements and to further improve accessibility in our community, a new activity in the 2016 Operational Plan was developed. DPNCHC partnered with the Stop Gap Foundation to create the Davenport Community Ramp Project. The DPNCHC Community Advisory Group invited community members to identify businesses and services in the neighborhood that needed accessible ramps. The project was led by a volunteer team who built and painted custom front-step ramps that made our community more accessible for people with disabilities, wheelchairs, and walkers, as well as those with children's strollers. By the end of the project, our 40 volunteers partnered with local shops and services agencies to install 18 new ramps, creating 18 more spaces where all members of our community can feel welcomed and supported.