

AC Nursing and Health Services Inc. Policies and Procedures	
Health & Safety Section 6 -	
Policy: AODA	
Policy Number: HS – 1.20	
Effective Date: January 2022	
Revision Date:	
Approved by: Board of Directors – Management	

**Purpose**

To ensure AC Nursing and Health Services is following the provincial statute that aims to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

**Scope**

To ensure that all candidates and applicants are provided with an equal opportunity or right to apply for open opportunities with AC Nursing and Health Services free from discrimination and are open to accommodation where needed.

**Policy Statement:**

AC Nursing and Health Services shall abide by Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards.

**THE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Code's goal is to provide for equal rights for everyone in Ontario. The Code directs that people with disabilities must be free from discrimination where they work, live, and receive services, and their needs must be accommodated.

**Elimination of barriers to accessibility in the workplace**

AC Nursing will strive to eliminate barriers to accessibility for workers who have physical barriers in the workplace. For example, desk risers, open space work environments for people with disabilities to include wheelchairs accessibilities.

**Physical Structure of Building**

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AC Nursing and Health Services is located on the main floor at 100 York Blvd, suite 115, Richmond Hill ON L4B 1J8. Washrooms are wheelchair accessible.

AC Nursing will strive to ensure a safety plan for all persons with disabilities. For example, fire and evacuation plans are required to ensure one’s safety.

**Education and Training**

It is mandatory that all AC Nursing staff members be trained on the modules for AODA and achieve certification.

**Remote Access to work (HR 1.90- Remote access work guidelines)**

AC Nursing and Health Services offers all employees the ability to work remote when physical challenges are noted. For example, employees who have challenges coming into a physical office will be offered a position to work remotely.

**Understanding Barriers**

**Attitudinal barriers** result when people think, and act based on false assumptions. Example: receptionist talks to an individual’s support person because she or he assumes the individual with a disability will not understand.

**Informational and communication barriers** are created when information is offered in a form that suits some, but not all, of the population. Example: print that is too small for some people to read and public address systems that alert only people who can hear the message.

**Technological barriers** occur when technology, or the way it is used, cannot be accessed by people with disabilities. Example: Websites not accessible to people who are blind and use screen reader software.

**Systemic barriers** are policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded. Example: eligibility criteria that effectively exclude people based on a disability, such as requiring a job applicant to have a driver’s license even though there are ways to reorganize a job to use another form of transportation.

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**Physical and architectural barriers** are physical obstacles that make it difficult for some to easily access a place. Example: a doorknob that cannot be turned by a person with limited mobility or strength, or a hallway or door that is too narrow to allow a person who uses a wheelchair to pass through safely.

**The tables below show different types of barriers and possible solutions to remove them.**

**Attitudinal barriers** may result in people with disabilities being treated differently than people without disabilities.

**Attitudinal Barriers**

- Thinking that people with intellectual disabilities are not able to make decisions.
- Assuming a person who has a speech impairment cannot understand you.
- Believing a person who has a mental health disability or someone who uses a wheelchair would not be a good employee.
- If a person with vision loss cannot enjoy movies, TV or concerts.
- Avoiding a person with a disability for fear of saying the wrong word or offending them.
- Thinking that every person with a disability will need costly accommodation.

**Possible Solutions**

- Do not assume what employees or clients with disabilities can or cannot do. Ask them.
- Train staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities.
- Learn about ways you can accommodate employees with disabilities.
- Learn about the different ways and available technologies that help people with vision loss enjoy movies, TV and concerts.
- Train staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities.
- Learn about the types of accommodations for people with disabilities. Many are low cost.

**Informational and communication barriers** arise when a person with a disability cannot easily receive and/or understand information that is available to others.

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**Information and Communication Barriers**

Print that is too small to be read by a person with impaired vision.

A PowerPoint or slide deck used in a presentation is not accessible to employees with low vision or who have hearing loss.

Videos to promote a program or service are not accessible to employees with low vision or who have hearing loss.

Brochures, guides and advertisements that are not clear or easily understood.

Complicated, busy, or confusing signs.  
Seating arrangements making it difficult for people who have hearing loss to fully participate in meetings

Marketing and communications materials are not inclusive  
People with disabilities are not included in visuals, or considered as a potential target audience.

**Possible Solutions**

Make everyday documents, such as signs and menus, easy to read by making sure the print is legible for most people.

Develop a template for slide decks using large fonts, high contrast colours and clean layout.

Provide a visual description of the slides when making a presentation.

Include captions when producing videos. When this is not possible, provide a text transcription of the video. Use plain language in written materials. Use symbols and pictures to help get your message across. Use sans serif fonts and avoid italics.

Keep signs clean and clear. Make information available in another form, such as a chart or pictogram.

Arrange seating at a round table to facilitate lip reading. Use assistive listening or amplification devices as appropriate.

Ensure marketing and communications, including photos and testimonials, reflect diverse people with a range of abilities and ages.

Ensure marketing materials, such as flyers, brochures, podcasts and YouTube videos are accessible.

**Technological barriers** occur when technology, or the way it is used, does not meet the needs of people with disabilities.

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**Technological Barriers**

Emails or other electronic communications not accessible to people who use screen readers.

Website graphics and charts included without descriptions.

Having only one way for your customers to contact you (Example: by phone only).

Accepting only online job applications.

Asking clients to use online forms to register for programs.

**Possible Solutions**

Make sure every email is accessible to people who use screen readers and offer alternative methods of communications.

Provide descriptions using alt tags for graphics and charts for people with vision loss.

Allow customers to contact you in a variety of ways, including phone or email.

Welcome job applications in a number of formats.

Offer clients alternative ways to register. (Example: telephone)

**Systemic barriers** are policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded.

**Systemic Barriers**

People with disabilities are excluded from events by not considering their needs at the event planning stage.

Not being aware of the different types of accommodations an employee might need when returning to work after an absence due to a disability.

No leadership or accountability to address issues related to people with disabilities.

Hiring policies not encouraging applications from people with disabilities.

Procedures that may affect some employees, such as use of cleaning products that can cause allergic reactions.

**Possible Solutions**

Make sure that accessibility is considered when making plans for events and invite attendees to tell you if they have specific accessibility needs, such as requiring on-line applications. Use accessibility checklists for events.

Learn about the types of accommodations available. Inquire about specific employee needs. Talking to employees about their specific needs is a good first step.

Designate a contact person to implement accessibility policies and procedures.

Review current hiring processes to identify and remove barriers.

Implement a fragrance-free policy.

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**Physical and architectural barriers** in the environment prevent physical access for people with disabilities.

**Physical/Architectural Barriers**

Aisles are blocked by displays or Merchandise, making them too narrow for a person using a wheelchair or walker

Inaccessible events or meeting spaces  
 Accessibility features, such as automatic doors, are broken and not fixed promptly.  
 Poor snow clearance creates temporary barriers to building entrance or parking lot.

**Possible Solutions**

Consider the paths that your employees and customers take when creating displays or storing merchandise.  
 When selecting a venue think about potential barriers.  
 Consider washrooms, parking, lighting, and signage. Not just a ramp.  
 Develop a maintenance plan. Ensure prompt response times when equipment is broken.  
 Maintain clear paths and parking lots

Resources for training:

<https://www.aoda.ca>

<https://worksitesafety.ca> (this provides you with online certification)