



**INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS POLICY**

Manual	Governance, Finance and Human Resources/Systems	
Effective date:	December 2014	Policy or Procedure No. <b>HRS34</b>
Date of review and/or update:		

**1.0 POLICY AND COMMITMENT STATEMENT:**

YouthLink is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

**Definitions:**

YouthLink considers the definition of a disability to be as outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Code, Section 10(1):

1. 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,
2. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
3. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
4. a mental disorder, or
5. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

## 2.0

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to employees in meeting the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

## 3.0

### **SCOPE:**

The policy applies to all employees and volunteers at YouthLink.

## 4.0

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was created with the goal of developing standards that would improve accessibility for people with disabilities across the province. The AODA allows the provincial Government to develop specific standards of accessibility and enforce them.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (191/11) encompasses multiple standards with phased-in timelines to break down barriers and increase accessibility for people with disabilities in the areas of information and communication, employment and built standards. Therefore for this policy is organized into 4 sections to address the applicable responsibilities that YouthLink has under these Standards:

1. General Requirements
2. Information and Communications Standard Requirements
3. Employment Standard Requirements
4. Design of Public Spaces Standard Requirement

#### **General Requirements**

- Develop and implement policies, practices and procedures under the Ontario Regulation 191/11 on how accessibility will be achieved
- Develop a multi-year accessibility plan and review and update at least once every five years
- Provide training to employees, volunteers and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities
- Make documents publicly available and provide them in accessible format upon request

### **Information and Communications Standard Requirements**

- Make all new website and content on those sites to conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A by January 1, 2014 and WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021
- Make existing feedback processes accessible upon request
- Provide and receive information and communications in an accessible manner

### **Employment Standard Requirements**

- Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities
- Notify job applicants that are selected that there are accommodations available for assessments and the selection process
- If accommodations are needed, employer will consult with applicant about suitable formats
- When making an offer of employment, the employer will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees
- Provide updated accommodation information to new and existing employees regarding policies and supports
- When an employee requests it, the employer shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communications supports regarding information needed in order to perform the employee's job and information that is generally available in the workplace
- When an employer is aware of an employee's need for accommodation, they will provide individualized workplace emergency response information and plans
- Employers shall develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities
- Develop and implement a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work and document the process
- When using the performance management process, the employer will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans
- Accessibility needs shall be taken into account when career development and advancement opportunities are provided to an employee
- When redeploying an employee, accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans will be taken into account

### **Design of Public Spaces Standard Requirement**

- When constructing a new space or redeveloping a public space, it will comply with the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces

## **5.0**

### **GUIDELINES:**

*Refer to the Appendix HRS34 for Complete Overview on the Accessibility Plan*

#### **Training for Employees**

- YouthLink shall provide training to all staff, and volunteers who deal with the public or other third parties on its behalf.
- This training shall be provided within one month of the date of hire after personnel commence their duties. The following people/positions shall take lead responsibility with respect to this:
  - The hiring manager shall ensure that all newly hired staff members undergo training as part of their orientation.
  - Managers shall ensure all placement students undergo training as part of their orientation to their placement.
  - Managers of volunteers shall ensure all volunteers undergo training as part of their orientation to their position.
- Staff, students and volunteers shall report completion of this training to the appropriate person, within one month of their date of hire/placement.

#### **Documented Individual Accommodation Plans**

YouthLink has developed a process for developing documented individual accommodation plans. The process includes examining the following elements:

- How we include the employee in the development of the plan
- How we assess the employee on an individual basis
- How we can request an evaluation by a medical practitioner/expert at our expense to determine if/how the accommodation can be achieved
- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining unit
- How the employee's personal information will be protected
- How frequently the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which to do so
- Providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs

### **Feedback Process and Requirements**

YouthLink will collect and respond to feedback about the way they provide services to people with disabilities. Service Providers will be instructed to note comments provided in person, in writing, online, by telephone, TTY, suggestion box or any other means. A simple-to-use, accessible process for customers to provide feedback or complaints will be in place and communicated to the public. The Program Manager will consult with client service staff on a regular basis to gather feedback and complaints to improve customer service. Questions or concerns regarding accessibility can be forwarded to the Human Resources Department.

Feedback about the way YouthLink provides goods and services to people with disabilities should follow the YouthLink Customer Service Policy, HRS22 at a minimum, which should be reviewed in conjunction with this policy.

*This protocol is available in an alternative format, upon request, to accommodate a person with a disability.*

6.0

**PROCEDURES:** (if required)

**7.0 No exceptions:** Exceptions to this policy are only permitted with approval from the Executive Director and the Board.

**APPENDIX HRS 34: YouthLink Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**