

ONTARIO DENTAL ASSOCIATION

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AND POLICY STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Dental Association (ODA) is committed to an accessible workplace and excellence when providing services to all ODA members and members of the public, including those with disabilities.

This policy has been established pursuant to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions can be found in the *AODA*, or in the regulations made pursuant to the *Act*.

“Disability”:

- (a) 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
- (b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- (c) A learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in the understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- (d) A mental disorder, or
- (e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

“Barrier”

Means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a policy or a practice.

“service animal”

An animal which is specially trained to assist a person with a disability. A service animal must be readily identifiable as a service animal.

“support person”

Means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

1. OUR MISSION

At the ODA we provide innovative and inspired leadership to deliver exceptional value by:

- promoting the highest standards of dental care and supporting our diverse membership in their pursuit of professional excellence and personal fulfillment;
- fostering a collaborative workplace environment which promotes creativity and personal growth while celebrating achievements; and
- advocating with a unified voice for accessible and sustainable optimal oral health for all Ontarians.

2. OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to excellence when serving all ODA members and members of the public, including persons with disabilities, and to carrying out our functions and responsibilities in accordance with the principles of respect for dignity and independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

3. PROVIDING SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:

This policy will guide decision-making related to accessibility issues and initiatives. Our goals in the area of accessibility and customer service include:

Communication

We will train staff on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

Telephone services

We will train staff to communicate over the telephone in plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. If we are notified that telephone communication is not suitable to an individual's communication needs, we will aim to find an alternative means of communication.

Assistive devices

We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by persons with disabilities while accessing our services. We will provide a manual wheelchair if an electronic assistive device (such as a scooter or automatic wheelchair) is unable to move safely around the building.

Billing

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all people to whom we issue invoices. For this reason, invoices will be provided in alternate formats upon request. We will answer any questions about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or e-mail, in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

4. USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS AND SUPPORT PERSONS

All ODA staff and volunteers (where applicable) are required to follow the procedures outlined below when providing service to persons with disabilities:

Service Animals

We are committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law, in which case steps will be taken to ensure that other

measures are available to enable a person with a disability to access our goods and services. We will also ensure that all staff and volunteers (where applicable) dealing with anyone entering our premises, are properly trained in how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person and they will be permitted to enter the ODA's premises together. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on the ODA's premises. The ODA may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

5. NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION

If there is a temporary disruption of the ODA's facility or services usually used to allow a person with a disability to access ODA's goods or services, the ODA will place notices of the disruption in appropriate locations including all entrances using a suitable medium. The notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be given in accordance with requirements under Section 5 of the *AODA*.

6. TRAINING FOR STAFF

The ODA will provide training to all employees, independent contractors, volunteers (where applicable) and others who deal with ODA members and other members of the public on ODA's behalf, or who are involved in developing policies, practices and procedures. Training will be provided to existing staff at the time this policy is implemented; for new staff when they commence their duties; and for all on an ongoing basis. Training will cover:

- the purposes and requirements of the *AODA*, associated standards and the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities;
- 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 service animal or a support person;
- how to use the equipment, devices, services and/or facilities currently available on our premises;
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing ODA's goods or services;
- ODA's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard; and
- what to do with feedback concerning the manner in which the ODA provides goods or services to persons with disabilities.

7. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

The ODA is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. As required, we will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.

The ODA is committed to providing customers and clients with publicly available emergency information, and all print documents and information provided to the public, in an accessible format upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

Employees will be given any information that they need to perform their jobs, including any general information that is available to all employees, such as emergency procedures, in an accessible format on request.

8. SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS

Employees of the ODA will consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

9. EMPLOYMENT

The ODA is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. As required, the ODA will integrate accessibility into regular workplace processes, including recruitment, employee accommodation, and performance management and career development.

The ODA will consider the needs of persons with disabilities throughout their employment, including performance management.

The ODA will provide employees with disabilities with individualized accommodation plans, including emergency response information and return to work plans as necessary.

10. FEEDBACK PROCESS

Feedback from the public, ODA dentists and staff on this Accessibility Plan and Policy Statement is welcome and can be provided by any method, (e.g. in person, by mail, by email, by telephone or other appropriate medium). To provide feedback, contact the ODA at: 4 New Street, Toronto, ON M5R 1P6. Tel: 416-922-3900; Fax: 416-922-9005; Email: access@oda.ca. Please address your communication to the attention of the ODA Professional Affairs Policy Manager.

11. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY

If anyone has a question about this policy, he or she is encouraged to contact the ODA Professional Affairs Policy Manager. A copy of this document will be provided to individuals in an accessible format, on request.

12. INVESTIGATIONS

The ODA will respond to any complaints about the ODA's manner in providing goods and services to persons with disabilities, within a reasonable time. The ODA will also assist any individual who informs the ODA that he or she needs assistance in preparing a complaint. Complaints may be submitted to the Professional Affairs Policy Manager.

Applicable Legislation and Reference Documents

The following legislation and reference documents apply:

- [*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*](#)
- [*Ontario Human Rights Code*](#)
- [*Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*](#)
- [*Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11*](#)