

Accessibility Policy

- 1. PURPOSE:** The Eastern Ontario Regional Laboratory Association (EORLA) is committed to identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and Ontario's accessibility laws.
- 2. POLICY:** EORLA is committed to ensuring equitable access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maximize their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario's accessibility laws.
- EORLA is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination. EORLA understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.
- EORLA is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services or facilities to all patients (our customers) including people with disabilities.
- Our policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.
- EORLA employees work on premises owned and maintained by EORLA's member hospitals. Workplace modifications and implementations to remove or prevent barriers to accessibility may be subject to site hospital agreement and approval. In the event of differences between this policy and the site hospital(s) policy, the site hospital(s) policy shall be followed.
- 3. SCOPE:** This policy applies to all individuals that work for EORLA, including but not limited to, employees, physicians, volunteers, students, interns, and contractors that are engaged to perform work at EORLA.
- 4. DEFINITIONS:**
- Accessible Formats:** may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- Assistive Devices:** Any piece of equipment or device used to maintain or promote function in someone with a disability. Can range from low (e.g., walking stick) to high (e.g., computerized communication device).

Barrier: 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, an attitudinal barrier, technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Communication Supports: may include but are not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Disability:

- i) 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 remedial appliance or device,
- ii) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- iii) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- iv) a mental disorder, or
- v) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Kiosk: is an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Service Animal: An animal described in subsection 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

- i) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- ii) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Person: 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 and services.

5. ASSISTANCE:

Assistive Devices

Persons with Disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing EORLA goods, services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety

concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access EORLA's goods, services or facilities.

Service Animals

Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their service animal in those areas of EORLA open to the public, unless such animal is excluded by another law or may cause any safety or health issues to employees or patients.

If the presence of the animal is excluded by law, or site hospital policy, in certain areas of the hospital, the patient will be notified of the reason for the exclusion and other measures will be used to provide services to the person with a disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks. When the animal cannot be easily identified as a guide dog or service animal, an employee may ask the owner of the animal to provide documentation from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons related to their disabilities. The letter can originate from a member of the following College of:

- Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- Chiropractors of Ontario
- Nurses of Ontario
- Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- Optometrists of Ontario
- Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- Physiotherapists of Ontario
- Psychologists of Ontario
- Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

Support Person

Persons with a disability who use a support person are entitled to bring that person with them while accessing services at EORLA. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to their Support Person while accessing services at EORLA.

6. ACCESSIBLE WEBSITE & WEB CONTENT:

Internet websites and web content controlled directly by EORLA or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product shall conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A and AA in accordance with the schedule set out in the *AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)*, O. Reg. 191/11.



7. EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:

Recruitment

EORLA will post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

EORLA will notify job applicants who are individually selected for an interview and/or testing that accommodations for material to be used in the process are available, upon request.

EORLA will consult with any applicant who requests an accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability.

Successful applicants shall be notified about EORLA's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment.

Employee Supports

EORLA will inform employees of its policies (and any updates to those policies) used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

A written process for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans shall be developed for employees with disabilities. If requested, these plans shall include information regarding accessible formats and communications supports. If requested, the plans shall include individualized workplace emergency response information.

Accessible Formats and Communication Support for Employees

EORLA will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Upon an employee's request, EORLA shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports 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

EORLA will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary, and if EORLA is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

Where the employee requires assistance, this information shall be provided, with the employee's consent, to the person designated to provide assistance. The information shall undergo a review when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed.

Return to Work Process

EORLA shall have in place a documented return to work process for employees returning to work due to disability and requiring disability-related accommodations. The return to work process will outline the steps that the EORLA will take to facilitate the return to work.

8. TRAINING:

All employees shall be provided with required accessibility related training by their site hospital, prior to or upon the commencement of their duties with EORLA. Training will include:

- Purpose of the AODA, 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards and related policies;
- 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 the assistance of a support person;
- How to use equipment or devices provided by their site hospital and/or EORLA that may help with the provision of services to a person with a disability;
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing services.

Training records shall be maintained by the applicable site hospital and will include the dates of which the training was provided.

9. INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION:

Upon request, EORLA will provide, or will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability.

EORLA will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. EORLA will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

10. NOTICE OF SERVICE DISRUPTION:

Notice will be provided, where possible, when facilities or services that persons with a disability rely on are temporarily disrupted. Such notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

Notice may be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place in the workplace or posted on EORLA's website or by such other method as is reasonable under the circumstances. In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

11. PROCUREMENT:

When procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, EORLA shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible

(practicable). If not practicable, EORLA shall provide an explanation, upon request.

12. BUILT ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES:

EORLA premises, including public spaces, are maintained by the applicable site hospital. When undertaking new construction or redevelopment of public spaces, within its control, EORLA shall ensure accessibility requirements are incorporated to meet accessibility requirements. Major modifications to the existing facilities must be approved in agreement with the applicable site hospital. In the event of differences between this policy and the site hospital(s) policy, the site hospital(s) policy shall be followed.

13. FEEDBACK:

EORLA welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. EORLA ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports on request.

All feedback may be provided in writing, in person, by e-mail, or by telephone address to:

Eastern Ontario Regional Laboratory Association
501 Smyth Road Critical Care Wing, 4th Floor
Ottawa, ON
K1H 8L6
Phone: 613-798-5555
Email: humanresources@eorla.ca

14. REFERENCES:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Ontario Human Rights Code
Employment Standards Act

15. DEVELOPED BY: Human Resources