

Policy Information		
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Independent Living Waterloo Region (ILWR) Accessibility Policy - Plain Language Version

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Part 1 General

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) states that the Province of Ontario must be accessible for people with disabilities by the year 2025

ILWR must:

- Create policies that explain how we will be accessible
- Train employees, Board members and volunteers on our accessibility plans
- File accessibility reports

Part 2 Accessible Customer Service

The Accessible Customer Service Standard of the AODA requires every provider of goods and services to establish policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities.

ILWR will provide:

- Services that are accessible to all people
- Services that protect the dignity and independence of all people
- Education about accessibility to employees, Board members, volunteers and all other people we work with

Communication

Communication is the sharing of information between two people or systems. This might be in person, over the phone, or through accessible technology.

ILWR will:

- Communicate with persons with disabilities in the way that works best for them
- Provide our documents in formats that work best for them

Assistive Devices

Assistive devices are equipment or products that help persons with disabilities. For example: wheelchairs, electric door openers and more.

ILWR will:

- Respect the use of assistive devices
- Train employees to use different assistive devices, as required

Service Animals

Service animals are animals (for example, dogs) that are trained to help persons with disabilities with different tasks.

ILWR:

- Welcomes service animals in all ILWR spaces.

- Will provide assistance to the person and provide a comfortable place for the animal to stay if a service animal is not allowed in for some reason (for example, allergies)

Support Persons

Support persons help a person with a disability to communicate, assist with their medical or personal needs, or with access to goods and services.

ILWR:

- Welcomes support persons in all ILWR spaces

Notice of Disruption

Service disruptions are planned or unplanned unavailability of ILWR spaces and services. This might include access to ILWR offices or website.

ILWR will:

- Inform the public about planned and unexpected disruptions in services or places used by persons with disabilities
- Put notices on outside doors, front desk, on our outgoing telephone message and website, if time permits

Training Employees

ILWR will:

- Provide Accessible Customer Service Training to employees, including paid employees, volunteers, Board members and others who work with the public for ILWR

Feedback Process

ILWR:

- Wants to hear feedback from the community
- Will handle feedback through a designated Administrative employee
- Will respond to feedback within 10 business days

Part 3 Accessible Information and Communication

Information includes text, numbers, images and sound. For example: reports, budgets, advertising and voicemail.

Communication is the sharing of information between two people or systems where information is provided, sent or received. For example, websites, posted mail and email.

ILWR will:

- Provide information and communication that is accessible to persons with disabilities

Plain Language

Plain language is clear, direct writing, using only as many words as necessary. It is language that is easier for everyone to understand.

ILWR will:

- Use plain language when creating ILWR information and communication
- Provide a plain language copy upon request and as soon as possible

Alternative Formats

Alternative formats are formats other than standard print. This might be: audio, large print, Braille, closed captioning, intervenors, interpreters and more.

An Intervenor is a person who communicates with people who are deafblind.

A Captioner is a person who types what people are saying for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

An ASL Interpreter is a person who communicates with people who are culturally deaf by using sign language.

ILWR will:

- Provide public information and communication in different ways upon request and as soon as possible
- Upon request, provide an Interpreter, Captioner or Note-taker

Notification and Feedback

ILWR will:

- Provide information about requesting other formats on our website
- Provide a feedback process on our website

Part 4 Information and Communication Plan

Electronic information and communication will be accessible in accordance with Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA standards and other best practices for accessible visual formatting.

Electronic Information and Communication

ILWR will:

- Ensure sent emails use sans serif fonts no less than 12 pt.
- Use plain language when creating electronic communication or provide alternative plain language versions
- Provide an accessible website

Printed Documents

ILWR will:

- Ensure printed documents use sans serif fonts no less than 12 pt.
- Use plain language when creating printed documents or provide alternative plain language versions

Emergency and Public Safety Information

ILWR will:

- Inform employees and the public what to do in an emergency while in an ILWR space

Training Employees

ILWR will:

- Train employees, Board members, volunteers, and third-party contractors on the AODA and the ILWR accessibility plan

Part 5 Accessible Employment

ILWR is committed to being an inclusive and accessible workplace for all employees, volunteers, and third-party contactors. The following pertains only to employees of ILWR.

ILWR will:

- Inform employees and the public that workplace accommodations are available for persons with disabilities applying for jobs
- Inform applicants before the interview that accommodations are available upon request
- Inform prospective employees about ILWR policies on accommodation when offering employment

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats for Employees

ILWR will:

- Inform employees about ILWR policies that support employees with disabilities
- Update employees if there are changes to our policies
- Upon request, provide alternate formats for:
 - Information that is needed for the employee to perform their job;
 - Information that is available to all employees in the workplace

Workplace Emergency Response Information

ILWR will:

- Work with employees who require accommodation on creating individualized workplace emergency response information
- Review individualized workplace emergency response information:
 - When the employee moves into another position
 - When accommodation plans are being reviewed; and
 - When we look at our general emergency response policies

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

ILWR will:

- Provide a written process for making accommodation plans
- Consult external experts to help with accommodation plans, as needed

Return to Work Process

ILWR will:

- Create, review, or modify an existing individualized accommodation plan if an employee with a disability misses work because of their disability

Performance Management

ILWR will:

- Consider the accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities when evaluating performance

Career Development and Advancement

ILWR will:

- Consider the accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities when changing positions

Part 6 Design of Public Spaces

ILWR is committed to creating accessible and inclusive public spaces.

ILWR will:

- Make all new constructions and redeveloped existing ILWR spaces accessible in compliance with the AODA and the Ontario Building Code
- When feasible, implement best practices to exceed minimal legislative requirements
- Consult with property managers concerning rented and partnered ILWR spaces

Part 7 Responsibilities

ILWR is dedicated to inclusion and pledges to provide services that respect and promote the dignity and independence of all people.

ILWR will:

- Review our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every five (5) years
- Not change this document without considering how it will affect persons with disabilities

Accountability

ILWR will:

- Make available this policy, the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and any other accessibility documents to the public and in alternative formats upon request

Questions about this Policy

Questions, comments or concerns about this document will be addressed by a designated Administrative employee. For more information, please email info@ilwr.ca or call 519-571-6788.