AODA – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Employment Policy

Intent

This policy applies to the provision of accessible employment services for persons with disabilities, in accordance with O. Reg. 191/11 *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (IASR) under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

All employment services provided by Autism Ontario will follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

Definitions

Accessible formats: Include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

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

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

Guidelines

General Requirements

The following general requirements apply to the five standards: information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces, and customer service.

Establishment of Accessibility Policies and Plans

Autism Ontario will develop, implement, and maintain policies governing how it will achieve accessibility through these requirements.

Autism Ontario will include a statement of its commitment to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner in its policies. These documents will be made publicly available in an accessible format upon request.

Autism Ontario will establish, implement, maintain, and document a multi-year accessibility plan outlining its strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the IASR. Accessibility plans will be made available in an accessible format upon request and will be posted on our website.

Autism Ontario will review and update its accessibility plan once every five years and will establish, review, and update our accessibility plans in consultation with persons with disabilities or an advisory committee. Annual status reports will be prepared that will report on the progress of the steps taken to implement Autism Ontario's accessibility plan. This status report will be posted on our website. If requested, the report will be created in an accessible format.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods and Services, or Facilities

Autism Ontario will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities. The only exception is in cases where it is impracticable to do so.

Training Requirements

Autism Ontario will provide training on the IASR accessibility requirements and Ontario's *Human Rights Code* as they pertain to individuals with disabilities. This applies to all employees and volunteers, individuals who participate in developing Autism Ontario policies, and all other persons who provide goods, services, or facilities on Autism Ontario's behalf. Training will be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable, during employee orientation. Training will be provided regularly to new employees and as changes to Autism Ontario's accessibility policies occur.

Records

Autism Ontario will maintain records on the training provided, when it was provided, and the number of employees who were trained.

Recruitment, Assessment, and Selection

Autism Ontario will notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for job applicants who have disabilities. Applicants will be informed that these accommodations are available upon request for the interview process and for other candidate selection methods. Where an accommodation is requested, Autism Ontario will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

Successful applicants will be made aware of Autism Ontario's policies and supports for accommodating people with disabilities.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

Autism Ontario will ensure that employees are aware of our policies for employees with disabilities and any changes to these policies as they occur.

If an employee with a disability requests it, Autism Ontario will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for the following:

- Information needed in order to perform their job; and
- Information that is generally available to all employees in the workplace.

Autism Ontario will consult with the employee making the request to determine the best way to provide the accessible format or communication support.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

Where required, Autism Ontario will create individual workplace emergency response information for employees with disabilities. This information will account for the unique challenges created by the individual's disability and the physical nature of the workplace and will be created in consultation with the employee.

This information will be reviewed when:

- The employee moves to a different physical location in the organization;
- The employee's overall accommodation needs, or plans are reviewed; or
- Autism Ontario reviews general emergency response policies.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

Autism Ontario must also develop and have in place written processes for documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. The process for the development of these accommodation plans should include specific elements, including:

- How the employee can participate in the development of the plan;
- How the employee is assessed individually;
- How an employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical expert or other experts at the employer's expense to determine whether accommodation can be achieved, or how it can be achieved;
- How an employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent or, if the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, another representative from the workplace in the creation of the accommodation plan;
- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- How and how often the individual accommodation plan should be reviewed or updated;
- How the reasons for the denial of an individual accommodation plan will be provided to the employee; and
- The means of providing the accommodation plan in an accessible format, based on the employee's accessibility needs.

The individual accommodation will also:

- Include information regarding accessible formats and communication supports upon request;
- Where needed, include individualized workplace emergency response information; and
- Outline all other accommodation provided.

Performance Management and Career Development and Advancement

Autism Ontario will consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when implementing performance management processes, or when offering career development or advancement opportunities.

Individual accommodation plans will be consulted as required.

Return to Work

Autism Ontario will develop and implement return-to-work processes for employees who are absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

The return-to-work process outlines the steps Autism Ontario will take to facilitate the employee's return to work and will use documented individual accommodation plans as outlined by the regulation.

Redeployment

The accessibility needs of employees with disabilities will be considered in the event of redeployment.

Individual accommodation plans will be consulted as required.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it reflects Autism Ontario's current practices and legislative requirements.