



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) became law in Ontario in June 2005. The goal of the Act is to create standards that will improve accessibility across the province by 2025. These standards are made into laws called regulations, and they provide the details to help meet the AODA's goal.

All organizations, both public and private, that provide goods or services either directly to the public or to other organizations in Ontario (third parties) and that have one or more employees in Ontario are legally required to comply with the Act. As a result, the AODA and its subsequent regulations apply to the College of Early Childhood Educators.

Regulations Under the Authority of the AODA

The AODA identifies five areas which were used to develop the accessibility standards that form the basis of the regulations. These five areas are:

1. Customer Service

2. Employment

3. Transportation

4. Information and Communications

5. Built Environment (refers to access to, from and within buildings, and outdoor street spaces such as pedestrian access routes and signal systems)

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

This regulation was enacted July 2007 under the AODA to focus on customer service. The College met the compliance obligation as required under this regulation by the January 1, 2012 deadline.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

This regulation establishes the accessibility standards for information and communications, employment, transportation and public spaces. The transportation standards are not applicable to the College.

Under this regulation, the College is required to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines the College's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meets its obligations under the regulation.

The standards set out in this regulation are not a replacement or a substitution for the requirements established under the Human Rights Code.

In accordance with the regulation, the College will:

- Establish, review and update this plan in consultation with persons with disabilities;
- Post this plan on its website (college-ece.ca);
- Report on the progress of the implementation of this plan, as required;
- Provide this plan in an accessible format, upon request; and
- Review and update this plan at least once every five years.

The College will comply with the following areas in the regulation by the noted deadlines:

January 1, 2015

- Develop accessibility policies and plans and make them available to the public
- Ensure self-service kiosks are accessible, where possible
- Ensure that all new internet websites and web content on those sites is accessible to (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) WCAG 2.0, level A
- Provide training to employees, interns and others on the accessibility standards in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and aspects of the Human Rights Code that relate to accessibility
- Ensure feedback processes, such as surveys or comment cards, are accessible when requested

January 1, 2016

- Ensure that accessible formats and communication supports are available for the public upon request
- Ensure that accessible employment standards are in place including notification of accommodation and disability supports during the recruitment process, processes for developing individual accommodation plans, return to work processes and professional development opportunities that take into account the accessibility needs of employees

January 1, 2017

- Ensure that new or redeveloped spaces are accessible and maintain accessible elements of public spaces

December 31, 2017

- Complete government accessibility report

January 1, 2019

- Update Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

December 31, 2020:

- Complete government accessibility report

January 1, 2021:

- Ensure that all internet websites and website content conforms with WCAG 2.0 level AA (excluding live captioning and audio description)

December 31, 2023:

- Complete government accessibility report

The College's Commitment

The College of Early Childhood Educators is committed to making the services it provides fully accessible to people with disabilities. We support the full integration of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and believe in equal opportunity.

Goods and services will be provided in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, reflecting the principles of integration and equal opportunity. People with disabilities will be given the opportunity to access and benefit from our goods and services in ways that meet their individual needs. We will work to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are met in a timely fashion and will fully comply with the requirements set forth in the AODA.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The College has developed this multi-year accessibility plan to meet Ontario's accessibility laws as outlined in the AODA. This plan outlines the College's policies and actions designed to provide inclusive and accessible services to our members, applicants, employees, and the general public. The College is committed to meeting the accessibility standards by the deadlines, as noted above. This plan is available on the College's website and in an accessible format upon request. The College will formally review this plan every five years to ensure that the current practices in place are still relevant and to determine if new policies to remove barriers to accessibility should be incorporated. The College will also complete government accessibility reports, outlining our compliance with relevant accessibility standards in the Act and regulations.

Our Accomplishments

Training

- Provided training to employees on the accessibility standards in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and aspects of the Human Rights Code that relate to accessibility.

Technology

- New public register developed with accessibility in mind.

Policies, procedures and practices

- Developed and implemented Integrated Accessibility Standards policy.
- Adopted video-conference procedure for discipline hearings.

Communication

- Ensured that feedback processes, such as surveys, are accessible when requested.

Training

All employees, interns and other individuals who provide services on behalf of the College will receive accessibility training. Training will focus on the requirements in *the Integrated Accessibility Standards* ("the Regulation") under the AODA, the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities, College policies and procedures related to accessibility and ways to accommodate individuals with disabilities. This training will be conducted in a manner that respects the learning styles of the individuals being trained and will address specific job requirements related to accessibility.

The College will take the following steps to ensure that the above mentioned individuals are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessibility laws by January 2015:

- Require accessibility training to be completed within the first three months of employment at the College.
- Provide accessibility training to existing employees, interns and other individuals who provide services on behalf of the College.
- Provide accessibility training to members of the College's Council as part of new member and annual orientation.
- Review the College's policies relating to accessibility and the accommodation of individuals with disabilities on an annual basis during a staff meeting.

- Additional training will be provided if there are any changes made to College accessibility policies, as soon as it is reasonable to do so.
- Training will be mandatory and recorded in an internal database.

Information and Communications

The College is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities, where appropriate, to determine their information and communication needs.

By **January 1, 2015**, the College will take the following steps to ensure that existing processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to people with disabilities upon request:

- Accessible counters and reception area features such as clearance for mobility aids/devices, etc.
- College staff trained to provide services compliant with the AODA customer service accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.
- Where an accessible format is requested for a feedback response, College staff will consult with the recipient to ensure the accessible format is appropriate.

The College will take the following steps to ensure that by **January 1, 2016**, accessible formats and communication supports for people with disabilities will be available upon request:

- Consult with the individual making the request to determine the suitability of the accessible format or communication support.
- Provide or arrange for the provision of the accessible format or communication support in a timely manner and at no cost than that charged to other persons.
- Inform the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports by updating the College's website to outline the process for requesting an accessible format and/or communication support. Information on this process will also be available in the College's reception area.
- Regular updates to the College Style Guide will reflect accessibility considerations and best practices, where applicable, in the development of College documents.

WCAG 2.0, level A

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) explains how to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities. WCAG 2.0 is a technical standard that has 12 guidelines organized under four principles – perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust. Each of the four criteria must meet functional testing criteria in either level A, AA, or AAA.

The College will take the following steps to make all new internet websites and web content on those sites conform with WCAG 2.0, level A:

- The redesign of the College's public register in 2014 included updating information on the public register to comply with, at a minimum, WCAG 2.0 level A requirements,



including reformatting the presentation of material for assistive technology software and ensuring ease of readability in larger fonts.

- Train staff who develop documentation for publication on the public website and register in the production of accessible documents.

Employment

The College is committed to supporting fair and accessible employment practices, from recruitment to retirement, allowing all College employees to reach their full potential.

By **January 1, 2016**, the College will take the following steps to accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment, assessment and hiring process:

- Inform prospective applicants about the College's accommodation policy in job postings and on the College's website under the careers section.
- Regularly review the current recruitment policies and make revisions as necessary to enhance accessibility.
- Ensure job postings are accessible by creating them in plain language and making them available in alternative formats upon request.
- Advise applicants about the accommodations available during the recruitment process.
- Consult with job applicants who request accommodations during the recruitment process in order to provide them with the appropriate support.
- Notify successful candidates of the College's accommodation policies when making offers of employment.

By **January 1, 2016**, the College will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are taken into account:

- As part of a new employee's orientation, they will be provided with information regarding the College's policies about accommodations for employees with disabilities.
- Policies regarding accommodations for employees with disabilities will be posted on the College's SharePoint website and any changes to these policies will be communicated to employees.
- Employees with disabilities will be provided with accessible formats and communication supports as needed in order to perform their job. The College will consult with the employee to determine the most suitable supports.
- A written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans will be developed, which will include:
 - How an employee can participate in the development of the plan;
 - How the employee will be assessed on an individual basis;
 - The manner in which the College may request an evaluation by outside medical or other experts to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved;
 - What, if any, supporting documentation the employee is required to provide to the College, outlining their disability;
 - How the employee may obtain assistance from a representative from the workplace in the development of the plan;
 - The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;

- The frequency with which the plan will be reviewed and updated and how it will be done;
- The manner in which reasons for denial, if any, will be provided; and
- How the plan will be provided to the employee in a way that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs.
- Individual accommodation plans will include, if requested, information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided, individualized workplace emergency response information and any other accommodation that is to be provided.
- The College's Health and Safety policy will provide alternatives for employees with disabilities during emergency situations.
- A documented return to work process will be in place for its employees who are returning after being absent from work due to a disability and require additional or different disability-related accommodations.
- Performance management and career development and advancement will take into account the needs of employees with disabilities.
- Supervisors will be provided with guidance on:
 - Understanding and accommodating various types of disabilities and their impact on work performance.
 - Understanding employer obligations to provide employment accommodation.

Built Environment

The College is committed to providing accessible public spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Any new development or major modification to public spaces will comply with the AODA's requirements.

By **January 1, 2017**, the College will put the following procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to its accessible service-related elements:

- Ensure that the Registration and Member Services reception desk and waiting areas at the College are accessible to individuals using mobility aids/devices.
- In the event of a service disruption, the public will be notified via the College's public website and signage used at the College's office.

Contact Us

Questions about the College's Multi-year Accessibility Plan can be directed to the College's Corporate Services Department.

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