

Information and Communications Standard (Integrated Accessibility Standard - Ontario Regulation 191/11)

POLICY

The Accessibility Standards for Information and Communications under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) were created to establish accessibility standards for information and communication in Ontario.

APPLICATION

This policy applies across the organization's Ontario locations and as otherwise noted in this policy.

The standards in this section are understood to not apply to unconvertible information or communications. If the organization determines certain information or communications to be unconvertible, the organization will provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

GUIDELINES

This document records the organization's policies with respect to this Standard, but recognizing that the organization plans to implement these policies, at the latest, in accordance with the compliance schedule provided for in the Regulation, certain of these policies may not be in effect as of the Revision Date of the policy noted below. For this reason, the planned effective date of each policy is also indicated.

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.

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.

Communications means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

Information includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

Internet website means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public.

New internet website means either a website with a new domain name or a website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh.

Not practicable (with respect to internet websites and contents) means, in determining whether meeting the requirements of this section is not practicable, the organizations may consider, among other things:

- the availability of commercial software or tools or both; and
- significant impact on an implementation timeline that is planned or initiated before January 1, 2012.

Persons with Disabilities means those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Unconvertible means either that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or that the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines means the World Wide Web Consortium Recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0”.

Emergency Procedures, Plans and Public Safety Information (Effective January 1, 2012)

To the extent that the organization’s emergency procedures, plans or public safety information are made available to the public, the organization will provide the information in an accessible format, or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

Feedback Processes (Effective January 1, 2015)

The organization will ensure that feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports as soon as possible, upon request. The organization will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Accessible formats and communication supports (Effective January 1, 2016)

Except as otherwise provided for under the IASR, the organization will upon request provide or 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 at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

The organization will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

The organization will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Accessible websites and web content (Effective Dates – See below)

The organization will make their internet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA in accordance with the following schedule:

- New internet websites and web content on those sites for our organization created after January 1, 2014 must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A.
- All internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live), and success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded) after January 1, 2021.

Except where the organization determines that meeting the requirement is not practicable, the organization understands the above applies to:

- Websites and web content, including web-based applications, that an organization controls directly or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product; and
- In the case of a new internet website that is an existing website undergoing a significant refresh, to web content published on the website after January 1, 2012.

Employment Standard (Integrated Accessibility Standard - Ontario Regulation 191/11)

POLICY

The Accessibility Standards for Employment under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) were created to establish accessibility standards for employment in Ontario.

APPLICATION

This policy applies across the organization's Ontario locations and to its Ontario employees and as otherwise noted in this policy.

GUIDELINES

This document records the organization's policies with respect to this Standard, but recognizing that the organization plans to implement these policies, at the latest, in accordance with the compliance schedule provided for in the Regulation, certain of these policies may not be in effect as of the Revision Date of the policy. For this reason, the planned effective date of each policy in this section is also indicated.

Definitions

Accommodation means the special arrangement made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs.

Employees in the context of this section does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals, nor to agents or other individuals who are not employees of the organization, but is otherwise defined as noted in the definition provided in the **Accessibility Policies and Plans** section of this policy.

Performance Management means activities related to assessing and improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness, with the goal of facilitating employee success.

Persons with Disabilities means those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Career Development and Advancement includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee's current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another in an organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level in the organization or any combination of them and, for both additional responsibilities and employee movement, is usually based on merit or seniority, or a combination of them.

Redeployment means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated by the organization.

Workplace Emergency Response Information (Effective January 1, 2012)

Where the organization becomes aware of the need to accommodate an employee's disability, and if the employee's disability is such that the individualized emergency response information is necessary, the organization will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to the employee with the disability as soon as practicable after it becomes aware of the need.

If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, with the employee's consent, the organization will provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the organization to provide assistance to the employee.

The organization will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when:

- the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and/or
- the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

Recruitment-related (Effective January 1, 2016)

Notwithstanding any processes the organization follows with respect to recruitment plans outside of this formal Human Resources policy which may already be compliant with the Standard, the organization will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.

During a recruitment process, the organization will notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, that

accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used. If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the employer shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

When making offers of employment, the organization will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees (Effective January 1, 2016)

Notwithstanding any processes the organization follows with respect to accessible format and communication supports outside of this formal Human Resources policy which may already be compliant with the Standard, the organization will:

- Inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.
- Provide the information required to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.
- Provide updated information to its employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.
- Where an employee with a disability requests it, 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.
 - The organization will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans (Effective January 1, 2016)

Notwithstanding any practices the organization follows with respect to accommodation outside of this formal Human Resources policy which may already be compliant with the Standard, the organization will develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. The process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans shall include the following elements:

- The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
- The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
- The manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist the employer in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how accommodation can be achieved.
- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan.
- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
- If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee.
- The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Individual accommodation plans will:

- If requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided, as required in the Standard;
- If required, include individualized workplace emergency response information, as required in the Standard; and
- Identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Return to Work Process (Effective January 1, 2016)

Notwithstanding any practices the organization follows with respect to career development and advancement outside of this formal Human Resources policy which may already be compliant with the Standard, the organization will:

- Develop and have in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work; and
- Shall document the process.

The return to work process shall,

- Outline the steps the organization will take to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work; and

- Use documented individual accommodation plans, as described in prior section, as part of the process.

The return to work process referenced in this section will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute.

Performance Management (Effective January 1, 2016)

Notwithstanding any practices the organization follows with respect to career development and advancement outside of this formal Human Resources policy which may already be compliant with the Standard, the organization will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities.

Career Development and Advancement (Effective January 1, 2016)

Notwithstanding any practices the organization follows with respect to career development and advancement outside of this formal Human Resources policy which may already be compliant with the Standard, the organization will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities.

Redeployment (effective January 1, 2016)

Notwithstanding any practices the organization follows with respect to career development and advancement outside of this formal Human Resources policy which may already be compliant with the Standard, the organization will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.