



...by authority of the Board of Directors

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		<i>POLICY #:</i>	HMNR_6_4
<i>TITLE/SUBJECT:</i>		Accessibility Policy – AODA and IASR	
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<i>SECTION:</i>	6- Human Resources- Orientation	<i>DATE:</i>	REVISED MAR 2024

POLICY:

West Huron Care Centre/Blue Water Rest Home (WHCC/BWRH) is committed to providing excellent customer service, equal access, and meeting the needs of people with disabilities. We believe that access to programs and services should ensure dignity, independence, and integration for people with disabilities. Furthermore, we aim to remove and prevent barriers and meet our accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

PROCEDURE:

The following procedure will be subdivided into the following subsections:

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BACKGROUND ABOUT THE AODA & DEFINITIONS

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) which became law on June 13, 2005, provides a foundation for identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for people with disabilities.

Businesses and organizations with one employee or more that provide goods, services, or facilities to the public, and other businesses and organizations, are subject to the IASR. This includes:



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- Businesses or non-profits
- Public sector organizations
- Municipalities
- Educational institutions
- Producers of educational material
- Library boards

Depending on the type and size of the business/organization, IASR compliance is required between January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2025.

The AODA allows developed a grouping of five standards called the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

The IASR standards are as follows:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces

The customer service standard became law on January 1, 2008 and is the first mandatory regulation under the AODA. The purpose of this standard is to make organizations operations accessible to people with disabilities by identifying and removing barriers to customer service.

Use of Support Person and Service Animals

We will allow entry on the premises to a person with a disability who is accompanied by their support person or service animal. If there are any fees for admission to specific events or outings, we will provide notice of such fee.

Service animal is described as an animal that is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, or the as indicated in a letter from a physician or nurse which confirms that the person requires animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Support person is described as a person who accompanies them in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or accessing goods or service.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

We must provide notice to the public when services or facilities will encounter temporary disruption. In such notices we will indicate the reason for the temporary service disruption, its anticipated duration, any alternative services, or facilities available and contact



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information. Such notices may be in a conspicuous location, on our website or social media, communicated via email, or by other methods that are reasonable in the circumstance.

Staff Training

We are committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, IASR, and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to people with disabilities. In addition, we will train all people who participate in developing our organizational policies, and all that provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of WHCC/BWRH.

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes:

- purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service
- Standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- what to do if someone with a disability is having difficulty accessing goods, services, or facilities

We provide training when onboarding and when there are any changes to the policies. We also maintain training records of training.

Feedback

WHCC/BWRH welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service, which will help to identify barriers and respond to concerns. Feedback can be provided in-person, by telephone, in writing, or by email.

Notice of Availability of Documents

WHCC/BWRH notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service are available upon request with notice posted on Resident and Family Communication Board. We will provide documents in an accessible format and consult with the person making the request to ensure the format is suitable.

Information and Communication

We have a process for receiving and responding to feedback and the process is accessible to people with disabilities upon request. We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability. We will consult with the person making the request to



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determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication.

If we determine we are unable to convert the information, we will provide the person making the request with an explanation as to why, and a summary of the unconvertible information.

Employment

We notify employees and applicants that accommodations are available during the hiring process, upon request. For those requesting accommodation, we will work with the person making the request to determine suitability.

Where needed, we will provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency, sharing with designated person responsible for helping them, with their consent.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response when needed, eg. move to a different department, or when overall accommodation needs reviewed.

We have a process for developing individualized accommodations plans for employees and for those returning to work that require disability-related accommodation.

We review our emergency response policies annually and update as required.

Design of Public Spaces

We will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces and have a procedure in place to reduce service disruption to the accessible parts of our public spaces.

Changes to Existing Policies

We strive to build our policies based on a foundation of respect, dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

This document is publicly available. Accessible formats are available upon request.

ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING IN ACTION AT THE WHCC/BWRH CONTINUUM

The overall purpose of the AODA is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to prevent and to remove barriers to their full participation in the life of this Province. While accessibility policies and training are important and necessary, more important is the task of identifying barriers and removing them. The following are intended to identify some of the planning objectives that will help to prevent, to identify and to remove



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barriers for persons with disabilities to the programs and services of the WHCC/BWRH Continuum of Care.

Planning Objectives

- 1) To enhance building inspections of the Joint Health and Safety Committee, to identify accessibility barriers, which are directly reportable to the WHCC/BWRH CQI Committee by the JHSC co-chair
- 2) To include as part of the annual satisfaction surveys specific questions about accessibility, with opportunity to identify barriers and to suggest strategies to remove and to prevent barriers.
- 3) To make accessibility a standing agenda item at Residents Council
- 4) To review and report on barrier identification and removal efforts as well as prevention strategies on an annual basis, via the WHCC/BWRH CQI Committee, and to make this accessibility plan available to all WHCC/BWRH stakeholders annually.

Accessibility Report

An accessibility report will be submitted to the WHCC/BWRH Board of Director’s, providing an update on accessibility updates made and reasoning, as needed.

REFERENCES / RELATED DOCUMENTS:

HMNR_6_4D AODA CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

KEYWORDS:

AODA
 Ontarians
 Disabilities