

Woodbridge Pallet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Policy (AODA)

**Note: This policy has been updated to reflect the recommendations listed in the third review of the AODA, published in 2019.*

1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge our organizations commitment to provide reasonable standards of service to all persons in accordance with the “Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 429/07” (referred to as AODA).

2. Scope

The elements of this policy will apply to all personnel under employment of our organization, including management, workers, sub-contractors and agents representing our organization as required.

3. General Principals

The development of this program will provide benefits to both our organization and customers by allowing full access to our property and services without barriers. In doing so this will allow not only ensure legislative compliance but will also allow our organization to provide service to a wider range of customers and promote our company goodwill.

The fundamental principles of this standard are to ensure that the dignity and independence of all persons with either a mental or physical disability is always respected.

The standard will also ensure that all persons requiring service from our organization receive equal treatment as required under the Human Rights Code.

4. Definitions

Assistive device: Is a technical aid, communication device, or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them, such as a wheelchair, walker, or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering, or reading.

Disability: The term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation, or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect, or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- A learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- A mental disorder; or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Guide dog: Is a highly trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, to provide mobility, safety, and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service animal: An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- The person provides documentation from a regulated health professional college confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

5. *Program Elements*

WPL will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. As a minimum, our standards will consist of elements as required under the AODA that will include, but not be limited to our organization's standards.

- i. Establishment of policies, practices and procedures
- ii. Access to Building and Services
- iii. Assistive Devices and Technologies
- iv. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons
- v. Notice of Temporary Disruptions
- vi. Training for Company Personnel
- vii. Provisions for Communication and Feedback
- viii. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents Related to AODA

6. *Program Standards*

Access to Building and Services

Our organization will ensure that proper building access and egress is always maintained. Where necessary and in accordance to our business practices, our staff are prepared to accommodate those with disabilities by providing consultations as required.

It is the policy of our organization to review any issues, concerns or recommendations made by the general public or our clients regarding the function or maintenance of these facilities by senior management.

Assistive Devices and Technologies

Our organization does permit the use of assistive devices and technologies designed to aid persons with disabilities while in public areas of our properties. All manner of assistive technologies required by any persons with disability will be permitted without restrictions for use on our properties as required.

Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

Where not excluded by law, our organization fully supports the use of guide dogs as in all public areas of our properties. Use of other service animals on our properties will only be permitted for a disabled person, and only if the animal is of benefit to that disabled person.

Where necessary our organization will reserve the right to request a note from either a licensed doctor or registered nurse to confirm that the "service animal" is in use for reasons relating to the persons disability.

The care, use and safety of any animal on our property are the responsibility of the owner of the animal. Our company will assume the responsibility within reasonable limitations to clean any areas left soiled by guide dogs or other service animals in public areas of our properties.

Any issues or conflicts regarding the use of guide dogs or service animals must be immediately reported to the Senior Manager. Circumstances may include but are not limited to;

- Any incident involving violence directed to, or injuries received from a guide dog or service animal.
- Issues concerning allergies to animals.
- Reasonable protests involving animals being present inside the building.

Support persons assisting disabled individuals providing services to our facilities are welcomed. Support persons and disabled persons requiring access to authorized areas of our properties may only do so with permission from senior management and only while accompanied by approved company personnel as required. Support persons assisting contracted services may be required to accept or be included in the same service agreements as disabled persons providing said service.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

If our public facilities experience temporary disruptions that may affect access or services for the disabled, reasonable measures will be taken to ensure prompt communications and corrective action as required.

It will be the responsibility of Senior Management to ensure that information regarding any disruption is provided to staff and visitors as required. Notifications will be provided within a reasonable timeframe and must contain information including, but not limited to;

- i. The time, date and location of the disruption,
- ii. The reason for the disruption of service,
- iii. The anticipated duration of the disruption of service,
- iv. Descriptions of temporary or alternative alternatives (where necessary or available),
- v. Contact information for the building superintendent

In accordance to the AODA, notifications of the disruption must be posted in conspicuous areas on each floor of the buildings or properties as required. Notifications will be limited to public areas of the buildings and properties only. Senior Management will be responsible for posting notifications as required.

Training for Company Personnel

Elements of this AODA compliant program will be included in the Corporate Safety Program. Training will be provided to:

→ All employees in the organization who are required to interact with the public.

Regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- i. Review of the Purpose of the AODA
- ii. Review of the requirements of the AODA;
- iii. Review of the company accessibility standards
- iv. Interacting and Assisting Persons with various Disabilities
- v. Use of Assistive Devices, Support Animal and Support Persons
- vi. Disability Access Problem Solving
- vii. Policies, procedures, and practices of WPL pertaining to providing accessible work for employees with disabilities.

A review of the AODA training requirements and refresher training will be conducted on a yearly basis to review current policies, procedures and practices as required. Records of training will be kept on file for each employee.

Provisions for Communication and Feedback

Our company will accept all manner of feedback pertaining to the quality of services to the disabled in our properties. All manner of communication including contact phone number, mailing address and fax number for our company will be made available and posted in a conspicuous area. Senior Management will review and respond to feed back within a reasonable time frame as required.

Notice of Availability and Format of Documents Related to AODA

All documentation as required under the AODA, including all policies and procedures as required by the Freedom of Information and Protection Privacy Act will be provided upon request. When providing documentation to the disabled, our company will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the person's disability is taken into consideration when providing the documentation.

Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures, please contact Human resources.