

## HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



### Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

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Issued: January 1, 2014

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## 1.0 Policy Statement

The following policy has been established by FortisOntario and its operating subsidiaries to govern the provision of services with Ontario Regulation 191/11, "Integrated Accessibility Standards" under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA").

The Company is governed by this policy as well as the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and the AODA in meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.

## 2.0 Strategic Plan

FortisOntario in adopting the Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy (the "Policy") for all its operating subsidiaries identifies such plan as a strategic priority and supports the Plan's goals to break down barriers and increase accessibility for persons with disabilities in the areas of Information and Communications and Employment.

## 3.0 Statement of Commitment

FortisOntario is committed to treating people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We are committed to equal opportunity and to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the AODA. In support of this Policy, corresponding procedures and practices will be set out to support the Policy and may be amended from time to time.

## 4.0 Administration

Procedures and practices may be amended or added to the Policy as necessary and appropriate in order to ensure that it is current and applicable. Such amendments or additions shall be approved by the Manager, Human Resources and be coordinated with, and form part of the Policy.

This Policy becomes effective on January 1, 2014.

## 5.0 Definitions

**5.1 "Accessible Formats"** formats that are an alternative to standard print and are accessible to people with disabilities. Accessible formats may include larger print, Braille, and audio electronic formats such as DVD's and CD's.

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- 5.2 “Barrier”** shall mean anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include a physical, architectural and attitudinal barrier as well as, an information or communication barrier, technological barriers, a policy, procedure or a practice.
- 5.3 “Communications Supports”** supports that individuals with disabilities may need to access information. Some examples include plain language formats, sign language, as well as reading out loud captioning, or using written notes to communicate.
- 5.4 “Disability”** shall be defined as found in the Ontario Human Rights Code (Part II, Section 10.(1) of the OHRC):
- (a) 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,
  - (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
  - (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
  - (d) a mental disorder, or
  - (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”)
- 5.5 “Policy”** means this Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy.
- 5.6 “Procedures”** shall mean how FortisOntario will go about implementing their Policy.
- 5.7 “Practices”** shall mean what FortisOntario does on a day to day basis.

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5.8 “WCAG” refers to the World Wide Web Consortium Content Accessibility Guidelines.

## 6.0 Accessibility Plan

FortisOntario will develop, maintain and document an Accessibility Plan outlining the Company’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers from its workplace and to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five (5) years, and will be made available to any person who requests one. FortisOntario will also provide a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an accessible format upon request.

## 7.0 Training Employees and Volunteers

FortisOntario will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and continue to provide training on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities, to:

- all its employees and volunteers;
- all persons who participate in developing FortisOntario’s policies; and,
- all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Company

The training will be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons. Employees will be trained when changes are made to the accessibility policy. New employees will be trained during the orientation process, or when practicable. FortisOntario will keep a record of the training it provides.

## 8.0 Information and Communication Standards

### 8.1 Feedback

FortisOntario will continue to ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communications supports, upon request by January 1, 2015.

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## 8.2 Accessible Format and Communication Supports

Upon request, FortisOntario will provide, or will 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.

FortisOntario will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. FortisOntario will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

## 8.3 Accessible Websites and Web Content

FortisOntario will ensure that, as of January 1, 2014, new internet websites and web content on these sites will conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (**WCAG**) **2.0**, at Level **A** except where this is impracticable.

FortisOntario will ensure that, as of January 21, 2021, all its internet websites and web content will conform to **WCAG 2.0** Level **AA**. These requirements do not include Live Captions or Pre-recorded Audio Descriptions.

## 9.0 Employment Standards

### 9.1 Recruitment

FortisOntario will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

### 9.2 Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process

FortisOntario will notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate further 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, FortisOntario will consult with the applicant and provide, or arrange for the provision of, a suitable

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accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

### 9.3 Notice to Successful Applicants

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

### 9.4 Informing Employees of Supports

FortisOntario will continue to inform its employees of its policies (and any updates to those policies) used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. This information will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

### 9.5 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

Upon the request of an employee with a disability, FortisOntario will consult with the employee to provide, or arrange for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed to perform his/her job, and information that is generally available to other employees.

In determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support, FortisOntario will consult with the employee making the request.

### 9.6 Workplace Emergency Response Information

FortisOntario will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary, and if FortisOntario is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. FortisOntario will provide this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the employee requires assistance, FortisOntario will, with the consent of the employee, provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by FortisOntario to provide assistance to the employee.

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FortisOntario will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when the employee's overall accommodations needs, or plans are reviewed.

#### 9.7 Documented Individuals Accommodation Plans

FortisOntario will maintain a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

If requested, information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided will also be included in individual accommodation plans.

In addition, the plans will include individualized workplace emergency response information (where required), and will identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

#### 9.8 Return to Work Process

FortisOntario maintains a documented return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

The return to work process outlines the steps FortisOntario will take to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

This return to work process does not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any statutory compliance, e.g. under the Workplace Safety Insurance Act.

#### 9.9 Performance Management

In administering performance appraisal processes in respect of employees with disabilities, FortisOntario will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as individual accommodation plans.

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### 9.10 Career Development

Where FortisOntario provides career development and advancement to its employees, FortisOntario will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans.

### 9.11 Redeployment

Where FortisOntario has in place a redeployment process, FortisOntario will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans.

## 10.0 Related Documents

**10.1** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

**10.2** Integrated Accessibility Standards - **Ontario Regulation 191/11**

**10.3** Accessibility Standard for Customer Service - **Ontario Regulation 429/07**

**10.4** Ontario Human Rights Code

**10.5** Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

**10.6** Customer Requests and Feedback (FortisOntario HR A-120)

**10.7** Accessibility for Customer Service Standards Policy (FortisOntario HR A-124)

**10.8** FortisOntario Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (FortisOntario HR A-125A)