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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

December 2019

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Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

The government of Ontario enacted the AODA in 2005, building the framework for compliance with mandatory accessibility standards, stage by stage. The AODA requires by law, that all service providers remove barriers faced by people with disabilities.

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is to ensure that all Ontarians have fair and equitable access to programs and services and to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities moving organizations in Ontario forward on accessibility with the long term goal of a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

Recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the Act is to benefit all Ontarians by:

- a) developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and
- b) providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

This Act applies to every person or organization in the public and private sectors of the Province of Ontario, including the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

A person or organization may be subject to more than one accessibility standard.

Accessibility Standards

Accessibility standards shall:

- a) set out measures, policies, practices or other requirements for the identification and removal of barriers with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, premises or such other things as may be prescribed, and for the prevention of the erection of such barriers; and
- b) require the persons or organizations named or described in the standard to implement those measures, policies, practices or other requirements within the time periods specified in the standard.

Ontario businesses must follow the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

The IASR includes five standards in the areas of:

1. Information and communication
2. Employment
3. Transportation
4. Design of public spaces
5. Customer service

Nipigon Hospital is exempt from the Transportation Standard as the Hospital does not provide transportation services.

Compliance Reporting Requirements

The AODA give government authority to set monetary penalties to enforce compliance with accessibility standards. The maximum penalties under the AODA include:

- A corporation/organization that is guilty can be fined up to \$100,000 per day
- Directors and officers of a corporation/organization that is guilty can be fined up to \$50,000 per day

The Hospital is required to prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy referred to in the plan including:

- steps taken to comply with this regulation
- post the status report on their website and provide the report in an accessible format upon request

Disability Defined

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act uses the same definition of disability as the Ontario Human Rights Code.

When we think of disabilities, we tend to think of people in wheelchairs and physical disabilities – disabilities that are visible and apparent. But disabilities can also be non-visible. We can't always tell who has a disability. The broad range of disabilities also includes vision disabilities, deafness or being hard of hearing, intellectual or developmental, learning, and mental health disabilities.

disability [dis-uh-bil-i-tee] . . .

- any degree of physical 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 coordination, 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 a 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. (Ontario Human Rights Code 10(1), 1990).

Ontario Regulation 191/11

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

Businesses and organizations that have at least one employee and that provide goods, services or facilities to the public, and other businesses and organizations, are subject to the regulation. As a public sector organization, under the Public Hospitals Act, this includes Nipigon District Memorial Hospital.

Depending on the type and size of the business or organization, compliance deadlines range from January 1, 2012, until December 31, 2025.

What is the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation?

The standards outline requirements for organizations to create, provide, and receive information and communications that are accessible for people with disabilities.

The Parts of the IASR that apply to Nipigon Hospital include:

- Part I - General
- Part II - Information and Communication Standards
- Part III - Employment Standards
- Part IV.1 - Design of Public Spaces Standards
- Part IV.2 - Customer Service Standards

PART II - Information and Communication

The standard outlines requirements for organizations to create, provide, and receive information and communications that are accessible for people with disabilities. For example, organizations must provide information and communications in an accessible format to people with disabilities upon request and in a timely manner.

Goal 1 - Continue to provide access to accessibility information.

Objective #1 Establish an Accessibility Committee

Objective #2 Redevelop outdated website

Objective #3 Continue to develop and support processes to provide information in accessible formats

PART IV.2 – Customer Service Standard

The standard outlines requirements for removing barriers for people with disabilities so they can access goods, services, and/or facilities. For example, a person who requires the use of a service animal must be permitted to enter the premises. They also must be allowed to keep the service animal with them, unless excluded by law.

Goal 2 - Enhance the capacity for staff, professional staff and volunteers to provide quality, accessible customer service.

Objective #1 Redevelop and provide education on customer service standard to all staff

Objective #2 Redevelop and provide education on customer service standard to all volunteers

Objective #3 Redevelop and provide education on Ontario Human Rights Code, General Standard, Information and Communication Standard and Design of Public Spaces Standard as appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons

Objective #4 Develop a process for regular consultation with persons with disabilities

PART IV.1 – Design of Public Spaces Standard

The design of public spaces standard outlines the need for newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces to be accessible for people with disabilities. For example, organizations must provide accessible parking for people with disabilities when building new or redeveloping existing parking spaces.

Goal 3 - Review and enhance, where possible, interior and exterior spaces from an accessibility perspective.

Objective #1 Conduct an accessibility review of the facility and tenant spaces.

Objective #2 Prioritize recommendations.

Objective #3 Implement changes within budgetary constraints.

Judy Jean, Certifier
December 17, 2019

Cathy Covino, Chief Operating Officer
December 17, 2019

