



The Law Society of  
Upper Canada

Barreau  
du Haut-Canada

## Law Society of Upper Canada Policy

Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities: Provision of Services,  
Information, Communications, Employment and Built Environment

Effective January 1, 2014  
Reviewed September 2015  
And November 2015

Supersedes: Policy to Provide Services to Persons with Disabilities

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## **EFFECTIVE**

### **APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

This policy complies with Regulation 191/11, *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Integrated Regulation), and Regulation 429/07, the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation* (the Customer Service Regulation) adopted under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. It also complies with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

This policy is implemented in accordance with the time frames established by the Integrated Regulation and the Customer Service Regulation, as indicated below.

### **COMMITMENT OF LAW SOCIETY**

The Law Society of Upper Canada (the Law Society) is committed to maintaining an accessible environment for persons with disabilities in employment, in its communications and information, in the delivery of its goods and services and in its built environment.

The Law Society is committed to,

- providing an environment and goods and services that promote and respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- providing persons with disabilities with the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients;
- preventing and removing barriers to accessibility;
- providing equal opportunities to persons with disabilities in obtaining, using and benefiting from the Law Society's goods, services, programs and facilities; and
- meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner.

### **WHO THE POLICY APPLIES TO**

The policy applies to all staff, agents, volunteers, clients, and visitors to the Law Society. All areas of the Law Society are accountable for enhancing access to persons with disabilities.

### **MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

The Law Society establishes, implements, maintains and documents a multi-year Accessibility Plan outlining the Law Society's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet its requirements under the Regulation. The plan is posted on the Law Society's website and is made available in an accessible format upon request.

The Accessibility Plan is reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

### **TRAINING FOR STAFF UNDER THE CUSTOMER SERVICE REGULATION**

The Law Society trains its staff and other individuals who provide services to the public on the Law Society's behalf on the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities.

The training is provided within 6 months after staff members commence their duties and includes the following topics:

- the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
- how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;

- how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal or a support person;
- how to use or access the equipment or devices available on the Law Society's premises or otherwise that may help with the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities;
- what to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty in accessing the Law Society's goods and services;
- the Law Society's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service and integrated standards.

The Law Society provides training on an ongoing basis when changes are made to the Law Society's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

### **RECORD OF TRAINING**

The Law Society keeps a record of the training provided under this policy, including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC**

When the Law Society prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes the information available to the public, the Law Society provides the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

### **WORKPLACE EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES**

The Law Society provides individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with disabilities, if the disabilities are such that the individualized information is necessary, and if the Law Society is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disabilities. The Law Society provides this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the employee requires assistance, the Law Society, with the consent of the employee, provides the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the Law Society to provide assistance to the employee.

The Law Society reviews the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed, and, when the Law Society reviews its general emergency response policies.

### **ACCESSIBILITY IN THE PROVISION OF SERVICES**

#### ***Definitions***

"Guide dog" means a dog trained as a guide for a person who is blind or visually impaired.

"Service animal" means an animal for a person with disabilities where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

“Support person” means, in relation to a person with disabilities, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

### ***Communication and assistive devices***

The Law Society is committed to excellence in serving all clients, including persons with disabilities, and will carry out its functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

#### *Communication*

The Law Society communicates with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

#### *Assistive devices*

The Law Society is committed to serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from its goods and services. The Law Society provides its staff members with training on how to use the assistive devices available on the Law Society premises.

### ***Use of guide dogs, service animals and support persons***

A person with disabilities who is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal is permitted to enter the premises of the Law Society with the animal and to keep the animal with him or her, unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises. If the animal is excluded by law from the premises of the Law Society, alternative measures will be taken to enable the person to access Law Society goods and services.

A person with disabilities who is accompanied by a support person is permitted to enter the Law Society’s premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with disabilities who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on the Law Society premises.

The Law Society may require a person with disabilities to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with disabilities or the health or safety of others on the premises.

The Law Society does not usually charge fees for support persons, but if fees are charged for admission to the premises (e.g., special events), clients will be informed of this by a notice posted at the Law Society or by such method that is reasonable in the circumstances, such as on the website or in advertisements for events.

### ***Notice of temporary disruption***

The Law Society notifies the public in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities. This notice includes information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notices are posted at all public entrances and service counters of the Law Society, or communicated by such method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

### ***Maintenance of documents***

The Law Society maintains documents describing its policies, practices and procedures and, upon request, gives a copy of a document to any person. The documents include policies, practices and procedures with respect to the following:

- use of guide dogs, service animals and support persons;
- the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption;
- the training policy, including a summary of the contents of the training and details of when the training is to be provided;
- records of the training provided under this policy, including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided;
- the feedback process.

The Law Society notifies persons to whom it provides goods and services, by posting the information at a conspicuous place on the Law Society premises, on the Law Society website or by such method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

When required under this policy to give a copy of a document to a person with disabilities, the Law Society provides the document or information in a format that takes into account the person's disabilities.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS - ACCESSIBLE NEW WEBSITES AND WEB CONTENT – LEVEL A**

The Law Society's new Internet and web content conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A.

The Law Society notifies the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

### **TRAINING RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT**

The Law Society provides training, appropriate to the duties performed by employees, volunteers or persons as described below, on the requirements of the Integrated Regulation and on the *Human Rights Code* to,

- all its employees and volunteers;
- all persons who participate in developing the Law Society's policies; and
- all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Law Society.

The Law Society provides training on an ongoing basis and as soon as practicable when changes are made to this policy. New employees, volunteers or persons described above are trained as soon as practicable after the commencement of their duties.

## **ACCESSIBLE FORMATS AND COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS**

Upon request, the Law Society, in consultation with the person making the request, arranges for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. The final determination as to which accessible format or communication support shall be used rests with the Law Society of Upper Canada.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

The Law Society adheres to the following recruitment requirements, as specified in the Regulation.

**Note: The Law Society's *Accommodation Policy* complies with the Integrated Regulation. In addition to the principles stated below, the *Accommodation Policy* and its procedures apply to requests by an employee for accommodations based on disability. The *Accommodation Policy* is available on the Law Society's intranet.**

### ***Recruitment, assessment and selection processes***

The Law Society notifies its employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

The Law Society notifies job applicants who 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 the selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Law Society consults with the applicant and provides or arranges for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

The decision as to which accommodation is to be provided rests with the Law Society.

### ***Notice to successful applicants***

Successful applicants are notified about the Law Society's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment.

## **REVIEW OF POLICY**

This policy is reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the practices of the Law Society.

No changes are made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.

Any Law Society policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities will be modified or removed.

## **FEEDBACK PROCESS**

The Law Society welcomes any feedback regarding the methods it uses to provide goods and services to persons with disabilities. Individuals may provide their feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, or by delivering an electronic text by email or on a key or otherwise to the

Director, Equity, 416-947-3413 or 1-800-668-7380 ext. 3413, [lawsociety@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:lawsociety@lsuc.on.ca) or at the Law Society of Upper Canada, Equity Initiatives Department, Osgoode Hall, 130 Queen Street West, Toronto (Ontario), M5H 2N6

Complaints may be made in writing to the Director, Equity, or the CEO. The Director, Equity, or the CEO will review and assess every complaint received. Where possible, the Director, Equity, or CEO will address the issues. If a complaint cannot be addressed, the Director, Equity, or CEO will advise the complainant.

### **QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY**

If anyone has a question about this policy, or the purpose of this policy is not understood, please contact the Director, Equity, 416-947-3413 or 1-800-668-7380 ext 3413 or at [jbouchar@lsuc.on.ca](mailto:jbouchar@lsuc.on.ca) or at the Law Society of Upper Canada, Equity Initiatives Department, Osgoode Hall, 130 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N6.

## **EFFECTIVE AT LATER DATE**

### **BUILT ENVIRONMENT - effective January 1, 2017**

When constructing new service counters, new fixed queuing guides, new waiting areas or existing waiting areas, the Law Society shall meet the requirements under Regulation 191/11.

The Law Society shall develop procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces and for dealing with temporary disruptions as required by Regulation 191/11.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS - ACCESSIBLE WEBSITES AND WEB CONTENT – LEVEL AA - effective January 1, 2021**

The Law Society ensures that all its Internet websites and web content conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021, except where this is impracticable or there is an exception by law.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy

Training & Development Policy

Staffing Policy & Procedures

Accommodation Policy

