



## Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

### Guidelines

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

### Definitions

Assistive Device – 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, and/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 coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a 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.

### Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

#### The Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities:

DeFaveri 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 by:

- ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality;
- allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing services; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

We are committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. When requested, we will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.

### Assistive Devices:

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing services provided by our employees. In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure access to services.

### Service Animals:

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public and third parties unless otherwise excluded by law.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to their disability, we may request verification from the customer.

The customer who is accompanied by a service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times. Employees should not distract, touch, or offer treats to the animal that is on official duty to provide assistance to their owner with a disability.

### Support Persons:

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, we will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any such conversation.

### Notice of Disruptions in Service or Accesses:

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Management. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities, accesses, or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use our services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

In the event that a notification needs to be posted, the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- services or accesses to facilities/goods that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

When disruptions occur, DeFaveri will provide notice by posting notices on the door and within the reception area of our office.

### Feedback Process:

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the services we provide to people with disabilities and accessibility can phone, email, or write a letter to Management.

Customers who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgment of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

Notice of Availability and Format of Documents:

We will notify customers that the documents related to the AODA policy may be provided upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability in a timely.

We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support.

**Integrated Accessibility Standards**

Procurement of Goods and Services:

Accessibility criteria and features will be incorporated when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so. If it is determined that it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, we will provide, upon request, an explanation.

Accessible Emergency Information:

Upon request, DeFaveri will provide publicly available emergency information to customers in an accessible way.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

We have established and implemented a multi-year accessibility plan which is available upon request. The purpose of this document is to outline our strategy to prevent and remove barriers. This plan is reviewed and updated every five (5) years. Accessible format of the plan is available upon request.

Recruitment and Employment:

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities with respect to recruitment, employment, training, career development, and career progression. DeFaveri is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. Standard language is included in all job postings to notify our employees and the public of our commitment to accommodate applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process.

If the selected applicant requests an accommodation, the applicant will be consulted and provided suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to a disability.

When making offers of employment, applicants will be provided the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of this Employee Handbook.

Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Information:

Employees who have a disability will be provided individualized workplace emergency response information upon request. An Emergency Plan can be requested from Management.

For any employee who wishes to disclose the need to have an emergency response plan, the Management Team will work with them to complete an Emergency Evacuation Plan.

#### Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP):

DeFaveri provides individual accommodation plans to employees who have a disability, upon request. Employees may make a request at any time during their employment.

Once the request has been made, the Management Team will work together with the employee to implement an IAP.

Once plans have been finalized, an annual review will be required to ensure effectiveness. Only members associated with the plan will receive information regarding the arrangement.

Both the Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan and the IAP will be updated when:

- The employee moves to a different department or location; and
- The employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed.

#### Performance Management and Career Development:

When undertaking any performance management and career development, DeFaveri will ensure that the accessibility needs of all employees with disabilities needs are taken into account. This will include a review of any IAPs that are currently in place. Where an individual identifies any accessibility barriers, DeFaveri will take steps to remove the barriers identified.

Should an employee acquire a disability during employment at DeFaveri, the company will work with the employee to allow an effective and healthy return to work.

#### Design of Public Spaces:

DeFaveri will meet Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Due to the retail nature of our business, public spaces will typically include only service-related elements like service counters/cashier counters, fixed queuing lines, and waiting areas.

#### **Training**

Training on AODA will be provided to all employees. A record of training will be kept for all employees who have completed it.