

# RENFREW COUNTY AND DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2017-2021

## INTRODUCTION

In 2005, the Ontario government passed the ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)***, with the goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025. The Act was developed in response to a history of discrimination against people with physical and mental disabilities. It is designed to create an environment in which people with disabilities have the same access to goods, services, employment, information, transportation and public spaces as people without disabilities. The AODA establishes standards for the identification, removal and prevention of barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living. The principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity were used as the basis for developing these standards.

The ***Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*** became law in January 2009. This regulation established accessibility standards relating to Customer Service.

The ***Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11*** became law on July 1, 2011. This regulation includes the Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation Standards. Requirements under these standards are phased in between 2012 and 2025. Note that the Transportation Standard applies to organizations providing transportation services, and does not apply to the Renfrew County and District Health Unit (the Health Unit).

The ***Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*** requires organizations to create, put into practice, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan. This plan outlines the activities that the Health Unit (a non-profit organization with over 50 employees) will implement to comply with the Act and to identify, remove and prevent barriers for clients and employees with disabilities related to accessing, using and benefiting from the Health Unit's programs and services.

## STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (the Health Unit) protects and promotes the health and well-being of all residents through leadership, partnership, accountability and service excellence. The Health Unit is committed to working towards optimal health for all in Renfrew County and District. In keeping with its Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals, the Health Unit is committed to the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity as described in the AODA and to meeting the needs of people with disabilities through the implementation of the ***Renfrew County***

**and District Health Unit Policy and Procedures Regarding Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities.** To this end the Health Unit will provide:

- equal access and participation for people with disabilities
- programs and services that are accessible to all
- processes to ensure that all employees, students, volunteers and contractors who provide programs, services or facilities on behalf of the Health Unit are provided with appropriate training on the AODA and its Standards
- information and communications to persons with disabilities in a timely manner in accordance with the AODA and its Standards
- employment practices that accommodate job applicants and employees with disabilities

The Health Unit will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its practices are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity as expressed in the AODA by:

- valuing all clients as deserving of effective and full service (dignity)
- taking into account how people with disabilities can effectively access and use Health Unit programs and services and show respect for these methods (dignity)
- allowing clients with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing programs and services as long as this does not present a safety risk (independence)
- providing *integrated* services that allow people with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same places and in the same or similar ways as other clients, and providing *alternative* measures where necessary to meet the needs of people with disabilities (integration)
- taking into account individual needs when providing programs and services to ensure that people with disabilities have opportunities equal to that given others to obtain, use and benefit from Health Unit programs and services and do not experience barriers to access or participation (equal opportunity)
- upon request, communicating with people who have disabilities in ways that take into account their disability

This plan describes how [Renfrew County and District Health Unit Policy and Procedures Regarding Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities](#) has and will be implemented.

<b>Part 1: General</b>			
<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Status</b>
Establish general accessibility policies under the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation</i>	Establish accessibility policies including a statement of commitment to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner.	AODA Working Group	Completed
	Make the policies publicly available on the Health Unit's web site. Provide the policies in accessible formats upon request.	Communications Coordinator	Completed
Establish multi-year accessibility plan under the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards</i>	Develop and implement a multi-year accessibility plan.	AODA Working Group	Completed
	Review and update the plan annually.	AODA Working Group	2017 – 2021 plan completed September 2017
Provide training on the applicable requirements under the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards</i>	Research and develop training resources and create a training plan on the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards</i> and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities. Training may vary according to duties.	Planning and Evaluation Coordinator, AODA Working Group	Completed
	Ensure training is provided to all employees, students, volunteers and contractors as soon as practicable after starting at the Health Unit, as part of their orientation.	Program Managers and Directors	Completed and as required
	Ensure additional training is provided when there are changes to accessibility policies and procedures.	Program Managers and Directors	As required
	Maintain records of training including dates of training and names of people trained.	Planning and Evaluation Coordinator	As required
Report progress	Complete Accessibility Compliance Report	Chief Executive Officer	Completed December 2014 and December 2017

<b>Part 2: Accessible Customer Service Standard</b>			
<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Status</b>
Develop Accessible Customer Service Plan	Develop a plan for providing goods and services to people with disabilities that includes practices for communications; assistive devices, service animals, support persons, notice of temporary disruption; training; and feedback process.	AODA Working Group	Completed
	Post the plan on our web site and make it available in accessible formats upon request.	Communications Coordinator	Completed
Provide Accessible Customer Service Training	Provide accessible customer service training to all employees, students, volunteers and contractors as soon as practicable after starting at the Health Unit as part of their orientation.	Program Managers and Directors	As required
	Provide additional training when there are changes to the Accessible Customer Service Plan.	Program Managers and Directors	As required
	Maintain records of training including dates of training and names of people trained.	Planning and Evaluation Coordinator	As required
Notice of temporary disruption	In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to on-site services or facilities for customers with disabilities, the Health Unit will notify customers promptly. A clearly posted notice will include (where possible) information about the reasons for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be posted at relevant Health Unit offices and on the Health Unit's website where appropriate.	Planning and Evaluation Coordinator, Managers	As required

<b>Part 3: Information and Communication Standard</b>			
<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Status</b>
Implement a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the provision of services to people with disabilities	Include information about the feedback process on the Health Unit's Accessibility web page. Create link to the Accessibility page from the footer on each page. Feedback from clients will be provided to Program Managers for response.	Communications Coordinator	Completed and as required
Ensure that all feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities	Include a statement on all forms and surveys that gather feedback, indicating the availability of accessible formats and communication supports upon request. Suggested wording: "Please ask us if you need this form in an accessible format or if you would like help with completing it."	All employees	As required
Provide information to the public in accessible formats or with communication supports upon request	Communicate policies and procedures for providing information in accessible formats and communication supports to all staff. See training activities in Part 1: General.	Program Planning and Evaluation Coordinator	As required
	Provide instructions to the public on how to request information in accessible formats or with communication supports on the Health Unit web site and in the reception area of Health Unit premises.	Communications Coordinator	Completed
	Work with persons with disabilities to provide the information requested in a timely manner.	Staff, Coordinators and Program Managers	As required
Provide emergency procedures, plans and public safety information available to the public in accessible formats or with communication supports upon request	Work with persons with disabilities to provide the information requested in a timely manner.	Staff, Coordinators and Program Managers depending on the situation	As required
Ensure all websites and content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA	Include compliance with WCAG 2.0 level AA in work specifications for web development consultants.	Communications Coordinator	As required
	Use at least two methods of checking accessibility at least once per year (e.g. monthly accessibility analysis, visit site using assistive technology, user testing and feedback, keep log of accessibility issues repaired).	Communications Coordinator	Monthly accessibility analysis initiated October 2017

<b>Part 4: Employment Standard</b>			
<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Recruitment, assessment and selection: January 1, 2016</b>			
Inform the public and job applicants that the Health Unit will accommodate disabilities during the selection process	Include on job postings that accommodation is available for applicants with disabilities.	Human Resources	As required
	Consult with applicants with disabilities to arrange for the provision of accommodation for an interview format and process that meets their specific needs.	Human Resources	As required
Notify successful applicants of the organization's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities	Include the Health Unit's Policy and Procedures Regarding Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities in orientation material for new employees.	Human Resources	As required
<b>Accessible formats and communication supports for employees: January 1, 2016</b>			
Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats or communication supports in the workplace	Consult with employees with disabilities to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports that they require to do their job effectively and to be informed of information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.	Program Managers and Coordinators	As required
Inform Health Unit employees of policies for supporting employees with disabilities	Provide a copy of the Policy and Procedures Regarding Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities to all employees	Medical Officer of Health	Completed

Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
<b>Workplace emergency response information: January 1, 2012</b>			
Provide individualized emergency response information to employees with a disability if necessary and the Health Unit is aware of the need for accommodation	When the Health Unit is aware of the need for accommodation, develop individualized emergency response information for employees with a disability.	Human Resources	As required
	If assistance is required during emergency response, with the employee's consent, provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the employer to provide assistance to the employee.	Program Managers and Coordinators	As required
	Review individualized workplace emergency response information: when the employee moves to a different location in the Health Unit; when the employee's accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and when the Health Unit reviews its general emergency response policies.	Program Managers and Coordinators	As required
<b>Documented individual accommodation plans: January 1, 2016</b>			
Develop and have in place a written process for the development of accommodation plans for employees with disabilities	Have in place a written process for developing individualized accommodation plans to meet the needs of employees with disabilities.	Human Resources	Completed
<b>Return to work process: January 1, 2016</b>			
Develop, have in place and document a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations to return to work	Have in place and document a return to work process that supports employees returning to work that require disability-related accommodations.	Program Managers and Coordinators Human Resources	Completed

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Performance management: January 1, 2016</b>			
Ensure performance management process considers the needs of employees with disabilities	Performance management for employees with disabilities will take into account the accessibility needs of these employees and their individual accommodation plans	Program Managers and Coordinators Human Resources	As required
<b>Career development and advancement: January 1, 2016</b>			
Ensure career advancement takes into account employees with disabilities	Career advancement for employees with disabilities will take into account the accessibility needs of these employees and their individual accommodation plans	Program Managers and Coordinators Human Resources	As required
<b>Redeployment: January 1, 2016</b>			
Ensure redeployment considers the needs of employees with disabilities	Redeployment for employees with disabilities will take into account the accessibility needs of these employees and their individual accommodation plans	Program Managers and Coordinators Human Resources	As required

## **CONCLUSION**

Renfrew County and District Health Unit is committed to improving health for all in Renfrew County and District. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines a process to identify, prevent and modify barriers for persons with disabilities to ensure equitable access to public health services and programs.

Updated October 3, 2017