

RENFREW COUNTY AND DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2022-2026

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

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 Directions, 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)
- considering 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)
- considering individual needs when providing programs and services to ensure that people with disabilities have opportunities equal to those 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 consider 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.

Part 1: General			
Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Establish general accessibility policies under the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation</i>	Review and update accessibility policies and procedures including a statement of commitment to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities as required. Review and update annually.	Senior Management Team (SMT)/AODA Working Group	Completed
	Post updated policies and procedures on our website. Provide the policies in accessible formats. Review and update annually.	Communications Team	Completed
Establish multi-year accessibility plan under the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards</i>	Develop and implement a multi-year accessibility plan for 2022 - 2026. Review and update annually	SMT/AODA Working Group	Completed
Provide training on the applicable requirements under the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards</i>	Provide current training on the <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards</i> and the Ontario Human Rights Code (as it pertains to people with disabilities) to all employees, students, volunteers, and contractors during the onboarding/orientation process.	HR Team	Ongoing
	Provide additional training when there are changes to accessibility policies and procedures.	HR Team	Ongoing
	Maintain records of training including dates of training and names of people trained.	HR Team	Ongoing
Report progress	Complete Accessibility Compliance Report as required every 3 years.	SMT/AODA Working Group	Completed June 2021. Next report due December 31, 2023.

Part 2: Accessible Customer Service Standard
RCDHU is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Develop Accessible Customer Service Plan	Review and update as required our Customer Service Plan for providing services to people with disabilities that includes practices for communications; assistive devices, service animals, support persons, notice of temporary disruption; training; and feedback process.	SMT/AODA Working Group	Completed
	Post the updated plan on our website and make it available in accessible formats.	Communications Team	Completed
Provide Accessible Customer Service Training	Provide current AODA Customer Service Standards Training to all employees, students, volunteers and contractors as soon as practicable after starting at the Health Unit as part of their orientation.	HR Team	Ongoing
	Provide additional training when there are changes to the Accessible Customer Service Plan.	HR Team	Ongoing
	Maintain records of training including dates of training and names of people trained.	HR Team	Ongoing

Part 3: Information and Communication Standard

Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Implement a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the provision of services to people with disabilities	Review the information about the feedback process on the Health Unit's Accessibility web page. Initial response to feedback will be within 5 business days.	Senior Management Team	Ongoing

Ensure that all feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities	Remind managers to include a statement on all forms, as well as 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 assistance is required with completing it."	All employees	Ongoing
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Part 3: Information and Communication Standard			
RCDHU is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.			
Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Provide information to the public in accessible formats or with communication supports upon request	Refer to the mandatory accessibility training that instructs staff on how to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request. See training activities in Part 1: General.	Managers	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 areas of Health Unit premises.	Comms Team/SMT/AODA working group	Ongoing
	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 Managers, depending on the situation	As required

<p>Ensure all websites and content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA</p>	<p>Include compliance with WCAG 2.0 level AA in work specifications for web development consultants.</p>	<p>Communications Team</p>	<p>As required</p>
<p>Ensure all websites and content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA</p>	<p>Use at least two methods of checking accessibility at least once per year (e.g., accessibility analysis, visit site using assistive technology, user testing and feedback, keep log of accessibility issues repaired).</p>	<p>Communications Team</p>	<p>Review accessibility analyses</p>

Part 4: Employment Standard			
RCDHU is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.			
Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Recruitment, assessment, and selection			
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 Team	As required
	Consult with applicants with disabilities to arrange for the provision of an accommodation for an interview format and process that meets their specific needs.	Human Resources Team	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 Team	As required
Accessible formats and communication support for employees			
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.	Managers and Coordinators	As required
Remind 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.	Managers and Coordinators	Ongoing

Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Workplace emergency response information			
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.	Managers and Coordinators	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 aid the employee.	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 accommodation needs, or plans are reviewed; and when the Health Unit reviews its general emergency response policies.	Managers and Coordinators	As required
Documented individual accommodation plans			
Develop accommodation plans for employees with disabilities	Review and update individualized accommodation plans to meet the needs of employees with disabilities.	Human Resources Team, Managers	As required
Return to work process			
Review return-to-work plans for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations to return to work	Review and update return-to-work plans that support employees returning to work that require disability-related accommodations.	Managers and Coordinators, Human Resources Team	As required

Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Performance management			
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.	Managers and Coordinators	As required
Career development and advancement			
Ensure career advancement considers employees with disabilities	Career advancement for employees with disabilities will consider the accessibility needs of these employees and their individual accommodation plans.	Managers and Coordinators, Human Resources Team	As required
Redeployment			
Ensure redeployment considers the needs of employees with disabilities	Redeployment for employees with disabilities will consider the accessibility needs of these employees and their individual accommodation plans.	Managers and Coordinators	As required

Part 5: Public Spaces			
RCDHU is committed to maintaining accessible elements in public spaces.			
Requirements	Activity	Responsibility	Status
Preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements in public spaces	Monitor all accessible elements in public spaces (accessible doors, mobility equipment such as wheelchairs, etc.) and provide preventative and emergency maintenance as needed. Maintain or repair wheelchair ramps as needed due to winter conditions, other weather effects or damage.	Landlord, Corporate Services	As required
Temporary disruptions when accessible elements of public spaces are not in working order	Arrange for repairs as required. Communicate temporary disruptions to the public with information in accessible formats or with communication supports on the Health Unit web site and in the reception areas of Health Unit premises.	Corporate Services, Communications	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 December 12, 2023