



## CORPORATE

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### Accessibility - Accessibility Standards Policy

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<b>Approved Date:</b>	04/20/2015	<b>Department:</b>	All Staff, Human Resources, Senior Management
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#### **Purpose Statement:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide an overarching framework that documents the Society's accessibility policies, programs, guidelines, procedures and services.

This policy is drafted in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 C. 11 (AODA)* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 (Regulation)*. Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society (WECAS) is committed to meeting the requirements of this legislation.

#### **Policy Statement:**

WECAS supports and is guided by the four core principles of Dignity, Independence, Integration and Equal Opportunity. WECAS is committed to creating an inclusive culture across the organization by preventing and removing barriers for persons with disabilities. Where it is not possible to remove barriers, WECAS will make efforts to accommodate persons with disabilities in a timely, effective and suitable manner.

#### **Scope:**

This policy shall apply to all employees, volunteers, foster parents and students.

#### **Definitions:**

**Accessible Formats** may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

**Accessibility Plan** describes a multi-year plan that addresses the identification, removal and

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prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in WECAS's policies, procedures, guidelines, programs and services.

**Accommodation** describes a process or a series of adjustments that are customized to the needs of an individual with a disability.

**Barrier** is defined by the *ADOA* as, anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, architectural barrier, information or communication barrier, attitudinal barrier, a policy, procedure or a practice.

**Communication Supports** may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

**Disability** is defined by the *ADOA* as:

- a) 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 co-ordination, 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;
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) A mental disorder;
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

**Equal Opportunity** means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others from the way services are provided: there should not be significantly more effort required to access or to obtain a service nor should there be an expectation that lesser quality or more inconvenience be tolerated.

**Equal Treatment** incorporates the principles of dignity, independence, equal opportunity, integration and inclusion.

**Kiosk** means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public

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use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

**Unconvertible** means information or communications are unconvertible if it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications, or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

**Undue Hardship** - the AODA states that the undue hardship standard as defined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* is the standard required by the *Regulation*. The AODA also states that reasonable efforts must be used to ensure policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, equal opportunity and integration.

**References:**

- Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities, 2005*
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/1*
- Ontario Human Rights Code*
- WECAS Policy # 359 – [Accessibility - Accessible Customer Services](#)
- WECAS Policy # - Return to Work
- WECAS Policy # - Emergency Plan

**Procedures:**

**1. Accessibility Plans and Policies**

WECAS will develop, maintain and document a multi-year Accessibility Plan outlining a phased-in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet the present and future requirements of the AODA. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years. Once approved, the Plan will be posted on both our external and internal websites. Upon request, a copy of the Accessibility Plan will be provided in accessible formats.

**2. Self Service Kiosks**

WECAS shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

**3. Training**

All WECAS employees, volunteers, foster parents and students providing goods and services on the Society behalf shall be required to undergo training on the requirements of the AODA accessibility standards and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer, foster parent or

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student. Training shall take place as soon as is practicable and upon completion, the Society shall keep a record of the training provided, including the dates on which accessibility training took place. Ongoing training will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable.

#### **4. Information and Communication Standards**

##### **i. Feedback**

WECAS has established a process for receiving and responding to client complaints and concerns regarding the manner in which WECAS provides services to persons with disabilities. [COMPLAINT PROCEDURES as per CFSA](#) WECAS will ensure these processes are provided in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request. The feedback process is available to the public on WECAS'S website. Please refer to the [Accessibility - Accessible Customer Services](#) for additional information.

WECAS will ensure the process for requesting feedback from clients, employees, community partners, foster parents, students and volunteers are accessible to persons with disabilities and will provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

##### **ii. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

Upon request, WECAS will provide, or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

If WECAS determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the person requesting the information or communications will be provided with:

- An explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and;
- A summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

WECAS will notify visitors and clients about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports via information posted on our external website and lobby.

##### **iii. Website Accessibility**

WECAS shall make any new web content on its internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA, except where meeting this requirement is not practicable.

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## **5. Accessible Employment**

WECAS will develop specific employment policies for the areas of Recruitment, Return to Work and Accommodations, Performance Management and Career Development and Advancement. These policies are intended to build upon an inclusive and accessible work environment free from discrimination and harassment.

### **Attachments:**

None