

OPERATING GUIDELINES

AODA – CUSTOMER SERVICE	
Topic: AODA	Policy # - OG-09
Effective: 01 January 2024	Number of pages: 5
Approved by: Executive Director	Date Approved: 16 November 2023
Last Revision Date: 16 November 2023	Next Revision Date: 30 September 2025

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to address the accessibility requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (the standard) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the AODA).

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Policy, PARC uses the following definitions: Not Applicable

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all PARC employees, clients, students, volunteers, and to any individuals who provides goods, services, or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of PARC in accordance with the legislation.

POLICY

The AODA is a provincial act that was passed with the purpose of developing, implementing, and enforcing accessibility standards to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises.

As a designated public sector organization, PARC is obligated, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11, to meet the accessibility needs of people with disabilities.

PARC is committed to meeting the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service by providing goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of

people with disabilities. The organization will use all reasonable efforts to ensure its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the spirit and requirements of the standard. PARC's services, programs, goods, and facilities are to be available to people with disabilities in manner that:

- is free from discrimination,
- is inclusive,
- provides accessible formats and communication supports,
- seeks to provide integrated services, and
- takes into consideration a person's disability.

This policy is intended to provide the overarching framework to guide the review and development of PARC policies, standards, procedures, and guidelines to comply with the standards developed under the AODA.

Accessibility Plans & Policies

The Management Team will produce a *Multi-year Accessibility Plan*. The Plan will be posted on PARC's website and will be made available in an accessible format and with communication support upon request. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated at least once every five years.

Accessible Formats & Communication Supports

Except as otherwise provided by the AODA, PARC, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, will provide or arrange to provide accessible formats and communications support for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication support will be provided in a timely manner, considering the person's accessibility needs.

This does not apply to products and product labels, unconvertible information or communications and information that PARC does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship. If it is determined that information or communications are unconvertible, the program will provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Communication with Persons with Disabilities

Employees will communicate with people with disabilities in a manner that takes into account their physical or mental ability.

Terminology

When referring to people with disabilities, PARC employees, volunteers and third-party contractors will use terminology that adheres to guidelines provided in PARC's AODA Customer Service Standards Training (HR Downloads).

Accessible Websites & Web Content

Websites and web content controlled directly by PARC or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product will conform to the *World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1*, at Level A and AA in accordance with the schedule set out in the *AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards*.

Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may provide their own assistive devices for the purposes of obtaining, using, and benefiting from the organization's services.

Service Animals

The organization welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. If a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the organization will ensure that alternative means are available to enable the person with a disability to access our programs and services.

Support Persons

The organization welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises. In the event that a fee is charged in relation to a support person's presence on the premises or to attend an organization-sponsored event, advanced notice of the fee will be provided.

Admission Fees

If PARC charges an admission fee in connection with a support person's presence at an event or function, PARC will ensure that notice is given in advance about the amount, if any, that is payable in respect of the support person accompanying a person with a disability.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

The organization will make reasonable efforts to provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to the facilities or services where such control is possible. This notice will include information about the reasons for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The organization will provide notice by posting information in visible places on our premises or on our web site, or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

Training for Staff

The organization will provide training to all employees, volunteers and other third parties who deal with the public providing goods and services on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices, and procedures. Training will be provided as soon as practicable after an individual assumes responsibilities related to the public and will include the following:

- A review of the purposes of the AODA and requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) and instruction about the following matters:
 - a) How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities,
 - b) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person,
 - c) How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability, and
 - d) What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods and services.
 - e) A review of the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11) and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

The amount and format of training will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public or their involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining

to the provision of goods and services. Employees will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices, and procedures. Training will take place as soon as is practicable and, upon completion, PARC will document the training provided and the certificate of completion will be kept in their HR file.

Procurement of Goods, Services, Facilities and Kiosks

When procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks, or facilities, PARC will incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not practicable. If not practicable, PARC will provide an explanation, upon request.

Feedback Process

Feedback is welcome as it encourages continuous service improvements. Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities may be given:

By mail: 1499 Queen Street West, Toronto, ON. M6R 1A3

By e-mail: info@parc.on.ca

By telephone: 416-537-2262

Availability of Documents Required by the Standard

The Act or any policies pertaining to the Act will be made available upon request. When providing a document to a person with a disability, the organization will work with the individual to determine options in order to provide the document or the information contained in the document in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

REFERENCES

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)