

Section: Human Resources - Accessibility AODA

AODA and the Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)	Date Approved:	February 23, 2021
	Director Responsible:	Director of Human Resources
	Date for Review:	February 23, 2023

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that KidsAbility’s compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) and Accessibility five standards

DEFINITIONS

The **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act**, or **AODA**, aims to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities. The AODA became law on June 13, 2005 and applies to all levels of government, non-profits, and private sector businesses in Ontario that have one or more employees (full-time, part-time, seasonal, or contract).

The AODA includes requirements that all organizations must meet, with deadlines specific to an organization’s type and size. The AODA is made up of five standards, as well as some general requirements, and they include the:

1. Customer Service Standard
2. Information and Communication Standard
3. Employment Standard
4. Transportation Standard
5. Design of Public Spaces Standard

The AODA standards are part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The IASR includes, in addition to requirements specific to each standard, the following general requirements:

1. provide training to staff and volunteers
2. develop an accessibility policy
3. create a multi-year accessibility plan and update it every five years
4. consider accessibility in procurement and when designing or purchasing self-service kiosks

SCOPE

The entire organization

POLICY

KidsAbility is committed to providing a barrier free environment for all clients, staff and visitors as well as the board of directors. KidsAbility will be accessible and inclusive respecting dignity and independence of all people.

PROCEDURE

KidsAbility will maintain an Accessibility Plan. The plan will be reviewed annually and updated at least every five years. KidsAbility will report progress to the Board on an annual basis and to the Ontario government every three years. The plan will outline actions to prevent and remove barriers in accordance with the requirements of the AODA. The plan and all reports will be posted for public viewing at www.kidsability.ca

Accessibility

- Comply with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)
- All written and electronic communication will conform with accessibility standards

- Alternate formats for electronic and written materials will be provided upon request
- Physical environments will be free from barriers
- Provide emergency information in an accessible format and, if requested, provide employees with disabilities individualized emergency response information
- Arrange for appropriate accommodations to support people with disabilities in the workplace, as students and as volunteers. Such request should be directed to the Director of Human Resources

Customer Service

KidsAbility shall provide services or facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. Please refer to the AODA Customer Service Standard Policy for further information.

Information and Communication:

KidsAbility has created a process for receiving and responding to feedback that are accessible and prominent on our website. The KidsAbility website and web content conforms to WCAG 2.0 Level AA. All documents can be made available in accessible formats and communication supports can be provided if requested. All AODA policies and protocol are posted on our website and are available in accessible formats if requested.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of any planned or unexpected disruption of service, KidsAbility endeavours to advise all clients and visitors promptly. For planned disruptions, such as all-staff training days, notices will be clearly posted at the site and on social media/our website indicating the date, time and anticipated length of the disruption, and any alternative facilities or services, if available.

For unexpected disruptions, such as closures due to inclement weather conditions, KA places notices on our website, social media, voice mail and with local radio stations (see below) as well as on the agency voicemail services and website www.kidsability.ca.

570 NEWS – newsroom@570news.com

CBC KW - yournewskw@cbc.ca

91.5 The Beat - info@915thebeat.com

Magic – darren.baxter@corusent.com

Training

KidsAbility will provide training to employees, students, volunteers and board members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members. Training shall be developed and implemented as outlined in the multi-year accessibility plan.

KidsAbility will provide training to employees, volunteers, and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf. In addition to providing training to all existing staff, all new staff members, volunteers and students will receive training as part of their Orientation to KidsAbility.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard
- KidsAbility's plan related to the Customer Service Standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices, require the assistance of a service animal, or require the assistance of a support person

- How to use the equipment or devices available at KidsAbility that may help provide services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing KidsAbility or its services
- Any changes or updates to the regulations or this plan

Workplace Emergency Response Information

KidsAbility is committed to providing employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

When requested KidsAbility will:

- Provide individualized emergency response information
- Obtain the individual's consent to share the information with anyone designated to help them in an emergency

Review the emergency information when:

- The employee is new to the organization
- The employee changes work locations
- The employee's overall accommodation needs are reviewed
- KidsAbility emergency response policies are renewed
- Annually upon the anniversary date of the issuance

Employment

KidsAbility is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. When requested, KidsAbility will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment, assessment and hiring process. KidsAbility shall notify internal and external job applicants that where needed, accommodations for disabilities will be provided upon request, to support their participation in all aspects of the recruitment process.

Accommodations

KidsAbility is committed to assist employees, students and volunteers with any work or placement accommodation requirements both onsite and their work from home environments where applicable. KidsAbility will work with the individual and will utilize guidance provided by a regulated medical professional when assisting with these accommodations.

KidsAbility has in place an Early & Safe Return to Work (ESRTW) process for employees who have been absent from work due to disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. A process is in place to develop individualized accommodation plans. Plans account for the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when using the performance management process and when redeploying/reassigning employees.

Should an individual (employee, student, volunteer) indicate that they require additional support in the event of an onsite emergency; an individualized Emergency Support Plan will be developed to support the individual's requirements. Upon receiving written consent from the individual, this individualized Emergency Support Plan will be shared with emergency responders as well as other staff supports.

Customer Expectations

KidsAbility's goal is to meet expectations for people with disabilities. Comments and feedback on how we provide services and supports to people with disabilities can be made to the Director of Human Resources and Engagement or designate. Feedback can also be provided by email found in the Accessibility section on our website. KidsAbility shall carefully consider all feedback received and provide a timely response.

Feedback Process

Customers who wish to provide feedback to KidsAbility on the way we provide our services to people with disabilities can submit:

- By Email
- In print
- Verbally
- electronically

KidsAbility will carefully consider all feedback received.

Email: Accessibility@kidsability.ca

REFERENCE

- KidsAbility Accessibility Plan posted on Website
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11