



Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

The following policy, practices and procedures have been established by the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman (“the Ontario Ombudsman”) to govern the provision of its services in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and Regulation 191/11, “Integrated Accessibility Standards.”

The Ontario Ombudsman endeavours to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures for the provision of its services are consistent with the principles outlined in the Integrated Accessibility Standards, specifically:

- The services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
- The provision of services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the services
- Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the services
- Communicating with a person with a disability must be done in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Use of Assistive Devices

The Ontario Ombudsman recognizes that some individuals with disabilities use assistive devices in order to access services. The Ontario Ombudsman will permit these individuals to use their assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from its services.

In addition to telephone and email service, the Ontario Ombudsman offers assistive measures such as TTY service to enable persons with disabilities to access its services. If necessary, alternate service methods will also be made available to accommodate individual needs.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

When communicating with a person with a disability, the Ontario Ombudsman will communicate in a manner that takes into account the person's disability, including

offering materials in alternative formats as requested.

Upon request, the Office of the Ombudsman will provide or will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability.

The Office of the Ombudsman will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

The Office of the Ombudsman will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. Please contact communications@ombudsman.on.ca if you require accessible formats or communication supports.

Service Animals

The Ontario Ombudsman recognizes that some individuals with disabilities may require the use of guide dogs or other service animals in order to access services. Persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal will be permitted to enter the Ontario Ombudsman's premises and to keep the animal with them, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.

If the animal is legally excluded from the premises, the Ontario Ombudsman will provide alternative measures to enable the person to obtain, use or benefit from its services.

Support Persons

The Ontario Ombudsman further recognizes that some individuals with disabilities rely on support persons for assistance while accessing services. A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter the Ontario Ombudsman's premises together with the support person, and will not be prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

Given the nature of the Ombudsman's work, support persons accompanying or assisting individuals with disabilities may be required to undertake to keep matters confidential.

Disruptions to Service

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to the Ontario Ombudsman's facilities or services that are usually used by persons with disabilities, the Ontario Ombudsman will provide notice of the disruption to the public, including the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or

services that may be available. Notice of such disruption will normally be posted on the Office's website and may also be posted on the physical premises, where appropriate in the circumstances.

Staff Training

The Ontario Ombudsman provides training to its staff about the provision of services to persons with disabilities. The training includes a review of this policy, the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, as well as the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards.

The training also includes:

- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities, including those who use assistive devices, service animals or support persons;
- How to use any equipment or devices available at the Ontario Ombudsman that may help with the provision of services to persons with disabilities; and,
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Ontario Ombudsman's services.

Staff are trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures. New staff are trained upon commencement of employment.

The Ontario Ombudsman keeps a record of the training it provides.

Comments or complaints

Comments or complaints regarding the Ontario Ombudsman's provision of services to persons with disabilities can be made to:

Director, Communications
Office of the Ontario Ombudsman
483 Bay Street
10th Floor, South Tower
Toronto, ON M5G 2C9

Phone: 1-800-263-1830

Fax: 416-586-3485

TTY (teletypewriter): 1-866-411-4211

Email: communications@ombudsman.on.ca or [fill out a complaint form online](#)

Comments or complaints about how the Ontario Ombudsman receives feedback about its provision of services to persons with disabilities may also be made using the same contact information.

If requested, the Ontario Ombudsman will provide accessible formats and communication supports to accommodate individual needs in making a comment or complaint about the Ontario Ombudsman's provision of services to persons with disabilities and/or this process for providing feedback.

All comments and complaints will be reviewed by the Director, Communications, and other staff as appropriate, to identify potential opportunities to improve accessibility and ensure that appropriate actions are taken by the Ontario Ombudsman in response to concerns raised.

Copies of this Policy

The Ontario Ombudsman recognizes that persons with disabilities may use methods other than standard print to access information. If the Ontario Ombudsman is required to give a copy of this policy to a person with a disability, the Ontario Ombudsman will provide the policy, or the information contained in the policy, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Alternatively, the Ontario Ombudsman and the person with a disability may agree on an alternate format for the document or information.