

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
OPERATIONAL POLICY



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| POLICY: Accessibility                               | SECTION NO: 03-01 |
| EFFECTIVE DATE: 03-Nov-2025 APPROVED BY: OADD Board | POLICY NO: 02-01  |
| REVISION DATE:                                      | APPROVED BY:      |

**PURPOSE OF POLICY**

The Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities (“**OADD**”, also referred to herein as “**we**” or “**us**”) is a professional organization of people working and studying in the field of developmental disabilities, throughout Ontario. OADD’s members include agencies and organizations; university and community college students and instructors; service provider direct care staff and managers; family support workers; case managers; psychologists; social workers; and other dedicated individuals.

OADD does not own, lease, or maintain premises, does not provide services to the public, and does not have employees; this Accessibility Policy will be amended if any of these circumstances change.

OADD provides programs to members of the public and hosts meetings and events to which members of the public are invited to speak and attend. For the purpose of this Policy, the word “**Program**” shall refer to programs offered by OADD, as well as meetings and events hosted by OADD.

This Accessibility Policy sets out the policies and procedures that OADD has put in place to promote the core principles of dignity, independence, inclusion, integration, responsiveness, and equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities participating in Programs, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “**AODA**”).

**POLICY:**

OADD believes in integration and is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the AODA and Ontario’s accessibility laws.

In particular, OADD is committed:

1. to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities in any Programs;
2. to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and

- independence;
3. to excellence in serving and providing services to all customers, including people with disabilities; and
  4. to ensuring a proactive approach with respect to accessibility by developing and implementing accessibility policies and procedures.

OADD is also committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination. OADD understands that obligations under the AODA and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **Training**

OADD will train all contractors and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards, and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, OADD will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing OADD's policies; and
- b) all other persons who organize, facilitate, and implement the Programs.

The training provided to OADD contractors and volunteers on accessibility will be relevant to their specific roles. Training will include providing information on:

- the purpose of the AODA and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards;
- OADD's policies related to the Customer Service Standards;
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person; and
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing OADD's services.

OADD will train every person as soon as practicable after becoming involved with OADD and will provide training in respect of any changes to OADD's policies.

OADD will maintain records of the training provided, including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

### **Assistive Devices**

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing or participating in Programs. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used by OADD to ensure the person with a disability can participate in the Programs.

## **Communication**

OADD is committed to communicating with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. OADD will work with a person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works for them.

## **Service Animals**

OADD welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of any premises used by OADD to provide the Programs that are open to the public and third parties, subject to any restrictions by the owner or operator of the premises.

When OADD cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter, or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms that the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Optometrists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded; and
- discuss with the customer another way of providing the programs and services.

## **Support Persons**

OADD is committed to providing access to, and the ability to participate in, any Program to persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person.

Where a person with a disability participating in a Program is accompanied by a support person(s), OADD will ensure that the person and any support person(s) are permitted to enter any relevant premises together, and that the person with a disability has access to the support person(s) while on the premises at all times.

In cases where there may be an admission fee for any Program, OADD will not charge the fee for the support person(s). However, OADD reserves the right to charge for the meal(s) provided to the support person(s) and will inform the person with a disability about any fees prior to the date of the Program.

OADD will ensure that all OADD contractors and volunteers are trained on how to interact with persons with a disability accompanied by a support person.

OADD may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person to a Program, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability, or the health or safety of others. In this situation, OADD's requirement for a support person will be discussed with the person with a disability. Before making a decision, OADD will:

- a. consult with the person with the disability to understand their needs;
- b. consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence;
- c. determine if there is any other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others at the Program.

If OADD determines that a support person is required, OADD will waive the admission fee (if applicable) for the support person(s).

## **Feedback Process**

OADD welcomes feedback on how it provides accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Feedback may be provided in the following ways:

- note your feedback on the event evaluation form
- email us with your feedback
- contact the OADD office by phone
- write a letter to OADD and mail to:

OADD

PO Main Box 28

Peterborough, ON K9J 6Y5

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

Feedback will come to the administrative support person who will forward to the Conference Chair. The conference chair will respond and may notify the Board Chair and/or Board executive at their discretion.

Responses will be provided within seven (7) business days.

OADD's feedback process will be accessible to people with disabilities through the use of accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

## **Notice of Availability of Documents**

This Accessibility Policy will be available on OADD's website. On request, OADD will provide this Policy in an accessible format or with communication support, in a timely manner and at no additional cost.

## **Information and Communications**

OADD has a process for receiving and responding to feedback relating to this Accessibility Policy; such process is accessible to persons with disabilities upon request.

OADD is committed to communicating with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about OADD and its Programs in accessible formats or with communication supports. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If OADD determines that information or communications are unconvertible, we shall provide the requestor with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

OADD will also meet internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

## **Changes to Existing Policies**

Any policies of OADD that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

This Accessibility Policy is publicly available; the plain language version is available on request.