



ACCESSIBILITY – INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS (IAS) POLICY

Number: HR-022

Title: Accessibility - IAS Policy

Owner: Human Resources

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Effective Date: November 2014

Reviewed Date: November 2014

Definition

The following policy has been established by the Barrie and Community Family Health Team (BCFHT) to govern the provision of services with Regulation 191/11, “Integrated Accessibility Standards” (“Regulation”) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

These standards are developed to break down barriers and increase accessibility for persons with disabilities in the areas of information and communications and employment.

BCFHT is governed by this policy as well as the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 in meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.

Policy

BCFHT is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the time frames established by the Regulation.

BCFHT Accessibility Plan

BCFHT will develop, maintain and document an Accessibility Plan outlining the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers from its workplace and to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years, and will be posted on our organization’s website. Upon request, BCFHT will provide a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an accessible format.



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Training Employees and Volunteers

BCFHT will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and continue to provide training on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, to:

- all its employees and volunteers;
- all persons who participate in developing BCFHT's policies; and,
- all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

The training will be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons.

Employees will be trained when changes are made to the accessibility policy. New employees will be trained during their orientation program. BCFHT will keep a record of the training it provides.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

1. Feedback

BCFHT will continue to ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

The public is encouraged to provide feedback on the accessibility of our services and request accessible formats and communication support through:

- BCFHT website under "Feedback" (directed to the HR Manager/Accessibility Officer)
- Discussing the request with a staff member of the clinic
- Calling the BCFHT main phone line
- Calling the HR Manager/Accessibility Officer directly at 705-721-0370 ext. 2139

Process for Responding to Feedback

When feedback is provided to through our website or provided directly to our HR Manager/Accessibility Officer, a formal response will be provided within 2 business days. When feedback is provided to staff verbally, staff is asked to relay that information to the HR Manager/Accessibility Officer as soon as possible.



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The HR Manager/Accessibility Officer's response may include advising of alternative formats of information or communication, or it may be to engage the individual in a discussion about how we can improve our programs and services to further improve our accessibility.

2. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon request, BCFHT 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.

BCFHT will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. BCFHT will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

3. External Accommodation Process

When a request for accommodation is made, BCFHT staff will work to provide an alternative format or solution immediately taking into account the nature of the disability. Should the staff member not be able to find a suitable alternative, they are asked to contact the HR Manager/Accessibility Officer, for additional discussion.

4. Accessible Websites and Web Content

BCFHT will ensure that our Internet websites, including web content, conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA except where this is impracticable.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

1. Recruitment

BCFHT will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process

BCFHT will notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate further in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.



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If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, BCFHT will consult with the applicant and provide, or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

Notice to Successful Applicants

When making offers of employment, BCFHT will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

2. Informing Employees of Supports

BCFHT will continue to inform its employees of its policies (and any updates to those policies) used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. This information will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

Employees are asked to contact their direct Manager or HR Manager/Accessibility Officer to request an accessible format or communication support. The Manager or HR Manager will consult with the employee to provide, or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed to perform his/her job, and information that is generally available to other employees.

In determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support, BCFHT will consult with the employee making the request.

3. Workplace Emergency Response Information

BCFHT will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary, and if BCFHT is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. BCFHT will provide this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the employee requires assistance, BCFHT will, with the consent of the employee, provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by BCFHT to provide assistance to the employee.



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BCFHT will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization and/or when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed.

4. Documented Individual Accommodation Plans (including Return To Work)

BCFHT will maintain a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities and those who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability related accommodations in order to return to work.

If requested, information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided will also be included in individual accommodation plans. In addition, the plans will include individualized workplace emergency response information (where required), and will identify any other accommodation that is to be provided. The internal accommodation process outlines the steps BCFHT will take to work with the individual to develop an individual accommodation plan (including return to work).

Internal Accommodation Process

When an employee with a disability requests an accommodation or is returning to work after being absent due to disability, the employee, employee's direct manager, and the HR Manager will take the following steps:

1. Recognize the Need for Accommodation

The need for accommodation can be:

- Requested by the employee through their manager or through HR.
- Identified by the employee's supervisor, manager or hiring manager.

2. Gather Relevant Information and Assess Needs

The employee is an active participant in this step:

- The HR Manager may request the employee fill out a functional capacity assessment form in order to ascertain the employee's functional abilities.
- The parties will discuss and evaluate potential options to find the most appropriate accommodation.



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- If the HR Manager and direct manager are not able to find a solution that meets the needs of the employee, the employee may appeal to the Executive Director for a review of the accommodation solutions discussed. If the accommodation plan is denied by the Executive Director, the manager will provide the employee the reason for the denial, in an accessible format.

3. Prepare a Formal, Individual Accommodation Plan

Once the appropriate accommodation measures have been identified, the accommodation details are documented in a formal Individual Accommodation Plan, including specific accessible formats and communication supports, workplace emergency response information, and any other accommodation measures that are requested and suitable. The accommodation plan is provided to the employee in a format that takes into account the accessibility needs due to disability.

4. Implement, Monitor and Review

The employee and manager will monitor the accommodation measures to ensure that it has effectively resolved the challenges. The frequency of the reviews will be predetermined based on the nature of the accommodation. The accommodation plan is reviewed if the employee's work location or position changes and if the nature of the employee's disability changes.

This accommodation process will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (ie. the Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 1997).

Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement and Redeployment

BCFHT will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when conducting performance management, providing career development and advancement to employees, or when redeploying employees.

Questions about this policy

This policy has been developed to break down barriers and increase accessibility for persons with disabilities in the areas of information and communications and employment. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation will be provided by:

Tracy Webber
Human Resources Manager/Accessibility Officer
705-721-0370 ext. 2139 twebber@bcfht.ca