

December, 2016

Fact Sheet: Ontario Region

Putting the AODA into Action Checklist

Is your co-op in Ontario? Do you have at least one employee? Then your co-op must meet the Integrated Accessibility Standards of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA).

Use this checklist to make sure your co-op meets all current standards.

Getting started

- Alert the Board to the co-op's responsibilities under the AODA.
- Decide who will coordinate an update to the co-op's AODA plan.
- Review your AODA work plan using this checklist. Make sure it allows time for board approval of policy changes (or members' approval if you choose to create or amend a by-law).
- Inform members of any changes that will affect them.

Training

- List all employees, volunteers, and any other persons who provide goods, services and facilities on behalf of the co-op (whether it is in their job description or not).
- List all staff and members who help develop co-op's customer service policies. At a minimum, this will include the board and co-op manager.
- Identify training that meets the Integrated Accessibility Standards and appropriately corresponds with duties and responsibilities of members, committees, directors and staff. CHF Canada's Resource Centre offers guides and on-line training options that can be completed at home or during staff office hours.
- Create a system for recording who has taken training, and when. See Resource Centre for sample form.

- Create a system to ensure contractors have taken training. See Resource Centre for sample form.
- Ensure everyone who needs training has completed it.
- Create a plan to train new staff, board members or volunteers.

To meet the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*, AODA training must cover:

- The purposes of AODA and requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*
- How to interact and communicate with people with various disabilities
- How to interact with people who use assistive devices, a service animal or support person
- How to use equipment or devices your co-op provides to help people access your services
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the co-op's services
- Your co-op's own policies, practices and procedures on serving people with disabilities

Policies, practices and procedures

- Gather all co-op by-laws, policies, practices and procedures – formal or informal -- that affect customer service. Think about:
 - Office practices
 - Membership application process
 - Unit showings
 - The process for signing the Occupancy Agreement
 - Move-in process, including providing members handbooks, safety info, etc.
 - Annual reviews
 - Maintenance and service requests
 - Unit inspections
 - Board and members' meetings
 - Member complaints
 - Processes for paying housing charges
 - Evictions
 - Communications to members (including notices about members' meetings, other notices, newsletters and websites).
- Review the specific AODA policy requirements (below). If your current policies don't match the sample policy, decide whether you will:
 - Revise your current policies to meet the AODA requirements **OR**

- Adapt the CHF Canada’s model *Accessible Customer Service Policy (2016)* for your own co-op. See the Resource Centre.

Specific policy requirements

- **A specific policy on the use of assistive devices**, including:
 - how you will serve people who use personal assistive devices
 - any assistive measures the co-op offers, and how they can be accessed

- **A specific policy on service animals**, identifying:
 - the areas of the co-op open to service animals, and any areas where service animals are prohibited by law
 - alternatives for providing services to member if their service animal is excluded
 - how the co-op will address special situations, such as emergencies, or concerns from people with allergies to animals
 - expectations of members in relation to a service animal’s behavior

- **A policy for support persons**, identifying:
 - any areas or circumstances where a support person would not be allowed
 - how you will handle discussions of confidential information when a support person is present
 - any circumstances when the co-op would require a person to be accompanied by a support person to protect health and safety
 - any documentation provided to the member or support person outlining expectations for the support person
 - the waiver of any applicable admission fee or fare for co-op events.

- **A protocol for temporary service disruptions**, identifying:
 - Facilities, services or systems that people with disabilities may rely on to use co-op services (e.g. entries, elevators, water systems, heating or electrical systems, public washrooms, laundry rooms, common areas, website, member meetings)
 - Any alternatives if these services are disrupted
 - How you will notify members or the public if there is a service disruption. Consider people unable to read print notices; or unable to hear announcements; or the impact of elevator disruptions on people with mobility disabilities. *See template in Resource Centre.*

- **A feedback process**, identifying:
 - How the co-op will receive feedback and respond to complaints about services to people with disabilities. *See sample feedback form in Resource Centre.*
 - Who will respond to complaints, what actions you will take, and turn-around times
 - How you will publicize the feedback process.

- **A policy on accessible workplaces**, identifying:
 - How the co-op publicizes the accommodation of people with disabilities in the hiring process
 - What type of workplace information is available in an accessible format if requested by employees
 - How the co-op carries out suitable performance reviews and provides appropriate career supports
 - Ways in which the co-op notifies staff about policies supporting people with disabilities

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