

Accessibility Plan



Thrive Group

The Thrive Group Commitment to Accessibility

The AODA legislation was put into place to break down barriers and obstacles which keep people with disabilities from easily managing basic activities that are fundamental to their daily lives. The legislation identifies the mandate to have a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. Under the Act, five standards are being developed that will help to alleviate barriers for people with disabilities. The standards include; Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and The Built Environment. Thrive Group and its member organizations are committed to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers for all stakeholders.

The Mission statement of the organization, stakeholder consultation, the AODA, and the requirements of the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) are the fundamental basis for the identification and resolution of barriers to service delivery. The following plan addresses:

- The AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)
- Accessibility at our organizations.
- How to interact and communicate with customers who have disabilities.
- How to serve a customer if their service animal is not allowed because of another law.
- Disruptions in service.
- Identified barriers to the provision of service.
- Actions to be taken to resolve the identified barriers.
- Feedback and evaluation process.

Introduction

Thrive Group is committed to excellence in serving all customers including persons with disabilities. The organization is an equal opportunity employer fully dedicated to accommodating employees who have disabilities.

Mission:

Thrive Group provides a spectrum of integrated services to support and care for individuals to live as independently as possible. By bringing together like-minded organizations we will:

- Develop and deliver quality services that are responsive and innovative
- Enhance collaborative approaches to service provision
- Inform government directives and influence health care system transformation, and
- Create efficiencies and reduce duplication.

Vision:

Building a community of quality and responsive services in a highly integrated and transformed health care system.

Training and orientation of all employees from the frontline worker to the CEO is an important part of accomplishing our Mission and Vision.

Definitions

Disability

The Ontario Human Rights Code and AODA define a disability as the reason that the person has or has had, or is believed to have or have had:

1. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
2. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
3. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
4. a mental disorder, or
5. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*

See more at: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-and-guidelines-disability-and-duty-accommodate/2-what-disability#sthash.pAsCmLwH.dpuf>

Accessibility

Accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. Currently 1 in 7 people in Ontario have a disability. This number is expected to rise to 1 in 5 by the year 2036 as our population ages. Planning is crucial for good access now and in the future.

Assistive Devices/Technology

Assistive devices are the adaptive and rehabilitation devices that aid people with disabilities. Assistive technology includes but is not limited to: electronic medical records, electronic gaming equipment, communication devices for clients, eBook readers, screen reading software for computers, adaptive telephones, wander guard equipment, sensors for doors, adaptive mouse devices for using computers, voice recognition software.

Assistive Devices

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with the various assistive devices on site, that we provide, and that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services. We will also engage actively with our residents and clients in order to facilitate and support the use of their personal assistive devices in service delivery.

Client need for assistive technology is assessed individually based on identified needs and aspirations. Supports may include but are not limited to:

1. Automatic door openers;
2. Augmentative communication devices including word boards, dedicated voice output systems and lap top/desk top computers;
3. Signalling devices such as large button call bells;
4. Powered mobility systems, including scooters and power wheelchairs, including tilt, power actuated leg rests; may include joystick, switch access, chin control, voice recognition or proximity switch;
5. Adapted telephones;
6. Electronic gaming modules to promote physical activity;
7. Skill based training for individual computer system;
8. Wander strips and signs to alert to potentially unsuitable or unsafe areas.

Partnerships are forged with providers of similar technologies including:

1. LHIN Home and Community Care – Speech and Language Therapists.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

Thrive Group will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so. If it is not possible, the agency is responsible for providing an explanation as to why upon request.

Communication

We will communicate with a person in a manner that takes into account their disability. This may include the alternating use of verbal or written information, adjusting the speed and volume of oral communication, and the use of alternative formats as identified by the resident/client. Requirements for augmentative or alternative communication will be documented.

Our website conforms to AODA requirements and is supportive of requirements resulting from disability.

Service Animals

We welcome service animals to our location. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that

are open to the public except where excluded by law. Allowances for service animals are included in the Client service planning process.

Serving a customer when their service animal is not allowed due to law

Where an animal is excluded by law from our premises, employees will explain why the animal is excluded. Exploration or discussion with customers regarding other methods of providing goods or services will be conducted. For example:

- Bring goods or services to the person in a part of the premises where the animal is not restricted
- Offer a safe location where the animal can wait, if the person is able to be separated from the animal while obtaining the service, and offer assistance to the person with a disability while they are separated from the service animal.

An example of an area where service animals are prohibited to enter is the kitchen area.

Support Persons

A person providing support to a customer with a disability or a frail senior is welcome to accompany them on our premises.

Disruptions in Service

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, Thrive Group will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted, broadcast, or circulated notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. This posting will be placed in a conspicuous place on the premises of the affected program, or by other reasonable methods dictated by the circumstances and client needs. If the disruption is anticipated, we will provide a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption. If the disruption is unexpected, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

Training

Thrive Group provides training to all employees, volunteers and others including third parties who deal with the public on our behalf. Training will also be provided to people involved in the development of policies, plans, practices and procedures related to the provision of our goods and services. This training will be provided to staff upon hire.

Training will include but is not limited to:

Accessibility Act:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, as well as the requirements of the customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and built environments standards.

Customer Service Standard:

- 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.

Integrated Standard (Employment, Transportation and Communication):

- How to use the various types of equipment (e.g. mechanical lifts, augmentative communication devices, bath lifts, etc.) available that may help with providing goods or services to people with disabilities;
- How to use common equipment such as hospital beds and other personal equipment;
- All staff receive general training on accessibility standard requirements and the Ontario Human Rights Code regardless of their level of contact with clients and the public;
- Role specific training appropriate to job duties;
- Scope of responsibility and accountability.

Built Environments Standard:

- Training on the identification and removal of physical barriers in the physical environment.

Client Specific Training:

- Training as required if a resident/client has augmentative communication needs or specialty devices (i.e. Client specific mobility devices);
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Thrive Group's services.

Staff will also be trained on the contents of our Accessibility Plan and when changes are made to our accessibility plan.

Feedback Process

Both the public and any stakeholder can provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services through:

- Telephone: 289-309-8477 (follow user prompts)
- By mail addressed to:
Thrive Group
565 Sanatorium Road, Hamilton, ON
L9C 7N4

By email: info@thrivegroup.ca

All feedback, including complaints, will be forwarded to the Executive Director, Administrator or CEO. Customers can expect to hear back within 3 business days.

Notice of Availability

Thrive Group will notify both the public and our residents/clients that our policies related to accessibility are available upon request through our website and at our individual locations.

Additional Practices Related to Accessibility

Additional practices conducted by Thrive Group that relate to accessibility include:

- Every 3 years an accessibility audit and plan for removal of barriers will be completed.
- Annual review of physical environment included in the workplace violence and harassment process.
- Client and Family Councils serve as advocacy groups.
- AODA training involving a review of common barriers and engaging in discussion with new employees.
- Supporting residents, clients and families with communication related to medical needs, care planning etc.
- We can arrange for staff escort to appointments for communication support and transfer assistance as required.
- Careplans designed to be flexible in order to accommodate changing needs.
- Offices arranged to be accessible to residents/clients and guests.
- Continually working to provide accessibility enhancements (i.e. door openers) for residents/clients.