
	Policy Number:	ADM-0125
	Policy Section ADMINISTRATION	
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	Revised / No Changes	
<u>ACCESSIBLE CLIENT SERVICE</u> Page 1 of 6	POLICY & PROCEDURE  Chief Executive Officer	

POLICY STATEMENT:

Algoma Family Services shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- Services shall 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, shall be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain services.
- Persons with disabilities shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain services.
- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons/animals in the access of services.

DEFINITIONS:

Accessible Elements, as defined by the Accessibility Directorate, refers to any element that is meant to serve people with disabilities. This may include, but are not limited to, elevators, escalators, voice announcement systems.

Accessible Formats, as defined by the Regulation, may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Barrier, as defined by AODA, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of a disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier or a policy or practice.

Communication, as defined by the Regulation, means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

Communication Supports, as defined by the Regulation, may include but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Disability, according to the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), also referenced by the AODA, disability means:

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.

Extranet website, as defined by the Regulation, means a controlled extension of the intranet or internal network of an organization to outside users over the internet. Feedback is considered as any comments, concerns, suggestions, or complaints about AFS's services received the AFS clients

Information, as defined by the Regulation, includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning. Intranet website, as defined by the Regulation, means an organizations, internal website that is used to privately and securely share any part of the organization's information or operational systems within the organization and includes extranet websites

Internet Website, as defined by the Regulation, means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public

New Internet Website, as defined by the Regulation, means in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies the person with disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, as defined in the Regulation, mean the World Wide Web Consortium Recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0”

Web Page, as defined in the Regulation, means a non-embedded resource obtained from a single URI using Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and any other resources that are used in the rendering or intended to be together with it by a user agent

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

This policy applies to all employees, Board members, volunteers, contractors, clients and visitors who have a relationship with Algoma Family Services

AFS Management shall ensure that:

- this policy and the supporting program are implemented and maintained,
- reviews and amendments to this policy shall take place on an ongoing basis, and revised as needed.
- all employees have the appropriate information and instruction to provide services,
- measures and procedures are followed by employees

PROCEDURES:

Communication

- Algoma Family Services’ employees when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person’s disability.
- Algoma Family Services utilizes various accessible communication mediums and will work with client to determine the best way to support service delivery.

Format of Documents

- Algoma Family Services will provide documents, or the information contained in documents, required to be provided under the [Customer Service Guide \(aoda.ca\)](http://aoda.ca) to a person with a disability in a format that takes into account the person’s disability.

Service Animals and Support Persons

- Algoma Family Service’s employees shall use reasonable efforts to allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access services.
- Algoma Family Services employees shall allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal unless the animal is excluded by law.

- Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained to the persons with disabilities, and other reasonable arrangements to provide services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- When a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting, or other harmful behaviour) an employee may ask the persons with disability to remove the animal from the area or discontinue / refuse access to services. In this event, other reasonable arrangements to provide services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their support person while accessing services.

Service Disruption - Notice

- It is possible that from time to time there shall be disruptions in service (e.g. an entrance way that is under repair, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that is temporarily unavailable).
- In the event that a disruption in service is planned, and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice.
- People with disabilities may often go to a lot of trouble to access services, such as booking transit or arranging a ride. By providing notice, you can save that person an unnecessary trip.
- Notice shall be provided through local media, on the website, or if possible over the telephone, and posted at the site.

Unexpected Disruption in Service - Notice

- In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, notice may be provided in a variety of ways, and shall be done as quickly as possible.
- In the event of a service disruption, alternative methods of service may be considered and those impacted by service interruption shall be informed of any alternative methods.

Training Requirements

- Every person who deals with the public on behalf of Algoma Family Services, including 3rd parties i.e. employees, agents, volunteers, management must complete training in relation to this Policy.
- Current employees, agents, volunteers, management, etc. shall receive training by January 1, 2012.
- New employees, agents, volunteers, management, etc. shall receive training as soon as “practicable”, after being assigned.
- Ongoing training on changes to policies, procedures, and new equipment shall be provided.

- The method and amount of training shall be geared to the trainee's role in terms of accessibility.
- Training records, including the dates when the training was provided, shall be kept by Human Resources.

Emergency Procedures and Plans

Accessible Emergency Information – AFS will offer an individualized workplace emergency response plan to be created for all employees upon hire and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation. Only with the employee's consent, AFS will also provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by AFS to provide assistance to that employee.

Accessible Emergency Information - AFS is committed to providing its clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. Emergency procedure information is posted at all AFS offices.

Anti-Oppressive Practice Implementation

Implementation of AODA is one element of a larger initiative being undertaken by the Agency on Anti-Oppressive Practice. AFS is committed to anti-oppressive practice in which we challenge the impacts of power and privilege, eliminate barriers, and are inclusive of the broad range of diversity in our community. It is imperative that our organization challenge ableism, and is fully inclusive, both as a workplace and service provider, for peoples with disabilities.

Client Feedback

- Feedback from our clients provides Algoma Family Services with opportunities to learn and improve. Algoma Family Services recognizes the right of our clients to make a complaint, compliment, or make suggestions on ways to improve our services.
- To assist Algoma Family Services in ensuring that the delivery of goods and service to those with disabilities is provided in an effective and timely manner, the client is invited to provide their feedback as follows:
- In writing, in person, e-mail, or telephone, addressed to the:

Director, Human Resources
205 McNabb Street
Sault Ste. Marie ON P6A 6R7
Phone: 705-945-5050, ext. 2032
hr@algomafamilyservices.org

- The Director, Human Resources shall respond either in writing, in person, by e-mail or by telephone, acknowledging receipt of feedback. Complaints will be addressed according to complaint categories already established in our organization's complaint management procedures.

RELATED POLICIES OR DOCUMENTS:

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [Customer Service Guide \(aoda.ca\)](#)
- Algoma Family Services Code of Conduct