

AODA - ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was introduced to improve the opportunities for people with disabilities. It is also intended to provide for the involvement of people with disabilities in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to enhance their full participation in the life of the province.

Meester Insurance Centre is committed to ensuring our organization's compliance by incorporating accessibility legislation into our policies, procedures, equipment requirements, training, and best practices. We will review these policies and practices annually, as organizational changes occur, or in anticipation of compliance deadlines. In addition, we will strive to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in a timely and effective manner.

Meester Insurance Centre is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for all stakeholders, including our clients, employees, job applicants, suppliers, and any visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, or use our services. As an organization, we respect and uphold the requirements set forth under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and its associated regulations.

Providing an accessible and barrier-free environment is a shared effort, and we are committed as an organization to working with the necessary parties to make accessibility for all a reality. For more detailed information on our accessibility policies, plans, and training programs, please contact our Office Manager.

In accordance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11*, this policy addresses the following:

Notice of Disruptions in Service:

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. This 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.

Notices of disruption will be posted at all public entrances prior or on event days depending on the nature of the disruption, notice will be provided by telephone, email or on our website.

Telephone Services:

We will train staff to communicate with individuals in a clear, plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. If telephone communication is not suitable for one's needs alternative forms of communication will be offered as required, via in person or email.

Assistive Devices:

As we are committed to customer service, anyone with disabilities who use assistive devices is welcome to bring in and use such devices; such as, wheelchairs, real-time captioning (on-screen typing of what speaker is saying) sign language interpreters or deaf-blind interveners etc. on our premises.

When providing any documents to a person with a disability, we will offer the document in a format that takes into account the disability. We will take reasonable measures to respond to the request of alternative formats, i.e. large print, specific form of email attachments, documents given in person or discussed over the telephone.

Support Persons & Service Animals:

We welcome people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person on our premises. Support persons who escort a person with a disability in order to help them with communication, mobility, personal or medical needs for such things as sign language interpretation or a vision assistant will never be prevented from having access on our grounds.

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals on our premises. Examples of such service animals include, dogs used by people who are deaf or blind, and animals trained to alert individuals on oncoming seizure. We will ensure our staff is properly trained on how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by service animals.

Training of Staff:

Meester Insurance Centre will provide training to all employees who deal with public as well as all those involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures on this policy.

Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and contractors at the time of orientation and in the event of changes to legislation, procedures, policies or practices.

Training will include the following:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the requirements of the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to use any equipment or devices available on our premises that may assist a person with disabilities and how to interact with their support persons or service animals as required
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing Meester Insurance Centre.

Feedback Process:

Our goal is to meet all customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations have been met are most welcome and appreciated. Feedback regarding the way Meester Insurance Centre provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made in person, in writing, by telephone, or by email as follows:

Meester Insurance Centre
Smithville, ON
Lisa Palcso
905-957-2333

Modifications to this or other Policies:

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Any policy of Meester Insurance Centre that does not respect and promote this will be modified or removed.

Questions about this Policy:

This policy exists to achieve excellence to individuals with disabilities. If there are any questions about the policy explanations should be provided by or referred to the Office Manager.