



Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Policy A004 V.03

Purpose

The purpose of the AODA Policy is to present a high level policy statement for The ArQuives regarding The ArQuives' Plan for Providing Services to People with Disabilities. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("the AODA") is a Provincial Act to develop, implement, and mandate accessibility standards for persons with disabilities. The ArQuives AODA policy outlines the organization's commitment to providing a respectful, accessible, safe, and welcoming environment for all visitors, including people with disabilities.

The ArQuives is committed to making every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, procedures, and standards are consistent with equity, dignity, independence, and integration principles.

Scope

This policy and related procedure applies to all volunteers and staff members of The ArQuives who act on behalf of The ArQuives in carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

Statement of Commitment

The ArQuives is committed to becoming a barrier-free environment and meeting the requirements of existing legislation, its policies, and goals to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who may choose to interact with The ArQuives.

The ArQuives is aware of their rights and responsibilities to ensure that the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("the AODA") is adhered to as we work to foster an accessible and inclusive environment for persons with disabilities in a rigorous and timely manner.

Physical accessibility is built into The ArQuives Strategic Plan through our desire to secure the right space to hold the archives and make the collection, space, and exhibitions accessible to the community.

Definitions

Accessible Formats: include but are not limited to accessible electronic formats, Braille, text transcripts, large print, recorded audio, and other formats accessible to persons with disabilities.

Assistive Device: a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that visitors bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker, or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Barrier: as defined by the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his/her disability. This includes:

- a physical barrier,
- an architectural barrier,
- an informational or communications barrier,
- an attitudinal barrier,
- a policy, practice and procedure barrier.

Communication Supports: include but are not limited to sign language, plain language, and other communication supports that facilitate effective communications.

Disability: The definition of disability includes all disabilities of varying severity, visible and non-visible disabilities, and those where individuals may experience their effects irregularly or consistently.

The AODA uses the Ontario Human Rights Code to define disability as:

- a. 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 coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d. a mental disorder; or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Guide Dog: A highly-trained working dog trained at one of the special facilities to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Public: For this policy, clients, users, researchers, and the general public will be referred to as “the public.”

Support Person: A support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

Service Animal: The Service Regulation[3] defines a "service animal" as "an animal for a person with disability". In this policy, a service animal is

- any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability; or
- where the person provides a letter from a physician confirming that they require the animal for reasons relating to their disability, or
- where the person provides a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

Volunteer: A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of The ArQuives. For this policy, interns will be referred to as “volunteers.”

Workplace Accommodation: Any change in the working environment that allows a person with limitations in their abilities to do their job.

Responsibilities

The Board of Directors is accountable to and responsible for:

- The governance of the policy, corporate liability for compliance with legislative requirements, including fiscal responsibility, human costs, and human rights issues.
- Review and approve the policy every 3 years.
- Support and promote the policy at The ArQuives.
- Drive the culture to a high level of understanding regarding persons with disabilities and accommodation.
- Completing all mandated training on AODA and Diversity and Inclusion
- Respecting and accommodating those they interact with that may have a disability.

The Executive Director is accountable to and responsible for:

- Demonstrating sensitivity and respect to confidentiality of information.
- Raising awareness to facilitate understanding of the policy and supporting employees and volunteers in training and with their obligations.
- Participating and cooperating to facilitate workplace accommodation.
- Completing all mandated training on AODA and Diversity and Inclusion

- Respecting and accommodating those they interact with that may have a disability.
- Reviewing and updating the policy in accordance with current practices to ensure compliance.

Employees are accountable to and responsible for:

- Participating and cooperating with all parties to facilitate workplace accommodation.
- Acting as a resource for volunteers.
- Completing all mandated training on AODA and Diversity and Inclusion
- Respecting and accommodating those they interact with that may have a disability.

Volunteers are accountable to and responsible for:

- Completing all mandated training on AODA and Diversity and Inclusion
- Respecting and accommodating those they interact with that may have a disability.

Policy:

1. The ArQuives will have a plan for full accessibility and will update the community on that plan through the website and through a posting in the main office.
2. The ArQuives will offer accommodations for any candidate invited to interview for a staff or volunteer position.
3. The ArQuives employees have the right to request any required workplace accommodations. Procedures for this can be found in the HR Manual.
4. The ArQuives staff and volunteers will communicate with people with disabilities in respectful ways that take into account their disability and the way the individual chooses.
5. Service animals and guide dogs are welcome in all areas of the archives open to the public.
6. Support persons accompanying visitors with disabilities will not be charged any researcher or entrance fees.
7. The ArQuives is committed to making its website and digital content barrier free where appropriate and feasible.
8. The ArQuives will notify staff, volunteers, and visitors of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities. This notice will be posted and include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed at the main entrance of 34 Isabella and on our website.
9. The ArQuives will provide AODA training to employees and volunteers. Training will be provided to staff within two weeks of the individual's start date. Volunteers and interns will be provided training through their orientation to The ArQuives when first beginning their work with the organization. Training will take

place in person or virtually. Staff and volunteers will also be trained when significant changes are made to the plan.

Such training will include the following:

- a. A review of the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of its Customer Service Standard.
 - b. How to interact and communicate with persons with various disabilities.
 - c. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal, or the assistance of a support person.
 - d. How to use equipment or devices available on The ArQuives' premises or otherwise provided by The ArQuives that may help with the provision of services to a person with a disability.
 - e. What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing The ArQuives' collections, programming, or other services.
10. Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

References and Additional Information

Ontario Human Rights: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/english/index.shtml>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-rules-businesses-and-non-profits#section-1>

<https://tangledarts.org/about-us/accessibility/>

<https://www.aoda.ca/creating-an-accessibility-policy-and-plan/>

Amendment, Modification or Variation

This Policy may be amended, varied, or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by The ArQuives Executive Director and Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall be responsible for making revisions to the policy every three years, or with greater or lesser frequency as warranted. This review process seeks to correct any oversights in previous terms of reference and to account for new circumstances that have arisen since the last review.

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