

***PSAC POLICY ON DISABILITY RIGHTS***  
*as required under the Accessibility Standard for  
Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under  
the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)  
and the Ontario Human Rights Code.*

**PURPOSE**

The Public Service Alliance of Canada believes in the right of persons with disabilities to live and work in society with dignity, autonomy and equality.

PSAC recognizes that persons with disabilities are one of the most marginalized and employment-disadvantaged groups in society. This is due in large measure to the many attitudinal, structural or architectural, technology, information or communication, and systemic barriers present in today's workplaces and society. This discrimination comes from a lack of understanding, negative stereotypes about disabilities and from employment systems that are designed with only able-bodied workers in mind.

A disability is only one aspect of a person and should not be used to define the person or limit his/her full participation in employment, society and the union. PSAC is therefore committed to eliminating barriers for people with disabilities in their participation in the union.

PSAC acknowledges that workers with disabilities represent an important source of information on how to eradicate disability-based discrimination from the workplace, society and the union. The union will strive to ensure that members with disabilities are represented throughout the union structures and that union activities and events are inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the union to respond to and address barriers for members with disabilities in order to enable them to fully participate in their union.

**DEFINITION OF DISABILITY**

The definition of disability under the AODA and the Customer Service Standard is the same as the definition of disability under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Disability means,

- (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

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,

- (b) a condition of mental impairment or developmental disability,
- (c) a learning disability, or 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.

## **APPLICATION**

This policy applies to situations involving members with disabilities participating in union events and activities.

This policy adheres to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

## **ESTABLISHING POLICIES, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

The union is committed to developing policies and that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. The union is committed to providing quality services, goods and opportunities to our members and others and will make reasonable efforts to ensure PSAC policies, practices and procedures pertaining to providing goods or services to members with disabilities are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity, as set out in the Standard. Any policy that does not respect or promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified.

## **ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

The union is committed to ensure that members with disabilities who use assistive devices can obtain, use or benefit from the services of the union. Persons with disabilities may use their own personal assistive devices if necessary for them to fully participate. Assistive devices include such things as walkers, white canes, note-taking devices, etc.

## **SERVICE ANIMALS AND SUPPORT PERSONS**

The union is committed to welcoming members with disabilities who are accompanied by service animals on union premises that members have access to or at union events, except where excluded by law. If guide dogs or other service animals are not permitted, then alternative ways will be provided for persons with disabilities.

The union is committed to welcoming members with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter the union's premises or events with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on union premise or events.

Advanced notice will be given if fees are applicable for a support person's admission to union events or in relation to their presence on union premises.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

When communicating with a person with a disability, the union elected or appointed officials, employees, agents or other representatives will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. Interactions dealing with accommodating members with disabilities will be done with sensitivity and discretion.

## **NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTIONS IN SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

The union will provide notice to the public of temporary disruptions in facilities or services that are usually used by members with disabilities to access services.

## **TRAINING**

Training will be provided to PSAC staff that interacts with members with disabilities and develop policies, procedures and practices dealing with the provisions of goods and services to members.

The content of training will include:

- the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;
- the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service;
- how to interact and communicate with members with various types of disabilities;

- how to interact with members with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
- information about the assistive devices made available by the union that may help members with disabilities access its goods and services;
- what to do if a member with a disability is having difficulty accessing goods and services; and,
- instruction on union procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to members with disabilities.

Training will be provided as soon as practicable after elected or appointed officials, employees, volunteers and other persons are assigned the applicable duties. Training will also occur on an ongoing basis as changes are made to the compliance statements, procedures and practices dealing with the provision of goods and services to individuals with disabilities.

## **FEEDBACK PROCESS**

Comments on the union's services are welcome and appreciated. Feedback regarding the way the union provides services to members with disabilities or questions about this policy can be made by email to [programs@psac-afpc.com](mailto:programs@psac-afpc.com) or by letter PSAC Human Rights Program, 233 Gilmour Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 0P2 or verbally at 613-560-4200. Members can expect to hear back within two days.

Complaints will be addressed according to the PSAC policies and applicable regulations.

## **NOTICE OF THE AVAILABILITY OF THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

The union will provide notice that the documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service are available to the public upon request.

## **DOCUMENT FORMAT**

When providing the documents to the public, the documents or the information contained in them will be provided in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

N.B. PSAC has also developed an Accessibility Plan that outlines the steps to ensure that the union is inclusiveness and accessible to persons with disabilities.

## Accessibility Plan

PSAC is committed to being inclusive and accessible to all members with disabilities in the following manner:

1. **Policies:** PSAC will make reasonable efforts to draft new or review existing policies, procedures and practices with a disability lens, including member policies and those internal to PSAC as an employer such as staffing, purchasing new equipment or technology, etc. Policies will be reviewed for gaps and barriers in the union's ability to provide services to members with disabilities. The union will make reasonable efforts to eliminate gaps and barriers that are identified.
2. **Assistive Measures:** Assistive measures include assistive devices, services, and alternate service methods. Members may use their own assistive measures at PSAC events and activities. If a member with a disability makes a request to PSAC to provide assistive measures, the union will make reasonable efforts to assist based on applicable reasonable accommodation principles in order to enable members with disabilities to participate at union events or activities. A member with a disability must identify the need for assistive measures in advance of PSAC event or activity. The union may require a medical certificate in order to outline the functional limitations if accommodation by the union is required.
3. **Service Animal:** All of PSAC premises are open to service animals. Service animals are also allowed at PSAC events. If a situation arises where another member has an allergy to animals, including service animals, then the union will discuss this situation with both members and make every effort to meet the needs of both members.
4. **Support Person:** A member may bring his/her own support person onto union premises or to union events. If a member with a disability makes a request to PSAC to provide a support person, the union will make reasonable efforts to assist based on applicable reasonable accommodation principles in order to enable members with disabilities to participate at union events or activities. A member with a disability must identify the need for a support person in advance of PSAC event or activity. The union may require a medical certificate in order to outline the functional limitations if accommodation by the union is required. Members will be notified of any additional costs, if applicable, associated with a support person in advance of attending a union event.

5. **Communications:** PSAC will make every reasonable effort to make communications more accessible. Plain language will be used in all communications. The union will offer to communicate with members by email, or by TTY or other alternate media.

**Training:** Staff persons who are in contact with members will be trained on how to interact and communicate with members with disabilities with various types of disabilities. Training will include the following: Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the 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; how to use the devices (e.g. TTY, wheelchair lifts, etc.) available on union premises or otherwise, that may help with the provisions of goods or services to people with disabilities; what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the union's services and policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.