

Integrated Accessibility Standards	
Adopted: May 6, 2014	Last Reviewed/Revised: May 21, 2024
Next Scheduled Review: 2026-2027	
Associated Policies & Procedures: VI-46 (A) Use of Assistive Devices by the General Public VI-46 (B) Use of Service Animals by the General Public VI-46 (C) Use of Support Person by the General Public VI-46 (D) Accessibility Standards – Notification of Disruption of Service VI-46 (E) Monitoring and Feedback on Accessible Customer Service	

Purpose

To comply with the Ontario Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education in the area of Accessibility Standards to break down barriers and increase accessibility for persons with disabilities in the areas of information and communications, employment and transportation.

Application and Scope

This policy applies to all operation policies and procedures in all facilities within the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB).

References

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#)
- [Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [Ontario’s Education Equity Action Plan \(2017\)](#)

Definitions

- **Customer** is any person who uses the services of the school board.

- **Assistive Device** is any device used by persons with disabilities to help with daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, augmentative and alternative communication systems.
- **Service Animal** is an animal that is being used because of a person's disability and this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a regulated health professional.
- **Support Person** is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability as they access the services of the HCDSB. A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.
- **Third Party Contractors** is any person or organization acting on behalf of or as an agent of the HCDSB (e.g. bus operators, psychologists).
- **Barriers to Accessibility** means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of the services of the HCDSB. This includes, but is not limited to, a physical or architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier.
- **Accommodation** is a means, through reasonable efforts, of preventing and removing barriers that impede individuals with disabilities from participating fully in the services of the HCDSB.
- **Interpreter Services** are services provided for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing and whose language of communication is ASL.
- **Accessible Formats** may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- **Communication Supports** may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.
- **WCAG 2.0** refers to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, which are published by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 provide recommendations for making Web content more accessible.

Principles

The Halton Catholic District School Board is committed to providing services to our students, parents/guardians, the public and our staff that are free of barriers and biases. The HCDSB will ensure that key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity are reflected and valued in our learning and working environments. Our conduct demonstrates our belief in the strength diversity brings to our communities as modeled by Jesus Christ.

HCDSB strives to ensure a fully accessible environment for all persons with disabilities and will continue to build upon and improve its practices in addition to ensuring that it meets the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner, consistent with the specific requirements of the Act and its regulations.

It is the policy of the HCDSB to provide an environment in all of its facilities that builds independence, dignity and respect for our students, parents/guardians, the public and our staff. Further, we are committed to providing persons with disabilities the same opportunity of access to our services in the same location and in a similar way as these services are available to all others we service in Catholic education.

HCDSB and its staff are committed to the elimination of discrimination as outlined in Ontario's Equity and Inclusion Strategy in a manner which is consistent with the exercise of the HCDSB's denominational rights under *Section 93 of the Constitutional Act, 1982* and as recognized at *Section 19 of the Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Requirements

HCDSB has developed, maintained and documented an Accessibility Plan outlining the HCDSB's strategy to prevent and remove barriers from its workplace and to meet its requirements under the Regulation.

This Accessibility Plan will continue to be reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities at least every five years and will be posted on the HCDSB's website. Upon request, the HCDSB will provide a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an accessible format.

In addition, the HCDSB will prepare annual status reports on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy outlined in the Accessibility Plan and will post the status reports on its website. Status reports will also be made available in an accessible format upon request.

PROCURING OR ACQUIRING GOOD, SERVICES OR FACILITIES

HCDSB will continue to ensure that accessibility criteria and features are incorporated when it procures or acquires goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practical to do so. Where it is not practical to incorporate accessibility criteria and features, the HCDSB will provide an explanation upon request.

TRAINING EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

HCDSB will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and provide training on the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities to all its employees and volunteers.

The training will be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons. Staff will be trained when there are substantial changes are made to the accessibility policy. New staff will be trained upon commencement of employment.

HCDSB will keep a record of the training that it provides.

1. Information and Communications Standard:

a) Feedback

HCDSB will continue to ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

b) Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon request, the HCDSB will provide, or will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability.

HCDSB will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

HCDSB will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

c) Accessible Websites and Web Content

HCDSB will ensure that its Internet and Intranet websites, conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.

2. Employment Standards

a) Recruitment

HCDSB will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

b) Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process

HCDSB will notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate further in an assessment or selection process, that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the HCDSB will consult with the applicant and provide, or arrange for the provision of, a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

c) Notice to Successful Applicants

When making offers of employment, the HCDSB will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

d) Informing Employees of Supports

HCDSB will continue to inform its employees of its policies (and any updates to those policies) used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that

take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. This information will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

e) Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

Upon the request of an employee with a disability, the HCDSB will consult with the employee to provide, or arrange for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed to perform his/her job, and information that is generally available to other employees.

In determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support, the HCDSB will consult with the employee making the request.

f) Workplace Emergency Response Information

HCDSB will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability when required. The HCDSB will provide this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the employee requires assistance, the HCDSB will, with the consent of the employee, provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the HCDSB to provide assistance to the employee.

HCDSB will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed and when the HCDSB reviews its general emergency response policies.

g) Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

HCDSB will continue to maintain a documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

If requested, information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided will also be included in individual accommodation plans.

In addition, the plans will include individualized workplace emergency response information (where required), and will identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

h) Return to Work Process

HCDSB will maintain a documented return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability related accommodations in order to return to work.

The return to work process will outline the steps the HCDSB will take to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

This return to work process will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (i.e. the *Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 1997*).

i) Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement and Redeployment

HCDSB will continue to take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when conducting performance management, providing career development and advancement to employees, or when redeploying employees.

3. Customer Service Standards

HCDSB will:

- provide services that respect the independence and dignity of persons with disabilities. Such services incorporate measures that include, but are not limited to the use of support persons;
- ensure that a disruption of service notice be posted at the site and on the HCDSB's website when services that are normally provided to a person with a disability are temporarily unavailable, such as access to an elevator. Alternative(s) to disrupted service will also be posted;
- develop a process for receiving and responding to feedback in order to monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the Accessible Customer Service Standard. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and will allow people to provide feedback using a number of methods;
- take into account the impact on persons with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, designing new systems or planning a new initiative so that adherence to this policy can be achieved efficiently and effectively;
- create a feedback process that will review the implementation of this policy with the HCDSB's various constituency groups;
- establish a process for consulting with frontline staff and volunteers who have a role in implementing the expectations and procedures established under this policy to review its effectiveness;
- ensure that all communications with a person with a disability takes place in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Chair of the Board