



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY			
Reviewed:	February 26, 2017	Effective:	February 26, 2017
Next Review:	February 2020	Approval:	Board of Directors

On June 24, 2016, the Athletics Ontario office moved into the Variety Village Complex (3071 Danforth Avenue in Scarborough, ON). Variety Village is AODA compliant facility -- a world class facility without barriers.

Athletics Ontario is committed to diversity, inclusion, and accessibility to individuals with disabilities under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, and to establishing and maintaining operational procedures for the training of employees and volunteers responsible for the delivery of its services, programs, or competitions.

Athletics Ontario understands that obligations under AODA and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other provincial or federal law.

Athletics Ontario will strive to ensure that its policies, best practices, and procedures are consistent with and promote the core principles of dignity, independence, and integration without barriers. Any AO policy which does not align with these core principles will be amended or removed.

1. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

- (a) **“Access”** the ability or extent to which individuals or members of Athletics Ontario can achieve full participation in the delivery of services offered by the Association.
- (b) **“Accessibility”** provides individuals, of all abilities, with opportunities to participate fully in everyday life -- the ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product, device, or environment which is available to as many people as possible.
- (c) **“Barrier”** obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating.
- (d) **“Disability”** the Ontario Human Rights Code defines disability broadly as:
 - i. "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,
 - ii. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
 - iii. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
 - iv. a mental disorder, or
 - v. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997."

- (e) **“Member”** refers to any entity approved for membership as defined in the AO By-Law (person, group of persons organized and associated for the purpose of athletics and registered as a Member of AO), as well as all individuals engaged in activities with AO (including, but not limited to, athletes; coaches; officials; volunteers; team managers; club administrators, coaches or board members; committee members, directors and officers of AO; employees; spectators at AO sanctioned events; and parents/guardians of athletes.
- (f) **“Service Animal”** an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,
- (g) **“Service Person”** another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

2. ACCESSIBILITY

This policy describes how Athletics Ontario develops, communicates, and provides services, programs or opportunities for persons with disabilities in a manner that respects their dignity, independence, and integration.

(a) Assistive devices

AO is committed to serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices (e.g., canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids) to access, obtain, use, or benefit from our programs and services.

(b) Communications and Information

Athletics Ontario is committed to meeting the communication needs of individuals with disabilities. The Association will provide information and communications materials in accessible formats or with appropriate communication supports. This includes publicly available emergency information, career opportunities, or technical information.

Athletics Ontario will consult persons with disabilities to determine their communication and information needs.

(c) Employment

Athletics Ontario will accommodate disabilities during recruitment, assessment, and when individuals are hired. AO will provide customized workplace emergency information to employees who have a disability. When utilizing performance management, career development, and redeployment processes, AO will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.

(d) Service Animals and Support Persons

Athletics Ontario welcomes persons with disabilities who may bring their guide dog or other service animal or support person on the parts of our premises/facility that are open to the public. On rare occasions, it may be determined that a service animal cannot enter an area of the premises/facility consistent with other laws. In these instances, AO will suggest appropriate alternatives and provide assistance. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter AO premises/facility that is open to the public with their support person at no additional cost.

(e) Temporary Disruption Notice

AO will provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or programs at AO premises/facility utilized by individuals with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and offer an alternative facility or service, if any. The notice will be provided in accessible formats and posted at all public entrances to our premises/facility.

(f) Training

Athletics Ontario is committed to training staff on Ontario's accessibility laws and on accessibility aspects of the Human Rights Code that apply to persons with disabilities. In addition, all AO athletes, coaches, volunteers, and member representatives will be offered training and best practices about the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

Training will occur on an ongoing basis and whenever amendments occur to relevant Provincial and/or Federal laws, policies, and procedures.

4. CONTACT US

To request accommodation, or assistance with any AO service, or to provide your feedback regarding how AO delivers its programs and services to individuals with disabilities, please contact us at office@athleticsontario.ca or visit our website at www.athleticsontario.ca for additional ways to reach the AO Office.