

<b>STATEMENT of POLICY and PROCEDURE</b>			
Manual:	Accessibility Standards	SPP No.	<b>AS 5.01</b>
Section:	Standard for Employment	Issued/re-issued:	Dec. 4, 2017
Subject:	<b>Accessibility standard for employment policy, statement of commitment</b>	Effective:	Jan. 1, 2017
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Issued by:		Dated:	Jan. 1, 2017

**1 POLICY**

- 1.01 Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 191/11, entitled, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, (Integrated Regulation) came into force July 1, 2011. The regulation establishes accessibility standards for employment. First Reference is included in the regulation's definition of an "obligated organization", and must comply by January 1, 2017.
- 1.02 First Reference is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to employment opportunities and related services as do all prospective employees and employees.
- 1.03 First Reference is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, in its human resources practices, processes, policies and procedures and employment related services.
- 1.04 The commitments in this policy are intended to ensure that accessibility remains a priority in First Reference's decision-making process and will serve to assist in ensuring that decisions improve accessibility and do not inadvertently create barriers.

**2 PURPOSE**

- 2.01 The purpose of this Statement of Policy and Procedure is to create a statement of commitment (policy) that provides a framework within which accessibility plans and initiatives are to be created in order to move the organization towards the goal of improved accessibility for people with disabilities, specifically with regard to the employment standard in the Integrated Regulation.

**3 SCOPE**

- 3.01 This policy applies to all applicants, prospective employees and employees, and all facilities of First Reference in Ontario. However, it does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid employees.

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**4 RESPONSIBILITY**

- 4.01 It is the responsibility of the managers, immediate supervisors, and department heads to ensure that all employees follow the guidelines set out in this policy.
- 4.02 Each manager, immediate supervisor, and department head is responsible to ensure all employees are trained under the employment standards of the Integrated Regulation and this policy, as well as First Reference’s employment practices and procedures.
- 4.03 Management staff and other staffs who have responsibility for recruiting, hiring and employee selection and/or supervise the work of employees of the First Reference will ensure that the provisions in this policy are implemented.
- 4.04 Staff of the Human Resources Department will ensure that the provisions of this procedure are incorporated in their practices.

**5 DEFINITIONS**

- 5.01 “**Accessible formats**” may include, but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by people with disabilities. There are a number of ways to produce information in a format which can be accessed by people who are not able to read printed or electronic documents. What format you use will depend on the type of information you have, and most importantly the requirements of your audience.
- 5.02 “**Accommodation**” means the special arrangements made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person’s unique needs.
- 5.03 “**Career development and advancement**” includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee’s current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another in an organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level in the organization or any combination of them and, for both additional responsibilities and employee movement, is usually based on merit or seniority or a combination of them.

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5.04 **“Communication supports”** may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that ease effective communications.

5.05 **“Disability”**, as defined in the Ontario **Human Rights Code**, 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 a developmental disability;

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- (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**.

5.06 **“Employee”** means every person who provides services to First Reference in return for wages.

5.07 **“Performance management”** means activities related to assessing and improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness with the goal of facilitating employee success.

5.08 **“Persons with disabilities”** are individuals who have a disability as defined under the Ontario **Human Rights Code**.

5.09 **“Redeployment”** means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs as an alternative to layoff when a particular job or department has been eliminated by the organization.

**6 REFERENCES and RELATED STATEMENTS of POLICY and PROCEDURE**

**Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**  
**Ontario Human Rights Code**  
 Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (O.Reg.191/11)  
 SPP AS 3.01 – Statement of organizational commitment

**7 PROCEDURES**

**Recruitment, assessment and selection process**

7.01 First Reference will ensure that in its recruitment practices the public is made aware that it will provide accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment, assessment and selection process.

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7.02 Employees of First Reference will be made aware that it provides accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment, assessment and selection process.

7.03 When First Reference selects job applicants for a job selection process, it will make applicants aware that, upon request, they have access to accommodation in relation to materials and processes that will be used for applicant selection and that take into account their accessibility needs due to disability.

7.04 When First Reference makes an offer of employment, it will notify the successful applicant of its policy of accommodating employees with disabilities.

**Supports for employees**

7.05 First Reference will inform employees of its policy of supporting employees with disabilities and procedures that provide for job accommodations.

7.06 First Reference will make this information available as soon as practicable to new employees and will provide updated information as policies are revised.

**Accessible formats and communication supports**

7.07 Where an employee with a disability so requests, First Reference will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports in relation to information that is generally available to employees in the workplace and that the employee needs to perform his or her job.

7.08 In determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication as required by 7.07, First Reference will consult with the employee.

**Workplace emergency response information**

7.09 First Reference will ensure that individualized workplace emergency response information is provided to employees who have a disability provided the disability is such that individualized information is necessary and the organization has been made aware of the need for accommodation due to the disability. First Reference will provide the necessary information as soon as

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practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

- 7.10 If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, First Reference will, with the consent of the employee, provide such information to the person designated to provide assistance to the employee.
- 7.11 First Reference will review individualized workplace emergency response information:
- (a) When the employee moves to a different location in the company
  - (b) When the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed
  - (c) When the company reviews its general emergency response procedures
- 7.12 First Reference will ensure that the workplace emergency response information requirements are in place as soon as practicable.
- Individual accommodation plans**
- 7.13 First Reference will have a written process in place for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- 7.14 The First Reference's written process will address:
- (a) How the employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan
  - (b) The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis
  - (c) How the company can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the company's expense, to assist in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how it can be achieved
  - (d) How the employee can request to have a representative of their bargaining unit, or another workplace representative if the employee is

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not a member of a bargaining unit, participate in the development of the accommodation plan

- (e) The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information
- (f) The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and how this will be done
- (g) How the reasons for denying an individual accommodation plan will be provided to an employee if accommodation is denied
- (h) How the company will ensure that the individual accommodation plan is provided in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to a disability

7.15 First Reference will provide individual accommodation plans that:

- (a) Include, if requested, any information regarding accessible formats and accommodation supports provided
- (b) Include, if required, individualized workplace emergency response information
- (c) Identify any other accommodation to be provided

**Return-to-work process**

7.16 The return-to-work process required under the AODA does not replace or override any other return-to-work process created as a result of any other statutory obligations under the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Act** and requires First Reference to develop, put in place and document a return-to-work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. The process will include:

- (a) An outline of the steps the company will take to facilitate the return to

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work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work

- (b) The use of documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process
- (c) Accessibility awareness training for all staff involved in program or course design, delivery and instruction related to these responsibilities

**Performance management process**

7.17 In administering performance management processes in respect of employees with disabilities, First Reference will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as individual accommodation plans.

**Career development and advancement**

7.18 Where the company provides career development and advancement to its employees, First Reference will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans.

**Redeployment**

7.19 Where First Reference has a redeployment process in place, it will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans during the redeployment process.

**Training for staff**

7.20 First Reference will provide training on this policy, practices and procedures, the employment standards under the Integrated Regulation, and the **Human Rights Code** as it pertains to the duty accommodate to all employees with disabilities.

7.21 Training will be provided to:

- (a) All employees
- (b) All volunteers
- (c) All those involved in the development and approvals of company

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policies, practices and procedures, and

- (d) All other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on the company's behalf.

**Modifications to this or other policies**

- 7.22 First Reference is committed to developing employment policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on applicants, prospective employees and employees with disabilities.
- 7.23 Any employment policy of First Reference that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of applicants, prospective employees and employees with disabilities will be modified or removed.
- 7.24 This policy is available in an alternative format upon request.

**8 RECORD KEEPING**

First Reference will maintain accurate records of training delivered to staff and make these records available for inspection as may be required.

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