

Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal 2017 Accessibility Report

This report summarizes the Tribunal's experience in ensuring our accessibility policies and plans meet the requirements in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, ("the AODA"), and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (the "IASR", O.Reg. 191/11)*. This report is posted on the Tribunal's website and is available in accessible formats on request.

Customer Service

The Tribunal continued to provide accessible customer service to clients and stakeholders, governed by our Accessibility Policy for Customer Service. The Tribunal accommodated parties to appeals, witnesses and representatives on a case by case basis to allow them to fully participate in hearings. Some examples of accommodation provided include:

- Arranging for accessible hotel accommodations in Toronto and at our regional hearing locations for workers and their support persons in 8 appeals.
- Arranging for equipment, such as beds, special chairs and amplifiers to be available in rooms for parties to use during their hearings.
- Arranging for American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for hearings for workers with hearing loss.
- Arranging for scent free environments in 2 hearings to allow workers to participate in person at their hearings.

Procurement

Throughout 2017, the Tribunal continued to be mindful of accessibility requirements when procuring goods or services or facilities and incorporated accessibility language into the Tribunal's tender documents. Tribunal managers and staff involved in procurement are aware of accessibility requirements in OPS procurement practices.

Information and Communication

Feedback

The Tribunal continued to ensure that feedback processes are available in accessible formats, such as via the website, by mail, fax, the TTY line or telephone. The Tribunal notified the public about the availability of these options in the Accessibility Policy for Customer Service and the Accessibility Policy – Integrated Accessibility Standards, which are both posted on the Tribunal's website.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The Tribunal continued to provide information in accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, upon request in accordance with the requirements of the IASR. An example of how the Tribunal provided accessible formats includes:

- Converting documents to a format that could be read by screen reading software for a worker with a visual impairment.

Training

As part of our corporate training program, the Tribunal has incorporated accessibility modules on the requirements of the *AODA*, the *IASR* and the *Human Rights Code, as well as, Creating Accessible Documents*. This training is provided to new recruits as soon as practicable after commencement of employment.

Training sessions on providing accessible customer service were delivered to new staff in June and December 2017. The Tribunal maintains a written record, including the date and number of participants, of the accessibility training program.

Employment

In 2017, a number of Tribunal vacancies were filled through an accessible and inclusive recruitment process enabling persons with disabilities to fully participate in the hiring process. Potential applicants were notified about the availability of accommodation, on request, for persons with disabilities and successful candidates were informed of the Tribunal's policy and processes for accommodating employees with disabilities, including individualized workplace emergency response information, at the time the offer of employment was made.

The Tribunal continued to provide timely and effective employment accommodation and return to work for employees and OIC appointees with injuries, illnesses or disabilities, including the development of individual accommodation plans. In addition, the Tribunal consulted with an employee with a disability, on request, to provide accessible formats and communication supports for information required to perform the employee's job and established individualized emergency response plans, when identified, for employees with a disability. Furthermore, employee performance management, career development and advancement opportunities took into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as individual accommodation plans.

Compliance

The Tribunal filed our Accessibility Compliance Report with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in December 2017.