

Ontario - AODA - Accessibility Standard for Customer Service

Policy

The Prosthetics Bracing & Orthotics Group is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

We also support the goal of the Ontario government to make Ontario barrier-free by 2025 and its implementation of accessibility standards for persons with disabilities. An accessibility standard is a rule that the PBO group and our staff must follow to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities.

This policy covers the accessibility standard for customer service.

Topic owner:	Human Resources
Practice Applies to:	Everyone
Process Responsibility:	Individuals, Managers
Final Accountability:	Managers

AODA Definition: Disability

1. 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;
2. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
3. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
4. a mental disorder, or;
5. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”)

Policy Guiding Principles

1. **Dignity and Independence:** Our goods or services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. **Integration:** The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods or services.
3. **Equal opportunity:** Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our goods or services.

Procedures and Guidelines

To support our policy guiding principles and requirements, the Prosthetics Bracing & Orthotics Group has developed procedures and guidelines in the following areas:

1. **Communication**
2. **Assistive Devices**
3. **Allow and welcome Support Persons and Service Animals**
4. **Disruptions in Services**
5. **Training**
6. **Invite Customers to Provide Feedback**
7. **Location and Notice of Availability of Documents and Document Formats**
8. **Modifications to this or other policies**

1. **Communication**

- a. The PBO Group will consider a person's disability when communicating with them with the end goal being to communicate in an effective way. Where possible and helpful, staff will ask persons with disabilities directly how best to communicate with them.
- b. The PBO Group offers alternate formats of print documents such as:
 - Easy-read, simplified summaries of materials for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities.
 - In addition, strategies such as offering phone service rather than requiring in-person service, or email rather than postal notices are other methods of using alternate channels to provide accessible communications.

2. **Assistive Devices**

- a. The PBO Group will ensure that we are prepared to serve customers with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods and/or services.
- b. The PBO Group allows and welcomes all forms of assistive devices on our premises. This may include for example, the use of walkers or oxygen tanks.

3. ***Allow and Welcome Service Animals and Support Persons.***

- a. The PBO Group welcomes people with disabilities and their support persons and service animals.
- b. Service animals and support persons are permitted to together enter our premises that are open and accessible to third parties or the public and in all situations where a disabled Customer requires the service animal and support person to access The PBO Group goods and services.
- c. A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. The PBO Group will notify clients of this through a notice posted on our premises and a disclaimer on our website.

4. **Disruption of Services**

- a. Persons with disabilities often go to a lot of trouble to visit our premises or access our goods or services such as booking accessible transit or other arrangements that require additional effort and planning.

As such, if The PBO Group encounters any disruption to our facilities and services that are in place for persons with disabilities or if our premises cannot be opened to the public for some reason, The PBO Group will ensure the following:

- Give notice of the disruption to the public.
- The notice of disruption will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.
- As soon as we are aware of the interruption, a notice will be posted in a conspicuous place on our premises and on our website.

5. Training

- a. The PBO Group will ensure that the following persons will receive training about the provision of our goods or services to persons with disabilities:
 - Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of The PBO Group whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
 - Every person who participates in developing The PBO Group policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.
- b. The training will include a review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and the requirements of this regulation and instruction about the following matters:
 - How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
 - How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - How to use equipment or devices that may be available on our premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
 - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
- c. The training will be provided to each person as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties.
- d. Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.
- e. The PBO Group will prepare a document describing its training policy, and the document must include a summary of the contents of the training and details of when the training is to be provided.
- f. The PBO Group will keep records of the training provided under this section, including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

6. Invite Customers to Provide Feedback.

- a. Customers who wish to provide feedback regarding the way The PBO Group provides goods and/or services to customers with disabilities can write to:

The Prosthetics, Bracing and Orthotics Group
9 Secord Drive
St Catharines, ON
L2N 1K9

Or email their feedback to info@pbogroup.ca

- b. All feedback will be directed to Alan Rigby, Operations Director. Customers can expect to hear back from The PBO Group within 3 days. Complaints will be addressed according to the PBO Group's regular complain management procedures. The PBO Group feedback process is readily available to the public and can be found on our premises and on our website.

7. Notice of Availability of Documents and Document Formats

- a. The PBO Group ensures that persons to whom we provide goods or services are aware that our policy and plan documents required by the OADA, are available upon request.
- b. The notice will be provided by posting the information in a conspicuous place as follows:
 - On each Clinic Location: posted at Reception
 - On our website: along the footer of each page
 - At our Centralized Services Location: posted on information bulletin board
- c. If a PBO Group client with a disability requests our plan, our staff will provide the information in a format that takes into account the person's disability. Our staff will work with our clients to find a format that is accessible for them and will be provided in a format agreed to by all parties. For example, our staff may direct our customer to our accessible website or read the content of the document to them aloud.

8. Modifications to this or other policies

Any PBO Group policy that does not adhere to our "Policy Guiding Principles", will be modified or removed.

Additional Information

Related Documents

- Core Company Policies

If you have questions, comments or suggestions regarding this document, contact Human Resources.