

## Accessibility Policy

### Statement

Ontario Cycling (OC) is committed to providing quality service to our diverse user community, including persons with disabilities. As part of our commitment to providing access to our services for all customers, we seek to remove obstacles faced by individuals with disabilities.

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (“the Regulation”) set forth under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Ontario Cycling recognizes Para-cycling as an integral discipline of the sport and is committed to reducing barriers to participation, training, competition, and athlete development for athletes with disabilities.

This policy is publicly available on OC’s website and will be provided in accessible format upon request.

### 1. Definitions

- a. *Accessible Formats* – Include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- b. *Assistive device* – Is a technical aid, communication device, or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them, such as a wheelchair, walker, or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering, or reading.
- c. *Communication Supports* – Include but are not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.
- d. *Disability* - The term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to:
  - 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 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. *Service animal* - As defined in the customer service standards under the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:
- i. The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, because of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
  - ii. The person provides documentation from a member of a regulated health professional college confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- f. *Support person* - A support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies them to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods and services.

## 2. Purpose

- a. OC will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity by:
  - i. Ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality.
  - ii. Allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services, if this does not present a safety risk.
  - iii. Using alternative methods, when possible, to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner.
  - iv. Considering individual needs when providing goods and services.
  - v. Communicating in a manner that considers the customer's disability.
  - vi. Providing accessible formats and communication supports to employees and potential employees with disabilities.
- b. OC will support the integration of para-cycling within its athlete development pathways, events, and programming in alignment with applicable national and international sport regulations and classification standards.
- c. OC will develop, maintain, and publish a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlining strategies to prevent and remove barriers and to improve accessibility across the organization. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five (5) years and will be available in accessible format upon request.

### 3. Application of this Policy

- a. This Policy describes how OC works with its employees as well as how OC provides its programs, goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity of persons with disabilities.

### 4. Guidelines

- a. OC will support our customers and our employees in the following manner:

- i. **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

Unless deemed unconvertible, OC will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, upon request. Accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the individual.

OC will consider the person's accessibility needs when customizing individual requests and shall consult with the individual making the request to ensure suitability.

OC will make the availability of accessible formats and communication supports publicly known.

**Exceptions:** The Information and Communication Standard does not apply to:

- Products & product labels.
- Unconvertible information or communications; or
- Information that the organization does not control either directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

**Unconvertible Information or Communications:** If it is determined, in consultation with the requesting party, that information or communications are unconvertible, OC will ensure that the individual who made the request is provided with an explanation and a summary of the information.

OC will classify information or communications as unconvertible where:

- It is not technically practicable to convert; or
- The technology required to make the conversion is not readily available.

- ii. Website Accessibility

OC will ensure that its public website and web content conform with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA standards, or

any updated standard required under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), except where compliance is not practicable.

OC will:

- Ensure new website content is published in accessible format.
- Provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request.
- Consider accessibility features when procuring or updating digital platforms, including membership, registration, and communication systems.
- Make reasonable efforts to remediate accessibility barriers identified through feedback or periodic review.

### iii. **Use of Assistive Devices**

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by OC.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services. For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a customer with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the customer is in a location that would be considered safe for both the customer and business. Or, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

Persons with disabilities who use their own assistive devices are responsible for the maintenance and repair of such assistive devices. Where an OC representative assists a person with the set-up, assembly, disassembly, adjustment, or usage of an assistive device, OC assumes no responsibility for any damage to, wear of, or loss of the assistive device.

### iv. **Guide Dogs and Service Animals**

A customer with a disability who is accompanied by guide dog or service animal will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. “No pet” policies do not apply to guide dogs or service animals.

***Exclusion Guidelines:*** If a guide dog or service animal is excluded by law, OC will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible (for example,

securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

***Recognizing a Guide Dog or Service Animal:*** If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to their disability, OC may request verification from the customer.

***Care and Control of the Animal:*** The customer who is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal is responsible for always maintaining care and control of the animal.

***Allergies:*** If a health and safety concern presents itself (for example, in the form of a severe allergy to the animal), OC will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

**v. The Use of Support Persons**

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, OC will ensure that both persons may enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the customer and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations, OC will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer before any confidential information will be discussed in front of the support person.

***Admission Fees:*** Where OC requires a support person to accompany a person with a disability, and where the person with a disability has agreed to the accompaniment, OC will not charge the support persons any fees.

**vi. Notice of Disruptions of Service**

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of OC. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use goods or services of OC, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances, such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

If a notification needs to be posted, the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable.

- Reason for the disruption.
- Anticipated duration; and
- A description of alternative services or options.

**vii. Training for Staff and Service Providers**

Training will be provided to all employees, volunteers, agents, contractors, and others who interact with the public or who participate in developing OC’s policies and procedures.

***Training Provisions:*** Regardless of format, training will cover:

- The purpose and requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.
- How to interact and communicate respectfully with people with various types of disabilities, including those who use assistive devices, service animals, or support persons.
- Steps to take when a person with a disability is experiencing difficulty accessing OC’s services or facilities.
- OC’s policies, procedures, and practices for providing accessible service.
- For staff, volunteers, coaches, officials, and event organizers working with Para-cycling athletes or supporting Para-cycling events, additional training will address: the needs and communication preferences of Para athletes; the safe and respectful handling of adapted equipment; and inclusive practices specific to Para-cycling competition and training environments.

***Training Schedule:*** Training will be provided to new employees and volunteers during onboarding, and to agents and contractors prior to engaging with the public on behalf of OC. Revised training will be provided when there are changes to legislation, policies, or practices.

OC will maintain records of accessibility training provided, including dates and participants, in accordance with applicable legislative requirements.

**viii. Employment Practices**

***Recruitment, Assessment and Selection:*** OC will notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for job applicants who have disabilities. Applicants will be informed that these accommodations are available, upon request, for the interview process and for other candidate selection methods. Where an accommodation is

requested, OC will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

Successful applicants will be made aware of OC's policies and supports for accommodating people with disabilities.

***Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees:***

OC will ensure that employees are aware of our policies for employees with disabilities and any changes to these policies as they occur.

If an employee with a disability requests it, OC will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for the following:

- Information needed to perform their job;
- Information that is generally available to all employees in the workplace.

OC will consult with the employee making the request to determine the best way to provide the accessible format or communication support.

***Workplace Emergency Response Information:*** Where required, OC will create individual workplace emergency response information for employees with disabilities. This information will consider the unique challenges created by the individual's disability and the physical nature of the workplace and will be created in consultation with the employee.

This information will be reviewed when:

- The employee moves to a different physical location in the organization.
- The employee's overall accommodation needs, or plans are reviewed.
- OC reviews general emergency response policies

***Performance Management and Career Development and***

***Advancement:*** OC will consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when implementing performance management processes, or when offering career development or advancement opportunities.

*Individual accommodation plans will be consulted, as required.*

***Redeployment:*** The accessibility needs of employees with disabilities will be considered in the event of redeployment.

*Individual accommodation plans will be consulted, as required.*

**ix. Design of Public Spaces**

OC will meet the required Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces, as set forth in Part IV.1 of the Regulation, when building or making major modifications to public spaces.

OC is committed to designing training and competition environments in a manner that considers the accessibility needs of members, including their safety, dignity and inclusion in all services.

For sanctioned cycling events and training environments, OC will promote accessibility considerations when feasible based on safety considerations, including:

- Accessible venue selection where practicable
- Accommodation of adapted equipment such as handcycles, tandems, tricycles, and other Para-specific equipment
- Accessible staging, mounting and dismounting areas where feasible
- Clear communication of course difficulty and physical demands
- Accessible registration and communication processes
- Inclusive safety briefings and operational planning

OC will promote education and awareness opportunities for coaches, officials, ride leaders, and event organizers to support safe and inclusive participation of Para athletes.

When procuring goods, services, facilities, or digital systems, OC will incorporate accessibility criteria and features where practicable, in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

**x. Feedback Process**

The goal of OC is to meet and surpass expectations while serving individuals with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcomed and appreciated. Feedback regarding the way the OC provides services to people with disabilities can be made by contacting:

Email: [support@ontariocycling.org](mailto:support@ontariocycling.org)

**5. Modifications to This or Other Policies**

OC is committed to developing and updating its policies in a manner that respects and promotes the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

This policy will be reviewed at least once every three (3) years, or sooner if legislative or operational changes require updates.

## **6. Questions about this Policy**

All questions regarding this policy should be directed to the OC President & CEO:

Email: [support@ontariocycling.org](mailto:support@ontariocycling.org)

## **7. Legislation**

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA 2005)
- Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) Regulation 191/11