



## ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Makkinga Contractors is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities promptly. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario’s accessibility laws.

Makkinga Contractors is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Makkinga Contractors understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (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 law.

Makkinga Contractors is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services, or facilities to all customers including people with disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

### DEFINITIONS

**Disability:** Under the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**, a disability is defined broadly to include a range of visible and invisible conditions that may be present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time.

Examples include:

- **Physical disabilities:** such as blindness, deafness, mobility impairments (e.g., paralysis, amputation), and reliance on assistive devices like wheelchairs or guide dogs.
- **Mental health disabilities:** conditions that affect thought processes, emotions, moods, behaviors, and the ability to cope with stress.
- **Learning disabilities:** impairments that affect the ability to take in, understand, or remember information.

The **Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)** defines disability in the context of work-related injuries and illnesses. A disability under WSIB includes both physical and emotional impairments that result from a work-related accident or condition. This can include conditions

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like traumatic head injuries, toxic chemical exposure, and emotional reactions to physical injuries.

**Guide Dog:** Under the **Blind Persons' Rights Act** in Ontario, a guide dog is defined as a dog that has been trained to assist a blind person and meets specific qualifications set out in the regulations. These qualifications include:

1. **Training:** The dog must have completed a training program at a recognized guide dog training facility. This training typically involves exposure to various environments, including street traffic, public transportation, and obstacles.
2. **Behavior:** The guide dog must demonstrate appropriate social behavior and not show any signs of ailments, diseases, or physical disorders that would interfere with its duties.
3. **Obedience:** The dog must show basic obedience skills with leash and voice commands.

**Service Animal:** An animal that is trained to assist a person with a disability. This typically includes guide dogs for the visually impaired but can also encompass other roles such as alerting persons of an oncoming seizure, guiding individuals with mobility issues, or providing support for those with mental health disabilities.

Service animals must be easily identifiable as relating to the person's disability, such as wearing a vest or harness, or the person can provide an identification card or a letter from a healthcare practitioner confirming the need for the service animal.

**Assistive Device:** An **Assistive Device** is defined as a piece of equipment that is used to replace, compensate for, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. This broad category includes a wide range of items such as:

- **Mobility aids:** Wheelchairs, canes, walkers, and prosthetics.
- **Visual aids:** Magnifiers, screen readers, and braille devices.
- **Hearing aids:** Devices that help individuals with hearing impairments.
- **Communication aids:** Devices that assist individuals with speech or communication difficulties.
- **Medical supplies:** Items like diabetic supplies, respiratory equipment, and orthotics.

These devices are essential for enabling individuals with disabilities to perform daily activities and live independently.

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## TRAINING

We are committed to the training of required staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario accessibility standards, and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities. The following positions will receive training: Receptionist, Office Staff, Project Manager, Equipment Manager, and Shop Supervisor.

In addition, we will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- b) all other persons who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes:

- purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services, or facilities to people with disabilities.
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our organization's goods, services, or facilities.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies. Training will include an e-Learning portion as well as an in-person or Teams session with the safety coordinator.

We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

## ASSISTIVE DEVICES

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services, or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services, or facilities.

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We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices if available on-site. Training on specific devices will also be provided for staff when assisting customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

## COMMUNICATION

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability. This may include the following:

**1. Verbal Communication:**

- **Clear Speech:** Speak clearly, slowly, and directly. Avoid shouting or speaking too fast.
- **Simple Language:** Use simple words and short sentences if the person has cognitive disabilities.

**2. Non-Verbal Communication:**

- **Gestures and Body Language:** Use appropriate gestures and facial expressions.
- **Written Communication:** Use written notes, whiteboards, or text messaging for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- **Visual Aids:** Employ pictures, symbols, or diagrams to assist understanding.

**3. Assistive Technology:**

- **Text-to-Speech Devices:** For individuals who have difficulty speaking.

**4. Ensuring Accessibility:**

- **Accessible Documents & Meetings** can be made available, as required.

Remember, the key to effective communication is patience, empathy, and actively seeking to understand the individual's needs and preferences.

We will work with the person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works for them.

## SERVICE ANIMALS

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter, or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

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A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Optometrists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

1. **Provide an Alternate Location:** Offer to serve the customer in a different area where the service animal is allowed.
2. **Offer Assistance:** Provide a staff member to assist the person with tasks that the service animal would normally perform. This could include guiding the person, retrieving items, or providing support as needed.
3. **Communicate Clearly:** Ensure that the company communicates clearly and respectfully with the person about the restrictions and the alternative accommodations being offered.
4. **Ensure Accessibility:** Make sure that any alternative accommodations provided are fully accessible and meet the needs of the person with the disability.

Service animals are excluded from certain locations primarily due to **health and safety regulations**. Service animals are generally prohibited on construction sites, heavy equipment shops, and automotive shops due to health and safety regulations. The primary reasons for this prohibition include:

1. **Food Safety:** In food preparation and manufacturing areas, service animals are generally excluded to prevent contamination and ensure hygiene. For example, the Health Protection and Promotion Act prohibits animals in areas where food is handled, prepared, or served, except for guide dogs and service dogs. This would include work site kitchens.

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2. **Safety Concerns:** In some cases, the presence of a service animal might pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, in areas with open flames or hazardous materials, it might be unsafe for service animals to be present.
3. **Regulatory Requirements:** Specific laws and regulations may dictate where service animals can and cannot go.
4. **Cleanliness and Hygiene:** Construction sites can be dirty and dusty, which might not be suitable for service animals.

Note regarding the *Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario*: If there is a conflict between a provision of this Act or a regulation under this or any other Act relating to banned breeds (such as pit bulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by a municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive concerning controls or bans on these breeds prevails.

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

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

## SUPPORT PERSONS

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

There are no fees or fares to access admission to our premises. Site-specific orientations may be required.

We will notify customers of this by posting a notice in the following location(s): Main Office

In certain cases, the company might require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for health or safety reasons.

Before deciding, Makkinga Contractors will:

- consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
- consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
- determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises

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## NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, the company will notify customers promptly. This posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be made publicly available in the following ways:

- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance, and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the Makkinga Contractors website;
- contacting customers with appointments;
- verbally notifying customers when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

## FEEDBACK PROCESS

Makkinga Contractors welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Feedback may be provided through an online form, by e-mail, or verbally.

Online Form QR



All feedback, including complaints, will be directed to the Safety Coordinator:

Shannon McQuaker

807-627-3448

570 Squier Place, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6M2

shannon@makkinga.ca

Customers can expect to hear back in 5 business days.

Makkinga Contractors ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

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## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

Makkinga Contractors notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on its website and at the main office.

Makkinga Contractors will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

## SELF-SERVE KIOSKS

The company does not utilize any self-serve kiosks currently.

## INFORMATION and COMMUNICATIONS

Makkinga Contractors has a process for receiving and responding to feedback and the process is accessible to persons with disabilities upon request. We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication support promptly considering the person's accessibility needs due to disability. We will consult with the person who is making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If the organization determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization shall provide the requestor with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

We will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports through this policy and our website.

## EMPLOYMENT

We will notify employees, job applicants, and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. We will notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We will consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

We notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

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We notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. We provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the accessibility needs due to disability. We will consult with the person who is making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

Where needed, we will also provide customized **emergency information** to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee's consent, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who would assist that employee during an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

## CHANGES TO EXISTING POLICIES

Any policies of this organization that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

This document is publicly available. Accessible formats are available upon request.

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