Law Commission of Ontario
Commission du droit de l'Ontario

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

The Law Commission of Ontario (LCO) has been committed to accommodation and accessibility for members of the public who participate in its activities since its creation, consistent with our mandate of "access to justice" and the principles of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. Accordingly, this Accessibility Policy has been developed to guide LCO employees, volunteers, and others who engage with the public or third parties on behalf of the LCO in providing accessible services and programs. The Policy has been prepared in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and meets the applicable requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*, O. Reg. 191/11 (IASR).

1. Purpose of the Policy

The LCO's activities include legal research; the preparation of consultation papers and reports on law reform in specific areas of the law; consultations related to law reform projects and general outreach about the LCO; and the organization of conferences and other events. The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all persons who participate in these activities that LCO staff and representatives will undertake them in a manner consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. The goal is to increase accessibility in a way that considers individual needs, enables full participation in activities, and provides opportunities for persons with disabilities to contribute to and benefit from the LCO's activities equal to the opportunities of other participants.

2. Application of Policy

This policy applies to the LCO's activities that involve the participation of members of the public and to all persons who are involved in undertaking these activities, including legal and administrative staff and volunteers.

These activities include access to public LCO documents; participation in consultations, including in focus groups, in-person or telephone interviews or on the web; feedback on consultation papers and interim reports; and contacting the LCO in writing, by email, and by telephone.

3. Providing Accessible Participation in the LCO's Activities

The LCO is located in the Ignat Kaneff Building at York University, home of Osgoode Hall Law School. The LCO's premises are accessible.

The following are examples of how the LCO will provide accessible participation by the public in its activities:

- Offering consultation documents and reports in a variety of formats, on request;
- Providing a variety of means of feedback to documents released to the public;
- Facilitating the participation of persons with mobility related disabilities who cannot attend consultations in person through alternate means;
- Ensuring LCO-organized conferences, consultations or similar events are accessible or that provision has been made for accommodation as requested;
- Welcoming service animals accompanying persons living with disabilities;
- Welcoming support persons accompanying persons living with disabilities;
- Ensuring that when information or communications cannot be converted into an accessible format, the LCO will explain why and will provide a summary of the information instead;
- Providing ways of contacting the LCO in a variety of formats.

Persons living with disabilities who wish to participate in the LCO's activities should know that the LCO holds all public activities outside its own offices. Where possible, it ensures that other sites are accessible by visiting them in advance; where this is not possible, it relies on the assurance of the person or organization providing the space where the activity will be conducted that it is accessible and that service animals are welcome.

The LCO does not have assistive devices in its offices and cannot ensure that they will be available on other sites used for its activities.

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to a facility or service normally used by persons with disabilities to access the LCO's programs or activities, we will provide public notice as soon as practicable. The notice will state the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and any available alternative facilities or services. Notices will be posted in a clearly visible location at the affected site, on the LCO's website, or by other reasonable means.

4. Training

The LCO is committed to providing training to all employees, volunteers, and others who provide services on its behalf on accessible customer service, the requirements of Ontario's accessibility standards, and the aspects of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* that relate to persons with disabilities. Training will be provided as soon as practicable and on an ongoing basis as changes are made to the LCO's accessibility policies or practices.

5. Employment

The LCO notifies employees, job applicants, and the public that accommodations are available during recruitment and hiring. Applicants selected to participate in an interview or assessment

will be informed that accommodations are available upon request. The LCO will consult with applicants to provide or arrange suitable accommodation. Successful applicants will be notified of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when employment offers are made.

Employees will be informed of the LCO's accessibility-related policies, including those on job accommodations that take into account accessibility needs due to disability. New employees will receive this information as soon as practicable after employment begins, and all staff will be informed whenever changes are made to relevant policies.

Upon request, the LCO will consult with an employee with a disability to provide or arrange accessible formats and communication supports for information needed to perform their job, and for information generally available to other employees.

Where required, the LCO will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with disabilities. With consent, this information may be shared with designated individuals who assist during emergencies. Individualized plans will be reviewed when the employee moves to a new location, when accommodation needs change, or when general emergency policies are updated.

When undertaking performance management, career development, or redeployment processes, the LCO will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and any individual accommodation plans in place.

6. When it would be Helpful for the Person with a Disability to Notify the LCO about the Need for Accommodation

In many cases, people living with disabilities will be able to participate in the LCO's activities without advising the LCO that they will require accommodation to do so. For example, the LCO always seeks to ensure that the location of consultations is accessible to persons with mobility related disabilities. Consultation papers and reports are posted in a variety of formats. Persons wishing to visit the LCO's offices can do so knowing that they are accessible.

However, from time to time, it would help the LCO ensure that the activity in which the person wishes to participate is accessible. For example, if in order to participate in a consultation, an individual requires large print background documents or documents in Braille, or a sign language interpreter, the LCO will need to know in order to prepare the documents or arrange for the interpreter. Another example is that support persons are always welcome, but if lunch is provided, it helps to know whether a participant will be accompanied by his or her support person. For events involving food, it is important to know whether an attendee's form of disability requires a particular kind of food. If the individual requires additional breaks, it helps in organizing a consultation to know that is the case.

7. Procedure for Requesting Accommodation

To advise the LCO that a form of accommodation will be necessary for a person with a disability to participate in an LCO activity, the person or someone on behalf of the person may advise the LCO in writing by letter or email, orally by telephone, in person, or in other formats, providing a description of the particular barrier and the accommodation required. Individuals are requested to advise the LCO of accommodation needs as soon as possible. Contact information is provided at the end of the document.

Once a form of accommodation has been agreed upon and provided, it is the responsibility of the person requesting the accommodation to report any problems or concerns with it to the LCO in order to permit appropriate adjustments to be made at the time where possible or in the future. If necessary and possible under the circumstances, the Executive Director will discuss the matter with the individual concerned.

8. Feedback Process

The LCO welcomes feedback on this policy and on its efforts to make its activities accessible. Questions and feedback should be communicated in writing by letter or email, orally by telephone, in person, or in other formats.

All feedback, including complaints, will be directed to the Executive Director for response within 10 business days. Customers who provide formal feedback will receive an acknowledgment of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

9. Contact Information

Requests for accommodation and feedback and questions about this policy can be communicated to the LCO in person or by mail at the following address:

2030 Ignat Kaneff Building
Osgoode Hall Law School, York University
4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

In writing, addressed in the case of consultations in a law reform project, to the head of the project, or otherwise to the Executive Director:

Email: lawcommission@lco-cdo.org

By telephone:
GTA: 416-650-8406
Toll-Free: 1-866-950-8406