



**Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony
Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy**

December 4, 2014

1. **POLICY**

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

2. **PURPOSE**

This Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy has been established by the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony to govern the provision of services with Regulation 191/11, “Integrated Accessibility Standards” (“Regulation”) under the AODA.

These standards are developed to break down barriers and increase accessibility for persons with disabilities in the areas of information and communications and employment.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony is governed by this policy as well as the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and the AODA in meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.

3. **SCOPE**

This Policy applies to all employees and volunteers of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony.

4. **RESPONSIBILITY**

All employees, volunteers, contractors and any other person acting on behalf of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony are responsible for complying with this policy. Department directors are responsible for ensuring that staff members follow the guidelines set on in this policy.

5. **DEFINITIONS**

Accessible formats: may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Accommodation: means the special arrangements made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs.

Communication supports: may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Communications: means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent, or received.

Information: includes data, facts, and knowledge that exist in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that convey meaning.

6. **REFERENCES AND RELATED STATEMENTS OF POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Ontario Human Rights Code

Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards

Accessible Customer Service Policy

7. **PROCESS**

Accessibility Plan

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will develop, maintain and document an Accessibility Plan outlining the company's strategy to prevent and remove barriers from its workplace and to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years, and will be posted on the KWS website. Upon request, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will provide a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an accessible format.

Training Employees and Volunteers

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and continue to provide training on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, to all of its employees and volunteers. The training will be appropriate to the duties of particular employees and volunteers. Employees and volunteers will be trained when changes are made to the Accessibility Policy. New Employees and volunteers will be trained as soon as possible after their start date.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will keep a record of the training it provides.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

Feedback

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will continue to ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to all persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon request, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will provide, or will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will ensure that our Internet websites, including web content, conform to the World Wide Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA except where this is impracticable.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Recruitment

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will notify the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate further in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

If a selected candidate requests an accommodation, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will consult with the applicant and provide, or arrange the provision of, a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

Notice to Successful Applicants

When making offers of employment, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Informing Employees of Supports

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will continue to inform its employees of its policies (or any updates to those policies) used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. This information will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

Accessible Forms and Communication Supports for Employees

Upon the request of an employee with a disability, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will consult with the employee to provide, or arrange for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed to perform his/her job, and information that is generally available to other employees.

In determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will consult with the employee making the request.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary, and if the KWS is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will provide this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the employee requires assistance, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will, with the consent of the employee, provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the KWS to provide assistance to the employee.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will maintain a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

If requested, information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided will also be included in individual accommodation plans.

In addition, the plans will include individualized workplace emergency response information (where required), and will identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Return to Work Process

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will maintain a written return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

The return to work process will outline the steps the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will take to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

This return to work process will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (i.e. the Workplace Safety Act, 1997).

Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement and Redeployment

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when conducting performance management, providing career development and advancement to employees, or when redeploying employees.

Questions about the policy

This policy has been developed to break down barriers and increase accessibility of persons with disabilities in the areas of information and communications and employment. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation will be provided by the Director of Operations.