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TITLE:	<b>ACCESSIBILITY</b>	

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<b>Approval:</b>  Jessica Diplock, Interim VP, People Relations and Corporate Affairs	<b>Date:</b> June 2, 2023

**PURPOSE**

To outline Health Sciences North’s (HSN) commitment to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

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 in a timely manner. 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.

**PROCEDURE**

**Method**

Procurement

We will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, including self-serve kiosks. If it is not possible and practical to do so, we will provide an explanation upon request.

*Self-Service Kiosks*

We will incorporate accessibility features/consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Information and Communications

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports.

We will also meet internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario’s accessibility laws.

### Employment

We will notify employees, potential hires and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring.

We will notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities. We will put in place a process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees.

Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency.

Our performance management and career development will take into account the accessibility needs of all employees.

### Public Spaces

We will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces.

We will put procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to accessible parts of our public spaces.

### Policies

We will use reasonable efforts to ensure that our policies are consistent with the following principles:

1. The goods, services or facilities will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. The provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities will be integrated with the provision of goods, services or facilities to others, unless an alternative measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services or facilities.
3. Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods, services or facilities.
4. When communicating with a person with a disability, we will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

We will modify or remove an existing policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **Education/Training Related Information**

We are committed to training all of our staff and volunteers in Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

Our self-learning package (SLP) module is mandatory and is completed upon hire by all employees, volunteers and others who provide goods and services to HSN. This SLP includes reference to applicable legislation (AODA, IASR, Ontario Human Rights Code) and reviews:

- How to interact with people with various types of disabilities and provides examples that apply to a variety of disabilities – physical, mental, communication, cognitive
- How to interact with people who use assistive devices (i.e. canes, wheelchairs) as well as service animals and support persons
- Examples of assistive devices
- What a service animal is and what the associated rights and privileges are related to someone who uses one
- What a support person is and what the associated rights and privileges are of that person

- How to access and use assistive devices and equipment at HSN
- What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing HSN services or facilities
- What is covered by the following standards:
  - Customer Service
  - Information and Communication
  - Employment
  - Transportation (doesn't apply to HSN)
  - Design of Public Spaces

Training will be updated with changes to law or policy.

### **References and Related Documents**

Government of Ontario (2005) *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. SO 2005, c 11

Government of Ontario (1990) *Human Rights Code*. R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19

Government of Ontario (2001) *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. S.O. 2001, c. 32

HSN (rev. 2013) *Accessible Procurement Declaration*

HSN (2017) *Accessibility Customer Service Standards*

HSN (rev. 2018) *Accommodated Parking - Employees*

HSN (rev. 2017) *Attendance Support*

HSN (rev. 2020) *Complaints and Compliments*

HSN (rev. 2018) *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Patients – Interpreter*

HSN (rev. 2020) *Emergency Response Plan for Accommodated Employees Form*

HSN (rev. 2020) *Employee and Affiliate Accommodation*

HSN (rev. 2019) *Employee Substance Misuse*

HSN (rev. 2019) *Employment Equity*

HSN (rev. 2019) *Fit for Duty*

HSN (rev. 2018) *Return to Work and Modified Work*

HSN (rev. 2017) *Sick Leave and Short Term Absence*

HSN (rev. 2019) *Work Reintegration – Occupational Injury/Illness*