

# Accessibility Policy

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 set forth under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, as they apply to Pegasus Community Project.

## 1. Policy Statement

### 1.1. Commitment

Pegasus supports the goals of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and will establish policies, practices and procedures consistent with the accessibility standards established under the AODA, including accessible customer service, employment, information and communication, and the built environment.

In doing so Pegasus is committed to giving individuals with disabilities the opportunity to access our services and allow them to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way as other people.

### 1.2. Removal of Barriers

The Pegasus mission is based on removing barriers to community participation facing participants, and we extend this ongoing commitment to employees, volunteers and the general public.

All of Pegasus' policies, practices and procedures are developed and/or improved with considerations of accessibility. The Board of Directors reviews and revises all policies at least annually, making sure that the identification and removal of barriers to accessibility is a priority.

### 1.3. Timely Service for Accommodations

While Pegasus seeks to remedy barriers to accessibility and will continue to promote and comply with the spirit of the AODA, there are many situations in which the need for accommodations will remain.

Pegasus is committed to accommodating persons with disabilities in a timely manner. This includes, but is not limited to, the provision of alternate formats of our information and communications and individualized emergency plans.

Participants, families and residential support persons requesting accommodations must contact the Program Supervisor and provide notification of the need for an accommodation. Accommodations will be determined,

coordinated and implemented in a timely matter with no additional cost to the individual.

Employees and volunteers requesting accommodations must notify their direct Supervisor – i.e. Store volunteers should notify the Store Manager; Program Counsellors should notify the Program Supervisor; Program Supervisors should notify the Program Manager; administrative staff and the Store Manager should notify the Executive Director; the Executive Director should notify the Board. The appropriate Supervisor will determine and coordinate the resulting accommodations in consultation with the employee or prospective employee.

#### **1.4. Training**

Pegasus will provide training to all employees and volunteers on AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to individuals with disabilities. Refresher training will include any changes to AODA policies. Training will be delivered in-person as well as through print and online materials. Records of names, dates and numbers of persons trained will be kept.

For more detailed information on training content and procedures, see the ***Staff Orientation, Hiring and Training Policy*** and the ***AODA Customer Service Standard Policies***.

#### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all participants, employees and volunteers within the Pegasus community. This includes all current and prospective Pegasus employees.

#### **3. Related Policies and Procedures**

- Accessible Customer Service Policy
- Staff Orientation, Hiring and Training Policy

Note: Accessibility is integrated into all of Pegasus' policies and procedures.

#### **4. Applicable Legislation**

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Ontario Human Rights Code

#### **5. Definitions**

***Disability*** as per the *Ontarian Human Rights Code*, means,

- (a) 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,

- (b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- (c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- (d) A mental disorder, or
- (e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*

**Barriers:** A barrier is anything that keeps someone with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability.

Barriers as indicated by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 are:

- a) **Attitudinal barriers:** The fears and assumptions that prevent people with and without disabilities from meaningfully interaction with one another. Examples of attitudinal barriers include:
  - Inferiority: The notion that people with disabilities are “second -class citizens”
  - Pity: When people feel sorry for the person with a disability as opposed to giving them an equal opportunity.
  - Hero worship: When people consider someone with a disability who lives independently to be “special” for overcoming a disability. It is important to remember that the disability is there but the individual has learned to adapt by using his/her skills and knowledge.
  - Ignorance: When people with disabilities are often dismissed as being incapable of accomplishing a task without being given the chance.
  - Fear: When people are afraid that they will “do or say the wrong thing” around someone with a disability and as a result avoid the individual with a disability.
- b) **Architectural or structural** are the physical limitations of an environment. Examples include: stairs, doorways, doorknobs that individuals can grasp, the width of hallways and even room layout.
- c) **Information and communication** are when a person can't easily receive or convey information. Examples include: small print size, low colour contrast between text and background, confusing design of printed materials and the use of language that isn't clear or easy to understand.
- d) **Technology** barriers occur when a technology can't be modified to support various assistive devices.
- e) **Systemic** barriers can result from an organization's policies, practices and procedures if they restrict people with disabilities, often unintentionally – for

example, a clothing store with a “no refund” policy and no way for someone in a scooter to enter the change room.