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**Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

**2025-2030**

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# Message from the CEO & the CHEO Research Institute (CHEO RI) – Our Commitment to Accessibility

In alignment with our values, the CHEO RI is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner that respects their dignity and independence. We embrace a broad definition of disability, which includes those that may not be visible or apparent. The CHEO RI aims to provide our workforce, the children, youth, and families we serve, and members of the community, with barrier-free access to our facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services. The CHEO RI continues to foster and endorse attitudes and behaviours that eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities.

We are committed to ensuring that we are equipped to deliver our work in a healthy, safe, and accessible manner to create a collaborative and safe environment for all. This plan focuses on initiatives regarding the AODA standards including customer service, information and communication, policies and training, employment, public space design and feedback.

# About Us

The CHEO RI is a not-for-profit corporation that connects exceptional talent and technology in the pursuit of life-changing research for every child, youth, and family in our community and beyond. We inspire trust in our research excellence by being curious, nimble, passionate, and equitable.

For additional information about the CHEO RI and its activities, please see our most recent [Annual Report - CHEO Research Institute](https://www.cheoresearch.ca/annual-report-2022-23/) on our website.

Our facility is at 401 Smyth Road and consists of two dedicated research buildings. Our facility is connected with the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario buildings, which consist of the original building (approximately 50 years old), as well as two new wings. Plans are underway to develop additional buildings on the grounds. Some Researchers and research teams work outside of the main CHEO RI campus including clinical space shared with the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario and with The Ottawa Hospital at 501 Smyth Road, referred to as CPCR.

# About the CHEO RI’s Accessibility Plan

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11* (AODA) is Provincial Legislation with the purpose of developing, implementing, and enforcing accessibility standards to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises on or before January 1, 2025. Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled “Accessibility Standards for Customer Service” came into force on January 1, 2008. This regulation establishes accessibility standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties. This plan requires all public institutions to put into motion several specific initiatives that will result in greater accessibility in the province of Ontario by 2025.

Our accessibility plan demonstrates our commitment to working together with all our partners and colleagues, including researchers, employees, learners, volunteers, patients, and families, with a range of accessibility needs, to meet the minimum standard specified as AODA requirements by 2025, and to bring an accessibility lens to the entire organization.

This Accessibility Plan is a living document which will evolve as the organization continues to identify and eliminate barriers to equal accessibility as we work towards an accessible workspace for all.

# CHEO Accessibility Committee

Due to our shared proximity in location to CHEO and alignment of work between our organizations, members of the CHEO RI Office of Research Services representatives sit on various relevant CHEO-led committees.

The role of the Accessibility Committee is to uphold the human rights and dignity of people who have disabilities who work at, partner with, visit and are being cared for at all CHEO locations and through all CHEO services, including services provided by the CHEO RI.

The committee’s mandate is to ensure compliance with the AODA and its standards (Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation – IASR) by identifying, advising, and facilitating the removal of barriers, fostering a barrier-free and inclusive environment for all.  The Accessibility Committee supports CHEO and the CHEO RI in establishing and working towards a vision for a fully accessible organization.

The Accessibility Committee values partnering with the children, youth, and families we care for, as well as the critical participation and perspectives of persons with lived experience of disability. As such, many family advisors to the Accessibility Committee are people who identify as living with disabilities and/or care for people with disabilities.

The Committee is co-chaired by the CHEO Director, Office of Indigeneity, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access, and Social Justice (I-IDEAS) and the CHEO Chief Building and Planning Officer, who report to the Accessibility Steering Committee, chaired by the Vice President, Quality, Strategy and Family Partnerships. Via the RI committee member, regular updates from this committee are provided to the CHEO RI Research Director, Human Resources. For information about improvements made or in progress, connect with us.

# Accessibility Standards & Workplan

## **Accessibility Standards**

AODA was enacted to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards so that all individuals benefit from accessible services, programs, spaces, and employment. Under the AODA legislation there are five standards:

* 1. *Customer Service* – provide accessible customer service to persons with disabilities so that they can access the same services as everyone.
  2. *Information and Communication Standard* – create and provide information and communication in ways that are accessible for all.
  3. *Employment Standard* – provide accessible workplace employment practices to potential or current workforce with disabilities across all stages of the employment life cycle.
  4. *Transportation Standard* – not applicable to the CHEO RI as it relates to ensuring that transportation service providers make the features and equipment on routes and vehicles accessible to passengers with disabilities.
  5. *Design of Public Spaces Standard* – make public spaces that are newly constructed, or redeveloped, easier for everyone to access.

The workplan below outlines how these standards are addressed.

## **Accessibility Workplan**

### Addressing the AODA Customer Service Standard in conjunction with the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO)

Reference - [165/16: Integrated Accessibility Standards (2016)](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r16165)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Regulation Section** | **Compliance Action** | **Responsible**  **lead/team** |
| 1 | Establishment of Policies (AODA, 2005, O.Reg, 165,16, s, 16) | Alignment with CHEO Policy - Customer Service: providing Services to People with Disabilities (Policy No. 218) | CHEO & CHEO RI Human Resources |
| 2 | Use of Service animals support person (AODA 2005, O, Reg 165/16 s. 16) | Complimentary to the Use of Service Animals Policy 219 from CHEO, Accessible Customer Service Guide covers use of assistive devices, support persons, service animals and includes information about different impairments and disabilities and how to assist someone. | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 3 | Notice of Temporary Disruptions – CHEO RI (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 165/16, s.16) | Update accessibility policy posted on the website address for the CHEO RI website: Notices of temporary disruption will appear on the Accessibility page of the CHEO RI website.  Alignment with CHEO Policy – Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (No. 225) | Director, RI Communications |
| 4 | Training for CHEO RI (AODA, 2005, O. Reg 165/16, s.16,) | All staff, volunteers and learners must complete AODA Training under the CHEO RI Mandatory Training Policy.  Training tracked by Education Coordinator for compliance.  Additional emphasis on AODA is provided at time of mandatory corporate orientation. | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 5 | Feedback Process for providers of goods or services a (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16) | Overall accessibility section on the website addresses:  Feedback process for collecting information related to the CHEO RI services and contact details  Alignment with CHEO Policy – Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (No. 225) | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 6 | Format of documents (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16) | Overall accessibility policy posted on the website addresses:  Notice of availability of documents upon request in different formats.  Guide to providing accessible customer service available for staff on intranet.  An information sheet on services for people with disabilities is available on the website.  Alignment with CHEO Policy – Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (No. 225) | Director, RI Communications |

### Addressing the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

Reference - [191/11: Integrated accessibility standards](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191)

#### General Integrated Standards

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|  | **Regulation Section** | **Compliance Action** | **Responsible**  **lead/team** |
| 7 | Establishment of Accessibility Policies (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 3) | Policy: Accessibility: Providing a Barrier- Free Environment at CHEO (No. 225)  Policy: Customer Service: Providing Services to People with Disabilities (No. 218) | The CHEO RI Representative on the CHEO Accessibility Committee (CHEO RI Representation on Committee)  CHEO Chair, Accessibility Committee – Office of I-IDEAS |

art 2 - Information & Communication Standards

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|  | **Regulation Section** | **Compliance Action** | **Responsible lead/team** |
| 8 | Feedback (AODA, 2005, O. Reg.  191/11, s. 11) | Feedback is accepted in the format the individual wishes.  Disabilities are accommodated by working with individuals to ensure effective and barrier-free communication can occur.  Complementary to this is the Accessible Customer Service Guide.  Next review date 2027 | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 9 | Accessible formats and communications support (AODA, 2005, O. Reg 191/11 s. 12(2) | Upon request, we will provide or arrange the provision of accessible formats and communications support for persons with disabilities in a timely manner.  Accessible formats, sometimes called alternate formats, are ways of presenting printed, written, or visual material so that people with disabilities can access it.  Alignment with CHEO Policy: Accessibility: Providing a Barrier- Free Environment at CHEO (No. 225)  Next review date 2027 | Chief Branding & Communications Officer  Director, RI Communications |
| 10 | Emergency procedure, plans or public safety information (AODA, 2005, O. Reg.  191/11, s. 13) | An emergency information sheet has been developed for the public who enter the CHEO premises.  A CHEO RI Emergency Management Framework has been developed to provide an overview of emergency responses.  An Emergency Preparedness Manual is available for staff electronically or a physical copy, as requested, in each department.  Next review date 2026 | Manager, Occupational Safety – The CHEO  RI Health & Safety Manager |
| 11 | Accessible websites and web content (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 14) | Website meets the SCAG 2.0 Level AA success criteria.  When content cannot be made fully accessible, a notice is placed on the webpage and a contact is available for alternate formats.  Alignment with CHEO Policy – Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (No. 225) | Director, RI Communications |
| 12 | Educational and training resources and materials, etc. (AODA 2001 O.Reg 191/11 s.15) | Following options are available:   * Course materials in large print format. * Close captioning on virtual meetings * PDF versions of most eLearning workshops. * Voice over narration for some e- learning modules. * Ability to accommodate for increased visibility requirements in classroom training. * Recording of sessions for review with transcript mode activated on some internal webinars.   Alignment with CHEO Policy - Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (Policy No. 225)  Next review date by CHEO is 2027 | Manager, Organizational Development & Learning CHEO  Director, RI Human Resources  Education Coordinator, CHEO RI |

#### Employment Standards

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|  | **Regulation Section** | **Compliance Action (ongoing reviews)** | **Responsible lead/team** |
| 14 | Recruitment General (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 22) | Communicated by adding section to all job postings that individual can request information in a required accessible format. | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 15 | Recruitment, assessment, or selection process (AODA, 2005, O. Reg.  191/11, s. 23) | Information is included in all job postings and in both official languages.  If an applicant requests accommodation, the Hiring Manager will consult with CHEO RI Human Resources who will consult with applicant and provide accommodation that considers the individual’s needs. | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 16 | Notice to successful applicants (AODA, 2005,  O. Reg. 191/11, s.24 | As part of the CHEO RI’s New Hire Package, information about various policies and procedures, including accommodation, is provided. | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 17 | Informing Employees of Supports (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 25) | Employee accessibility supports addressed in Accessibility Policy and Occupational Health & Wellness (OHW), Health and Safety, in addition to initial Health Review, and letter of offer.  These inform employees to identify needs to OHW who can then work with manager and/or HR as appropriate to develop individualized plan. | Director, RI Human Resources  RI Health & Safety Manager  Occupational Health and Wellness (OHW), CHEO |
| 18 | Accessible formats and communication support for employees (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s.  26) | Individual requests are addressed as needed on a case-by-case basis to provide the requested information in the most appropriate format.  Alignment with CHEO Policy – Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (Policy No. 225). | Director, RI Human Resources  Director, RI Communications |
| 19 | Workplace emergency response information (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 27) | Accessibility Policy: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (Policy No. 225) informs staff with disabilities to communicate their needs to OHW so individualized plans can be developed as required.  Emergency Preparedness (EP) manual available on intranet, and staff may request any information in a more accessible format, if needed.  The Emergency Management Framework for the CHEO RI is available on the intranet and staff may request it in a more accessible format, if needed.  Workplace emergency response information and staff responsibilities addressed in CHEO Accessibility policy (Policy No. 225) – information available in desired format upon request. | RI Manager, Health & Safety  CHEO Manager, Occupational Safety |
| 20 | Documented individual accommodation plans (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11 s.28 | OHW policy (Early and Safe Return to Work Accommodation Policy (No. 095) updated with accessibility clause in health and safety program. Accommodation plans developed case by case and in conjunction with the RI when Research employee, volunteer or learner is involved. | Director, RI Human Resources  RI Health & Safety Manager  CHEO Manager, Occupational Health |
| 21 | Return to work process (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 29) | Policy in place for employees to return to work.  Early and Safe Return to Work Accommodation Policy (095) | Manager, Occupational Health Director, RI Human Resources  RI Health & Safety Manager |
| 22 | Performance Management (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11,  s.30) | Commitment to develop accommodation plans on a case-by-case basis as needed. | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 23 | Career development and advancement (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s.31) | Commitment by HR and OHW to work collaboratively on a case-by-case basis as per our duty to accommodate. | Director, RI Human Resources |
| 24 | Redeployment (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s.32) | Early and Safe Return to Work Accommodation Policy updated with accessibility clause in health and safety program. | Manager, Occupational Health  Director, RI Human Resources |

#### Transportation Standard

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|  | **Regulation Section** | **Compliance Action** | **Responsible lead/team** |
| 25 | Public sector  organizations – | CHEO RI does not transport patients.  CHEO’s Accessibility Policy describes accessible transportation – example: | N/A CHEO RI  CHEO Director, Facilities, Capital  Planning and Strategic |
|  | requirement for | Vans are used for YouthNet and Healthy |  |
|  | accessible vehicles | Active Living outdoor trips – while they |  |
|  | (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. | are not wheelchair accessible, special |  |
|  | 191/11, s. 76) | arrangements are made upon request. |  |

#### Design of Public Spaces/Built Standard

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|  | **Regulation Section** | **Compliance Action (ongoing commitment)** | **Responsible lead/team** |
| 26 | Outdoor public use eating areas: application and general requirements  (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 80.16,- 80.17; O.  Reg. 413/12 s. 6) | Commitment to accessibility in redesign or new construction. | CHEO Director, Facilities, Capital Planning and Strategic Sourcing  CHEO RI Director of Operations |
| 27 | Outdoor play spaces requirements (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 80.18-80.20, O. Reg. 413/12 s. 6) | Commitment to accessibility in redesign or new construction. | CHEO Director, Facilities, Capital Planning and Strategic Sourcing  CHEO RI Director of Operations |
| 28 | Exterior paths of travel  (AODA, 2005, O. Reg. 191/11, s. 80.21-80.29, O. Reg. 413/12 s. 6) | Any new path or majorly redeveloped path should meet accessibility standards. Does not apply to anything built for recreational experience or regulated by Ontario’s building code. | CHEO Director, Facilities, Capital Planning and Strategic Sourcing  CHEO RI Director of Operations |
| 29 | Accessible parking   * Application, off-street parking * Access aisles * Minimum number and type of accessible parking spaces * Signage * On-street parking spaces   (AODA, 2005, O. Reg 413/12 s. 6) | CHEO exceeds current legal standards.  All new or majorly renovated parking areas should be made accessible. | CHEO Director, Facilities, Capital Planning and Strategic Sourcing  CHEO Manager, Security and Parking  CHEO RI Health & Safety Manager  CHEO RI Director of Operations |

#### Customer Service

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|  | **Regulation Section** | **Compliance Action (ongoing commitment)** | **Responsible lead/team** |
| 30 | Establishment of polices (Reg. 165/16 s.16) & use of service animals and support persons (Reg 165/16 s.16) | Customer Service Guidelines developed at CHEO RI. Guide addresses use of service animals and support persons.  Used in conjunction with CHEO Customer Service Policy 218. | Director RI Human Resources  Director, Office of I-IDEAS |
| 31 | Notice of Temporary Disruption (Reg. 165/16 s.16) | CHEO policy Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO Policy 225. | Director of RI Operations  Chief Building and Planning Officer |
| 32 | Feedback Process (Reg. 165/16 s. 16) | Wide range of feedback options available. Feedback section on CHEO RI external website. | Director of Human Resources |

# Communication of Accessibility Plan

The CHEO RI ensures our Accessibility Plan is shared with employees, volunteers, learners, and the community. We encourage feedback and identification of issues and barriers so they can be addressed.

## Internal Audience

* Informing all leaders and managers within the organization of the availability of the most recent Accessibility Plan.
* Posting the Accessibility Plan on the CHEO RI’s intranet site, which enables all employees and learners to consult or refer to the plan.
* Providing training and awareness about the plan and the CHEO RI’s commitment to accessibility, including updates via internal communication channels.
* Ensuring leaders are equipped with information regarding AODA and take appropriate training.
* Providing resources and material on intranet.

## External Audience

* Posting of the most recent Accessibility Plan on the CHEO RI web site, to ensure that patients, families, interested in or currently participating in research at CHEO, and the community at large have access to the plan, with an opportunity to express concerns or provide feedback on issues of accessibility.

# Feedback

The CHEO RI recognizes the importance of obtaining feedback from staff, learners, volunteers, patients, and families on ways in which the CHEO RI can continue to render itself accessible. We encourage feedback and welcome you to email [RIaccessibility@cheo.on.ca](mailto:RIaccessibility@cheo.on.ca)

Accessible formats of this document are available upon request.

# Appendix: CHEO & the CHEO RI Accessibility-related Policies and Resources

* + Accessibility: Providing a Barrier-Free Environment at CHEO (Policy No. 225)
  + CHEO Library Internal Policy: Accessibility
  + The CHEO RI Customer Service Guide
  + Customer Service: Providing Services to People with Disabilities (Policy No. 218)
  + Early and safe return to work accommodation (Policy No. 095)
  + Emergency information sheet (for the general public)
  + Emergency Preparedness Manual (Available internally on CHEOnet)
  + Guide to providing accessible customer service (internal webpage)
  + Initial Health Review (Policy No 94)
  + Mandatory Training Policy, the CHEO RI (ADM-026)
  + Occupational Health and Safety Policy Statement (Policy No. 300)
  + Parking (Policy No. 313)
  + Procurement - Equipment, Supplies and Services (Policy No. 306)
  + Recruitment and Selection at CHEO-OCTC (Policy No. 303)
  + Service Animals (does not apply to Pet Therapy Animals) (Policy No 219)