

# **Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy**

## **1. Purpose**

The policy defines the requirements and processes for Merrithew™ compliance with applicable AODA guidelines. The aim is to benefit the full range of persons with disabilities, whether a person's disability is apparent or not, everyone should be treated equally.

Merrithew shall, at all times, make available its services and goods to persons with disabilities in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service prescribed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, as amended.

## **2. Policy**

To this end, Merrithew has adopted a written policy entitled Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy (hereinafter referred to as "Policy").

The policy applies to all employees on behalf of Merrithew.

## **3. Accessibility Requirements**

### **a. Customer Service Standard**

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service came into effect in 2008 and were implemented by Merrithew in January 2012. In 2017, the Customer Service Policy has been revised to include changes that outline what the public may expect of Merrithew and ensures compliance within AODA legislation. The policy is intended to support employees, instructors, and other groups in their interactions with the public on behalf of Merrithew. The Customer Service Policy is available at our website at ([www.merrithew.com/support/accessibility/customer-service](http://www.merrithew.com/support/accessibility/customer-service)).

### **b. Employment Standards**

When requested, we will accommodate persons with disabilities within reason. If needed, Merrithew will provide customized workplace emergency information to employees who have a disability. We are committed to providing the customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request.

Merrithew will inform all employees of its policies and any updates used to support people with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that

take into account an employee's accessibility needs. This particular information shall be provided to new Merrithew employees after they begin their employment and at any time throughout their employment as needed.

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirement under the Ontario's Human Rights Code in relation to accommodating individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. Merrithew has ensured that the following aspects comply with this standard:

- Recruitment and Selection – Merrithew shall notify employees, potential applicants and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities during the recruitment process. In addition, Merrithew will notify job applicants when they are selected to participate in further assessment that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used in the selection process.
- Successful Applications – Merrithew will ensure that when making offers of employment, we will notify the successful applicant that policies for accommodating employees with disabilities are in place and available.

Merrithew has a written process for the development of documented Individual Accommodation Plans for employees with disabilities. IAPs shall include any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided, individualized workplace emergency response information, and shall identify any other accommodation that is to be provided either on a temporary or permanent basis, within reason.

Merrithew will maintain a documented return to work process for 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 outline the steps that Merrithew will take to facilitate the return to work.

#### c. Training

Merrithew will provide training to employees and instructors who provide goods and services on behalf of Merrithew on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities. Training will be provided on an ongoing basis and whenever changes are made to the policies, procedures and practices or plans. A record will be kept of the Merrithew employees and instructors who have received training, including the dates when training was provided and a summary of the content provided of the training. All new employees and instructors will receive training as part of their orientation at Merrithew.

#### d. Information and Communication Standard

We are committed to meeting and maintaining the communication needs of people with disabilities, within reason. When asked, Merrithew will provide the information and communication materials in accessible formats or with communication supports to those individuals, within reason. This includes publicly available information about our goods, services and facilities, as well as publicly available emergency information.

Merrithew will consult with people with disabilities to determine their needs, and work with those individuals to find a suitable solution.

Merrithew shall ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

Under the Information and Communication Standard, the entire website ([www.merrithew.com](http://www.merrithew.com)) was updated to be compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A. Merrithew will continue to review and update the website to ensure we continue to be compliant with the WCAG 2.0 Level A.

In addition, we will ensure that Merrithew website and web content are in complete compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA by January 1, 2021 as required.

e. Design of Public Spaces Standard

Merrithew will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to their public spaces.

However, Merrithew is not required to retrofit public spaces to meet the requirements. Merrithew is not required to alter its public spaces if it has no plans to do so.

For further information on this, or other standards, please see Human Resources.

V-11.15.2017