

Policy Number: ORG.06.01	
Title: Accessibility	
Section: Organizational	
Sub-Section: 06 - Accessibility	
Version #: 3	
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Policy Owner: Senior Leadership	
Approval Authority: Executive Director	Approval Date: Jun 26, 2026
Next Review Date: Jun 26, 2030	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline expectations for meeting the requirements of *Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to:

- All employees, students, and any individuals acting on behalf of the organization including persons involved in policy development
- All programs and services delivered by Fourcast
- All interactions with service users, participants, and members of the public
- All employment practices and workplace environments

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Statement of Commitment

- 3.1.1 Four Counties Addiction Services Team (Fourcast) is committed to providing an inclusive, accessible, and barrier-free environment for all individuals, including persons with disabilities, including:

- a) Respecting the dignity and independence of people with disabilities;
- b) Providing equitable access to programs, services, and employment;
- c) Identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility; and
- d) Embedding accessibility into organizational policies, practices, and decision-making.

3.1.2 Fourcast will maintain a document that summarizes Fourcast's accessibility policies (see Appendix A) and post this information on Fourcast's website. Upon request, Fourcast will provide a copy of this document to any person.

3.1.3 Fourcast will file an *Accessibility Compliance Report* every three (3) years with the Ontario Government to confirm that the organization is actively meeting mandatory accessibility standards.

3.2 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

3.2.1 Fourcast will maintain a multi-year accessibility plan outlining strategies to prevent and remove barriers and to meet requirements under *Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards*.

3.3 Accessibility Training

3.3.1 Fourcast will ensure that training on the requirements of the accessibility standards and *Ontario Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities is provided to all employees, students, and other Fourcast representatives delivering services or participating in policy development.

3.4 Accessible Information and Communications Standards

3.4.1 Fourcast will ensure that all information and communications processes are developed and delivered in ways that proactively identify, remove, and

prevent barriers for persons with disabilities, and ensure equitable access to information for all individuals.

- 3.4.2 Fourcast will maintain processes for receiving and responding to feedback in accordance with policies *ORG.11.06 Service User and Community Feedback & Complaints* and *HR.13.21 Employee Feedback*. The availability of accessible formats and communications supports upon request will be noted as part of communication of feedback processes.

3.5 **Accessible Design**

- 3.5.1 Fourcast will incorporate accessibility design, criteria, and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so and rationale is documented.
- 3.5.2 Where feasible, Fourcast will consult with persons with disabilities when designing or redesigning programs, services, or physical spaces.

3.6 **Accessible Employment Standards**

- 3.6.1 Fourcast will use inclusive and barrier-free employment practices and maintain related procedures. Accessibility is embedded across all stages of employment, including recruitment, accommodation, performance management, career development, and workplace safety.

3.7 **Accessible Customer Service Standards**

- 3.7.1 Fourcast will maintain policy *ORG.06.02 Accessible Customer Service Standards* to govern how the organization provides services to persons with disabilities.

4.0 **DEFINITIONS**

Accessibility: The design of products, devices, services, policies, or environments for people with disabilities.

Accessible Formats: May included but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in society, including attitudinal, communication, physical, policy, technological, or systemic barriers.

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

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.

Disability: A physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities. AODA uses the same definition of disability as the *Human Rights Code*:

- a) Any degree of 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*.

Information: Includes data, facts, and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital, or images, and that conveys meaning.

Persons with Disabilities: Individuals that have a disability defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees

- Participate in required accessibility training.
- Follow accessibility policies and procedures.
- Identify and report accessibility barriers or concerns.
- Respond to requests from service users for information in accessible formats and communication supports.
- Consult with service users requesting accessibility accommodations or supports, as required.

Human Resources

- Support the integration of accessibility into onboarding and orientation processes.
- Monitor compliance with accessibility training requirements and follow up on overdue training.
- Coordinate and support accessible employment practices, including recruitment, accommodation, individualized workplace emergency plans, and return-to-work processes.
- Maintain documentation related to employee accommodations.
- Provide guidance to managers on accessibility requirements under AODA and the Human Rights Code.

Managers

- Ensure accessibility considerations are incorporated into program design, service delivery, and communications.
- Ensure procurement within their area considers accessibility requirements, where applicable.
- Respond to and facilitate requests for accessible formats and communication supports in a timely manner.
- Consult with individuals requesting accommodations to determine appropriate supports.
- Identify and escalate accessibility barriers that cannot be resolved at the program level.

Communication Coordinator

- Ensure all public-facing communications (including website content, publications, and digital materials) meet accessibility standards, including WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements.
- Coordinate the development and dissemination of accessible formats and communication supports upon request, in collaboration with relevant departments.
- Ensure public communications include notification that accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request.
- Support the posting, maintenance, and accessibility of the multi-year accessibility plan on the organization's website.
- Review and update communication templates, tools, and platforms to ensure accessibility requirements are embedded.
- Collaborate with program areas to ensure accessibility is integrated into communications related to programs, services, and public engagement.
- Support accessible feedback processes by ensuring multiple, accessible channels are available for receiving public and service user feedback.
- Monitor emerging accessibility standards and best practices related to communications and digital content and recommend improvements.
- Identify and report accessibility barriers related to communications and digital platforms.

Senior Leadership

- Ensure the development, implementation, and public posting of the multi-year accessibility plan.
- Monitor organizational compliance with accessibility standards and address identified gaps.
- Ensure processes are in place for receiving, documenting, and responding to accessibility feedback.
- Promote a culture of accessibility and inclusion across the organization.
- Ensure accessibility considerations are integrated into strategic planning and organizational decision-making.
- File an Accessibility Compliance Report every three years.
- Act as policy owner and review/revise every four (4) years or as required.

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 Accessibility Training

6.1.1 All new employees, students, and contracted workers will be trained during orientation, and will be completed within their first 3 days of work with Fourcast.

6.1.2 Employees will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices, and procedures, and any revisions to *AODA* or the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* regulation.

6.1.3 Training will include:

- a) A review of this policy and related accessibility policies and practices, including *ORG.06.02 Accessible Customer Service Standards*;
- b) The purpose and objectives of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the requirements of the customer service standards in the accompanying regulations;

- c) How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- d) How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person;
- e) How to use equipment or devices available on Fourcast premises or that the organization otherwise provides, that may help persons with disabilities access services;
- f) What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Fourcast's goods and services; and
- g) How the *Ontario Human Rights Code* works with *AODA* to protect people with disabilities from discrimination and ensure they can participate fully and equally in society.

6.1.4 Human Resources will keep records of all training provided under *AODA* and accompanying regulations, and the Human Rights Code, including the dates on which the training was provided.

6.2 **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

6.2.1 The Fourcast website will conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA, but is not required to conform with:

- a) Success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live); and
- b) Success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded).

6.2.2 Public information will include a notification that accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request.

6.2.3 When information is requested in an accessible format or with communication supports, employees, managers, or departments, as appropriate, will:

- a) Consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support;
- b) Provide the information in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- c) At a cost no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

6.2.4 If the information or communications requested are unconvertible to an alternative format (because it is not technically feasible or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available), a Fourcast representative will provide the person requesting the information with:

- a) An explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) A summary of unconvertible information or communications.

6.3 **Accessible Design**

6.3.1 All procurement of goods, services, or facilities will include accessibility criteria and features wherever practicable.

6.3.2 When comparing vendors or products, employees will give preference to goods/services that meet recognized accessibility standards.

6.3.3 When constructing, redeveloping, or significantly renovating spaces, Fourcast will incorporate accessible design features in accordance with applicable legislation (e.g. AODA, Ontario Building Code).

6.3.4 Accessibility will be considered early in project planning, not retrofitted where available.

6.3.5 Accessibility will be considered for:

- a) Entrances, paths of travel, and waiting areas;
- b) Washrooms and common areas; and
- c) Service counters and program spaces.

6.4 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

6.4.1 Senior Leadership will review and update the multi-year accessibility plan at least once every five (5) years. The plan will reflect input from employees, students, and service users.

6.4.2 The multi-year accessibility plan will be posted on Fourcast's website.

6.4.3 Fourcast will provide the plan in an accessible format upon request.

7.0 RELATED INFORMATION

Policies

- HR.13.01 Terms and Conditions of Employment
- HR.13.02 Internal Recruitment
- HR.13.03 External Recruitment
- HR.13.06 Employee Orientation and Onboarding
- HR.13.08 Confidentiality
- HR.13.11 Workplace Accommodations
- HR.13.21 Employee Feedback
- ORG.06.02 Accessible Customer Service Standards
- ORG.07.01 Communications Principles
- ORG.07.03 Public Information
- ORG.07.04 Fourcast Website

ORG.11.06 Service User and Community Feedback and Complaints

PRG.01.02 Service User Rights and Responsibilities

Forms

Complaint and Feedback Form

Orientation Checklist

Reference Documents or Resources

Appendix A: Commitment to Accessibility

Accessibility Compliance Report

Fourcast Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

[Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, W3C World Wide Web Consortium
Recommendation 11 December 2008, Level A & Level AA Success Criteria.](#)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards

O. Reg. 332/12: Building Code Act, 1992

8.0 REVIEW HISTORY

Version #	Date Mmm DD, YYYY	Description of Review or Revision
1	Nov 30, 2015	New policy.
2	Oct 31, 2023	Reviewed and revised.
3	Jun 26, 2026	Reviewed and revised. Formerly <i>HR 6.06c Information and Communications Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.</i>

Fourcast's Commitment to Accessibility

Fourcast is committed to eliminating or reducing barriers for service users, employees, students, and members of the public who enter our premises, access our information, and use our services. We respect and uphold the applicable standards set forth under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and *Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards*.

Report an Accessibility Concern

If a person with a disability is prevented from accessing a Fourcast service, program, facility, or information, please use this form to let us know: [Complaint and Feedback Form](#)

All accessibility-related reports are collected in a central system for review and analysis. This helps Fourcast identify, remove, and prevent barriers in a timely way and supports ongoing accessibility improvements.

We are committed to making the feedback process accessible for people of all abilities. Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. Please contact us if you require assistance to report an accessibility concern.

For More Information

- [AODA](#)
- Fourcast's Accessibility policy (link to ORG.06.01)
- Fourcast's Accessible Customer Service Standards (link to ORG.06.02)
- Fourcast's Multi-Year Plan (link to current multi-year plan)

Fourcast will make written information and other forms of communication accessible upon request. To request these policies in an alternate format that is appropriate for your needs, please contact us.

Contact Information

Email: fourcast@fourcast.ca Phone: 1-800-461-1909