

Therapeutic Riding Association of Ottawa-Carleton



Policy Title: Accessibility Policy

Policy Type: Board Policy – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Purpose:

This policy sets out the commitment of the Therapeutic Riding Association of Ottawa-Carleton Inc. to advance a more accessible Ontario by complying with and exceeding the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA).

Background:

The AODA aims to create a more accessible Ontario by identifying and, to the extent possible, preventing and eliminating barriers experienced by people with disabilities. The related regulation establishes general requirements within five accessibility standards. Four of the accessibility standards are relevant for TROtt, specifically:

1. Customer Service
2. Information and Communications
3. Employment
4. Design of Public Spaces

This policy sets out TROtt's approach to accessibility through continuous improvement to our programs, practices and facilities in order to accommodate participants, volunteers and staff with varying needs and abilities. It should be read in conjunction with our policy ***EDI-2 Statement of Commitment to Accessibility***.

1) Customer Service

a) Training

Training is provided on the requirements of the AODA, on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 (IASR), and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities to:

- (a) all employees and volunteers
- (b) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- (c) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization.

We will maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

b) Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

c) Service Animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties. Service animals are not permitted in the paddocks.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest from a recognized charity. When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for a letter from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded
- discuss with the participant another way of providing goods, services or facilities

d) Support Persons

A person with a disability who needs to be accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises and no fee will be charged for the support person.

e) New or Adapted Programs

Annually we will endeavour to offer new and/or adapted programs to provide additional opportunities for participation for our existing participants and/or others with diverse disabilities not currently accessing our programs.

2) Information and Communications

a) Methods of Communication

When communicating with a person with a disability, all employees, contractors, volunteers shall communicate in a manner that is appropriate, respectful and takes into account their disability. We will work with the person with disabilities and/or their caregiver to determine what method of communication works for them.

We have a process for receiving and responding to feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. We aim to respond to such feedback within five business days. Our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

When asked, we will do our best to provide information about our organization, its services and our customer service processes, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and at no additional cost.

b) Website and Social Media

We will annually improve accessibility standards for our website and social media.

c) Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, TROtt will:

- i. Send a notice to participants promptly via email, phone call and/or text.
- ii. Post a notice in a conspicuous location accessible to the public (currently at the front left of the barn), and
- iii. Post a notice on our website.

The notices at (i), (ii) and (iii) above will explain the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

3) Employment

We seek to increase opportunities for people with disabilities to volunteer with or be employed by our agency.

We notify employees and job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

We notify existing employees annually and as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability, that accommodation for disabilities are available.

We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation.

4) Design of Public Spaces

We will annually improve the accessibility standards of our facilities.

Administration of the Policy:

1. The TROtt Board of Directors will establish an annual Accessibility Plan that will outline the strategy to prevent and remove barriers, recognizing that this is a multi-year process of continuous improvement.
2. The TROtt Board of Directors will include in the annual budget, the funds necessary to implement the annual plan.
3. The Executive Director will be responsible for implementing the plan, and for reporting semi-annually on progress.
4. Annual Accessibility Plans and Reports on Annual Progress will be posted on TROtt's website.

Created: June 11, 2024

Approved by the Board of Directors: June 11, 2024

Last Revision: August 19, 2025