



Bold Canine Inc. Accessibility (AODA) Policy

November 2023

Intent

Bold Canine Inc. provides accessible **customer service, information and communications, employment, and public spaces** to everyone, including persons with disabilities, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and its associated regulations.

This policy sets out the standards and responsibilities of all staff for providing accessible information and communications, employment, provision of goods and services, and public spaces.

Statement of Commitment

Bold Canine is committed to providing an accessible environment for all clients, employees, job applicants, suppliers, and visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, use our services, or work with us.

As an organization, we respect and comply with the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and its associated regulations. We strive to provide an accessible and welcoming environment for everyone by identifying and removing barriers in our workplace and ensuring that new barriers are not created. We ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities. We are committed to meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities in a timely and integrative manner that respects their dignity and independence.

We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility when the need arises and meeting our accessibility requirements under *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario's accessibility laws.

Definitions

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

Communication supports: Include but are not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Guide dog: A dog trained as a guide for a blind person that has completed a training program at a designated training facility set out in the *Guide Dogs Regulation*.

Service animal: An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators, such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- The person provides documentation from a designated regulated health professional college confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.



Support person: In relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies them in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods, services, and facilities. Accessible formats: Includes but not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Communication supports: Includes but not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communication.

Redeployment: The reassignment of an employee to another department or job in the company as an alternative to layoff when their job or department has been eliminated by the company.

Redeveloped: A planned significant alteration to a public space. It does not include maintenance activities, environmental mitigation, or environmental restoration.

Guidelines

This commitment is demonstrated in the areas of:

Communication - We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that consider their needs and disability. When requested, we will provide information about our organization and its services in accessible formats or with communication supports. This includes but is not limited to our feedback process and all publicly available safety and emergency information, such as evacuation procedures and floor plans.

We also ensure our website and web content meets the standards required by the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* to enable accessible information and communications online. The public is informed of the availability of accessible formats and communication support by our website. Requests for accessible formats or communication support should be submitted to the HR Manager, verbally or by email. We will consult with the individual making the request to ensure a suitable format or communication support is provided. Accessible formats and communication support are provided in a timely manner and at a cost no more than the original format.

Communication Exceptions - These communication standards do not apply to products and product labels; unconvertible information or communications; or information that we do not control through a contractual relationship.

Unconvertible Information or Communications - Information or communications are classified as unconvertible where it is not technically practicable to convert them, or the technology required to make the conversion is not readily available. If we determine that information or communications are unconvertible, we provide the individual who made the request with an explanation as to why and a summary of the information or communications.

Customer service – We allow customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways and at their own pace when accessing goods, services, and facilities, as long as this does not present a health and safety risk; using alternative methods of access when necessary to ensure that customers with disabilities have



access to the same goods, services, and facilities in a similar manner: taking into account individual accommodation needs when providing goods and services; and communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

Assistive devices - Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a health and safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, the HR Manager should be informed so that other reasonable measures can be put in place to ensure the access of goods and services. Where applicable, we will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

Use of service animals - We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. All are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. Every effort will be made to ensure that any off-site event venues are compliant with our commitment regarding service animals.

Support persons - We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter our premises or off-site event venues with his or her support person.

Billing - We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all our customers. Invoices will be provided in alternative format upon request. We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

Employment - We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities with respect to recruitment, employment, training, career development and career progression as practicable.

Hiring - Accommodations are available from the beginning of the recruitment process. Information regarding the availability of accommodation is included in all job postings. Applicants selected to participate in an assessment, or the selection process are informed that accommodations are available upon request. Where accommodation is requested, we will consult with the applicant and provides or arranges for suitable accommodation that meets their individual needs. Successful applicants are made aware of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when an offer of employment is made.

Accessible Workplace Information - We ensure that new employees are aware of the policies and supports available for employees with disabilities as soon as reasonably possible after beginning employment and all employees are informed of any updates to existing policies. We have the following policies to support employees with disabilities:

- Accommodation Policy
- Return to Work Policy & Procedures
- Individual Accommodation Plan



Upon request, we provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for employees with disabilities regarding information needed to perform their job and other information that is generally available to all employees in the workplace. Individualized workplace emergency response information is also provided to an employee with a disability where necessary. An employee who requires workplace information in an accessible format or with communication support should contact the HR Manager. We will consult with the employee making the request to determine the best way to provide the accessible format or communication support.

Individual Accommodations – We create and document individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities upon request. An employee with a disability who requires an individual accommodation plan should inform the HR Manager. These plans include:

- Information regarding accessible formats and communication support, where requested.
- Individualized workplace emergency response information, where necessary; and
- Details of any other accommodation provided.

When an employee is absent from work due to a disability and requires accommodation to return to work, the company will develop and document individual return-to-work processes.

Performance Management and Career Development – The accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are considered in all aspects of the employment relationship, including during performance management processes, career development or advancement opportunities, and in the event of redeployment. Individual accommodation plans are consulted, where they exist, as part of these process.

Facilities - We are committed to ensuring that our premises and related services are welcoming and accessible to people with disabilities. As practicable, we are willing to consider alterations to our facilities to accommodate people with disabilities. A notice of temporary disruption will be provided in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Accessible parking - We will ensure that any newly constructed or redeveloped off-street parking facilities provide standard parking spaces and wider parking spaces with signage identifying them as van accessible. Access aisles will be provided for all accessible parking spaces to ensure individuals can enter and exit their vehicles. Accessible parking spaces will be designated for the use of people with disabilities and will be marked with an accessible permit parking sign. The number of and location of accessible parking spaces will be determined in accordance with the IASR.

Constructing new facilities - To ensure services are accessible to individuals who use mobility aids or mobility assistive devices, we will comply with the requirements set out in the IASR when constructing new service counters (including replacing them) and fixed queuing guides; and constructing new or developing waiting areas.

Training

We are committed to training our employees in Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of *the Ontario Human Rights Code* that relate to persons with disabilities. We will train our employees on accessibility



as it relates to their specific roles. Training is developed and delivered in various formats when applicable and delivered as soon as practical to all new employees, volunteers, agents, and contractors.

We keep records of the training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees who attended the training. Where required, retraining is provided to ensure compliance with the company's policies and procedures.

Training includes the following:

- The purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the integrated standards.
- The *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
- A review of the requirements of the customer service standards.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- The use of various assistive devices.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Bold Canine's goods and services.
- Bold Canine's policies, practices and procedures relating to the integrated standards. Employees will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices, and procedures.

Feedback

We welcome feedback on how we provide service to persons with disabilities. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns. Bold Canine also welcomes feedback from its employees, customers, visitors, and vendors. If you have questions, concerns, suggestions, or feedback, please contact Jennifer Tutt, Human Resources Manager, at the contact information below:

Jennifer Tutt

Human Resources Manager

9609 Sideroad 17, Erin, ON, N0B 1T0

jen@boldcanine.com

518-833-0800, ext. 201



Acknowledgement and Agreement

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents of this policy. I agree to adhere to this policy and will ensure that employees working under my direction adhere to this policy. I understand that if I violate the rules set forth in this policy, I may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

(Copied to HR files)