

DECO

Accessibility Policy & Procedures

- 2023 -

DECO is committed to excellence and equal access in serving all customers including people with disabilities. We believe in integration and treating people with disabilities in a manner that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We will do so by preventing and removing any barriers possible, in compliance with the requirements under the *Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) and Ontario's Accessibility laws. DECO is also committed to meeting the current and any future obligations under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (The Code) or any other associated law.

Assistive devices

Accessible customer service is often about finding ways around barriers faced by our customers and any employees with disabilities. We will ensure that appointed members of our staff are familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers, selected applicants and employees with disabilities while accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable Health & Safety concern/risk, or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with the disability can access our goods, services or facility.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. How to communicate with a person with a disability will be included in the training of the designated personnel who will be involved with assisting persons with disabilities.

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.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff will ask for documentation from a regulated Health professional for reasons relating to their disability.

Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

DECO Accessibility Program, Practices and Procedures:

In compliance with the current laws and regulations within the AODA and The Ontario Human Rights Code (The Code) DECO will complete the following:

Appoint an “Accessibility Coordination Officer”

DECO will appoint a person who will implement and coordinate the “Accessibility for Disabled Ontarians” program. They will coordinate training, obtain resources required to implement the program and monitor it on an ongoing basis for its effectiveness.

Arrange to receive assistance using DECO Accessibility program

Customers, employees & applicants who have special needs, that would like assistance, through DECO Accessibility program should call the office at (905) 907-0300 and ask for the Accessibility Coordination Officer or email info@decohomes.ca. Most of our office staff will be trained in the program so that the issue of accessibility should not be a problem. Assistance can be provided to access the facility. A meeting room location will be provided, and any additional assistance will be available, as needed. When the call is made requesting assistance, the customer is requested to discuss their needs and how we might be of assistance to this individual.

How we can help

There are many ways we can help in a way that respects and promotes the dignity and independence of a person with disabilities.

We can:

- consult with the person with the disability to understand their needs and arrange/plan a location to meet with the DECO contact person they require to meet.
- answer questions about our Accessibility program.
- physically help carry items into the meeting when a support person is not available.
- remove or arrange to move accessibility hindrances.
- accept valuable feedback from any person(s) to our accessibility program compliance.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption, DECO will notify any registered persons with a disability, of the disruption by either e-mail or telephone. Those people contacted will include those who are registered with us in a list we will maintain, of customers requesting to be updated, in the event of service disruption.

The “**Notice of temporary disruption**” will need to be posted near the front door for individuals who may come to the offices and weren’t contacted. The posted notice should include:

- the reason for the temporary shutdown of services or facility.
- anticipated length of time services will be disrupted.
- who to call for clarification (the Accessibility Coordination Officer will coordinate communication to inquiries).
- a description of an alternate location that may be made available for meeting with this customer.

****Notices shall only be posted at the front door if the disruption is greater than three hours****

The “**Notice of temporary disruption**” will be e-mailed to any individual who is registered with us as needing ongoing special assistance under this program.

Designation of areas suitable for accessibility meeting areas

Certain areas have been appointed as areas that can be used for meetings with individuals with disabilities. DECO has determined the following areas to be prioritized for meetings involving persons with disabilities:

1. Main Boardroom on the ground floor.
2. Seated area in front of the reception area at main entrance of the building.
3. Lunchroom
4. Meetings can be scheduled at an offsite location should all parties feel this is better suited to assist the individual’s accessibility needs.
5. Other meeting styles can be considered to assist accessibility. Such alternatives may include phone/Zoom/Teams meetings or e-mails.

Facility systems present at our corporate office:

- A barrier free washroom is available at our main floor & second floor washrooms.
- An accessible parking space is available at the front entrance for those individuals with an accessibility parking permit.
- Our front entrance concrete walkway is ramped.
- Accessible door operators at the front entrance of our building, vestibule entrance & décor studio entrance
- An elevator is available for access to our second floor on the premises.

We have and will continue to train front-line personnel, Safety Officers, and HR/Payroll personnel to identify, welcome and coordinate such individuals needing special assistance.

Training of staff to successfully facilitate DECO Accessibility program in providing assistance and access for Disabled Ontarians

Individuals who work or potentially could work at the front desk or a customer/public facing position will be required to complete training of the DECO Accessibility program and the Human Rights Code of Ontario (The Code).

Employees who may potentially meet customers/individuals of special needs will also receive training. We train staff as soon as practicable after being hired. We

maintain records of the training provided including dates of training and the number of people who were trained.

Training to include:

- A review of the DECO policy and program for *Accessibility for Disabled Ontarians*.
- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- How to assist a disabled customer in the event of an emergency at the offices of DECO.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our offices or personnel.
- The Human Rights of Ontario Code.
- Changes or improvements made to our “Accessibility of Customer Service” program, policy and/or plan.

Feedback process

Customers, applicants, and employees with disabilities, who wish to provide feedback on the way DECO provides goods and services to people with disabilities can communicate directly with the Accessibility Coordination Officer by telephone or e-mail, verbally or send a letter (or note) to the office of DECO. These should be forwarded to the attention of the *Accessibility Coordination Officer*. A prompt response will be provided, and any suggestions will be promptly considered and implemented as required.

The individual can expect to hear back in 3 working days. This will provide sufficient time to investigate any complaints, seek solutions, and provide recommendations (if applicable).

Arranging to receive a copy of the DECO Accessibility policy/plan/program.

Employees, applicants, and customers may request a copy of the DECO Accessibility policy/plan/program. The information is available in various formats including:

- Large print pdf format (sent as attachment in an e-mail)
- Large print hard copy/paper printout available at the front desk or by mail, upon request.
- Audio version of the pdf file can be available whereby the plan/program is able to be heard by a visually impaired customer.
- DECO “Accessibility policy/ plan/program” can be discussed or summarized by speaking with the Accessibility Coordination Officer.

Construction Site Accessibility

Every Construction site is/will be unique and will need to be adapted as needed. Trailer adaptation for access may require a ramp that can be put in place as needed or a fixed ramp built to accommodate, should we have a new home purchaser with such an accessibility requirement on the project.

Due to health and safety regulations and concerns, access to any of our construction sites need to be restricted to persons or visitors who are trained and authorized to be on a construction site with the correct PPE. The primary meeting place for construction site meetings will be limited to an onsite trailer, our Head Office, or any other offsite meeting room that would be convenient and appropriate to a disabled persons requirement.

On site, personnel will require accessibility training. This will be provided by the Accessibility Coordination Officer using our company's Accessibility Procedure.

Training for Construction Site Accessibility to include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of our "Accessibility of Customer Service" program.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to assist a disabled customer in the event of an emergency on a construction site of DECO
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing a site area or the personnel of DECO
- Insight into the thought process & anxieties of a disabled person.
- Field workers involved in the accessibility of an authorized person will also be trained when changes or improvements are made to our Accessibility policy, program, or plan as it evolves on the construction site.

Employment:

We notify employees, job applicants and the public that accommodation can be made during recruitment and hiring. We will notify selected applicants and any successful applicants that accommodation is available upon request. We will consult with the individual when arranging for suitable accommodation in a manner that considers the accessibility needs due to the disability. If needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help a disabled employee in an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We have a written process for employees who have been absent from work due

to a disability and require disability-related accommodation to return to work through our modified work duties program.

Modification of this or other policy or programs pertaining to accessibility of an employee, applicant, or customer with disability needs

Any policy and/or procedure of DECO that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of a person with disabilities will be modified or removed once identified. This procedure will be reviewed annually and modified as required. We will continue to monitor any potential barriers for people with disabilities on an ongoing basis and refresh existing or create new ways of doing things as appropriate and in line with the requirements of current AODA requirements and *The Code*.

DECO

OUR GOAL

DECO aims to respect and promote the ideals of dignity and independence of individuals with accessibility requirements. We believe that no one's opportunities should suffer due to limitations placed on them by a disability. We will continue to be sensitive and improve our support to any of our customers and employees with accessibility requirements.

I, _____ have read the DECO Accessibility
(Please print your name)

Policy and Procedures and have completed the required training on this day

MM/DD/YY

Signature _____

Your completed training certificate and this signature page will be held in the employees file in compliance with the requirements of the AODA Act 2005