

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

Statement of Commitment

HVE Healthcare Assessments is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for all stakeholders including our clients, persons served, employees, job applicants, suppliers, and any visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, or use our services. We uphold the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity, and comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), its associated standards and regulations, and the CARF 2025 Section 1.L standards.

Purpose

This document outlines HVE's responsibilities and strategies to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to accessibility. It aligns with both AODA and CARF standards, ensuring inclusive service delivery.

Guiding Principles

As a provider of independent medical assessments, we aim to exceed client expectations, including for those with visible or non-visible, temporary or permanent disabilities. Our definition of disability aligns with the AODA and Ontario Human Rights Code and includes physical, cognitive, mental, developmental, and learning impairments.

Barrier Categories

HVE assesses and documents barriers through an Accessibility Status Log and reviews them annually. Barriers are identified through staff input, site inspections, and stakeholder engagement.

- Architectural
- Environmental
- Attitudinal
- Financial
- Employment
- Communication
- Technology
- Transportation
- Community Integration

- Any other stakeholder-identified barriers

Accessibility Planning and Review

HVE maintains a multi-year Accessibility Plan. It is reviewed annually by the Accessibility Committee and revised every five years or as needed. Stakeholder input, including from persons with disabilities, is incorporated into each review cycle.

Communication and Assistive Devices

Clients may use personal assistive devices, service animals, or companions during their assessments. Staff must communicate directly with the client unless otherwise directed. Alternate formats such as Braille, large font, or digital text can be provided upon request. HVE ensures that communication preferences are respected and accessible.

- **Service Animals:** This is normally a dog but can be any animal which provides assistance to an individual (i.e., Seeing Eye, mobility assistance, Hearing Ear). As well, an animal may be a 'predictor companion' where a client may suffer from seizures or episodes and the animal provides 'notification' that an incident is approaching.
- **Remedial, Mechanical or Electronic Devices:** These items are but are not limited to canes, walkers, wheelchairs, scooters, text to speech translators and vice versa, magnifiers, and hearing aids.
- **Companions:** Clients may also have companions in attendance that may act as their interpreter (i.e., ASL – American Sign Language), facilitate mobility or generally attend their needs. Please be aware that communication should be directed to the client and not the companion unless specifically requested to do so.

Accommodations Practices and Procedures

Accommodation requirements are typically identified prior to a client's arrival, either during the intake process or via referral. This information is shared discreetly and only on a need-to-know basis, respecting the client's dignity and aligning with HVE's Privacy Policy.

Where needed, consultative professionals may privately inform reception staff about a client's needs to ensure respectful and effective service upon arrival. Understanding these needs helps preserve independence and dignity throughout the assessment process.

Accommodation requests are reviewed by the Accessibility Coordinator within five business days. All requests are documented, and decisions are communicated in writing. If accommodations cannot be provided at a specific site, signage will be posted and the HVE

website will be updated with relevant information and timelines. Where possible, referrals or alternate arrangements will be offered.

Clients may request communications in their preferred format, including email, TTY, text, or through a designated third party. Visually impaired clients may request large-print, digital, or Braille documents. Hearing-impaired individuals are supported with face-to-face interaction, written communication, or interpreters when necessary.

Accessibility of Locations

HVE ensures that all assessment sites are convenient and accessible, with the following features:

- Major street access and proximity to transit
- Free surface parking with designated accessible spots
- Ramp access with railings and automatic door switches
- Elevators for non-ground floor locations
- Visible signage and clear entry points
- Accessible washrooms with appropriate fixtures
- Unobstructed lobbies and assessment rooms
- Flooring in good repair, with minimal or flat transitions
- Doorways and handles suited for wheelchairs and walkers

Compliance is reviewed annually. If accessibility features become temporarily unavailable, signage is posted on-site, and updates are shared via the HVE website.

Fees

There are no fees associated with providing requirements for accommodation in regard to alternate media.

Training

All staff, contractors, and volunteers will receive training on the AODA, Ontario Human Rights Code, and accessibility standards as they relate to individuals with disabilities. Training is delivered during onboarding and updated as roles evolve or policies change. Records of training sessions and participant completion are maintained.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement

HVE welcomes and values feedback about accessibility. Feedback can be submitted through our client satisfaction surveys, directly to staff, or to the Accessibility Coordinator. All feedback

is documented and reviewed quarterly. When applicable, feedback will result in process improvements to better meet accessibility needs.

Review and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with current regulations and CARF standards. Updates may also be made based on stakeholder feedback or audit outcomes.