



PowerStream Inc. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

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Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request.

PowerStream Inc. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Definitions

A **disability** is any degree of physical disability (i.e. blindness, visual impediment, deafness, hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment), a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability, a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, a mental disorder, or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

An **assistive device** is used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07).

A **service animal** is any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability; or a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

A **support person** who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Purpose of the Act

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 is to benefit all Ontarians by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

PowerStream Inc. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

This accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that PowerStream Inc. will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Statement of Commitment

PowerStream Inc. is committed to providing quality service that is accessible to all members of the public we serve. It is PowerStream's goal to ensure that all members of the public receive the same amount and quality of service, regardless of any barriers there may be.

PowerStream's Accessibility Principles

- To support initiatives that work to remove barriers and promote or increase equitable access.
- To promote a healthy, barrier-free work environment where employees can participate fully in all aspects of their job.
- To be a great place to work that is accessible to all employees, associates, customers, stakeholders and people with disabilities.
- To maintain a comprehensive Accessibility Policy, Work Procedure and a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- Through PowerStream's ongoing work, provide a range of accessibility services and support for people with disabilities.
- To ensure that PowerStream's information and communications to employees, associates, customers, and stakeholders are accessible.

Complying with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation

PowerStream has been in compliance with the Accessible Customer Service Standards Regulation since 2012. We continue to ensure that in PowerStream's day-to-day activities, all the requirements of this Regulation are fulfilled and in keeping with the principles of dignity, independence, equality and integration. For example:

- PowerStream ensures that all new employees receive training on the requirements of the Regulation, with particular emphasis on how to serve and communicate with all people.
- The public is encouraged to provide feedback using the "Accessibility" area of PowerStream's website www.PowerStream.ca. All feedback is sent to the appropriate manager for review and any resulting action is kept confidential.

Complying with the Requirements of the Accessible Employment Standards Regulation

PowerStream meets the requirements of Section 27 of the Accessible Employment Standards within the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). Under this section, we are required to provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability. If the employee requires assistance in case of an emergency, and has consented to have information about his or her accommodation needs shared, PowerStream will provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by PowerStream to provide assistance to the employee.

- PowerStream employees have been notified of PowerStream's commitment to work with them to create individual workplace emergency response information.
- A memo is sent once a year to all employees, asking if they have accommodation needs.
- Alternate formats are used if required by specific employees.
- PowerStream's respectful process ensures privacy for people who self-identify as needing accommodation.

PowerStream's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

- This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was created to comply with Section 4 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, which requires large organizations like PowerStream Inc. to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan.

2014 Requirements

A Summary of Accessibility Progress in 2014

In 2014, PowerStream Utilities continued to comply with existing accessibility requirements under both the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). PowerStream is also in compliance with the General Requirements of the IASR to create an accessibility policy for the IASR and PowerStream's first multi-year accessibility plan. In addition, new websites and content on those sites will be WCAG 2.0 Level A compliant.

IASR General Requirements:

Accessibility Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

- A policy for the Customer Service Standard and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation is posted on PowerStream's internal and external websites. Print copies and alternate formats are available upon request.
- PowerStream's commitment to accessibility is stated in its accessibility policy and this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. It includes goals which encompass the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.
- Completion of an Accessibility Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Information and Communication Standard

Accessible Websites and Web Content:

Beginning January 1, 2014, all new internet websites or existing websites underwent a major refresh, and web content on those sites now conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines or WCAG at the 2.0A level.

- Internal expertise has been developed for maintaining on-going accessibility requirements for all internet websites and content.
- PowerStream will contract external website expertise as required.

2015 Requirements

A Summary of Accessibility Progress in 2015

2015 is the year that large organizations like PowerStream must ensure that employees and volunteers are trained on the IASR and Human Rights Code. We must also ensure that PowerStream's feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities and provided in accessible formats and communication supports on request.

IASR General Requirements:

PowerStream provided training by January 1, 2015 on the accessibility standards referred to in this Regulation and on the Human Rights Code. The training targeted every person who deals with members of the public or who participates in developing PowerStream's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to the public; including all associates, contractors and others who provide service on PowerStream's behalf.

- PowerStream will provide the required training to its employees, as appropriate, based on the duties of that employee.
- PowerStream will maintain records of training including the dates and number of people trained.
- New employees and volunteers will receive training on the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation and the Human Rights Code during their orientation period.

Accessible Information and Communications

Feedback Process:

Section 11 of the Standard requires that by January 1, 2015, all of PowerStream's feedback processes be accessible to persons with disabilities. This involves providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communication support upon request. PowerStream must also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication support.

- PowerStream accepts feedback through the Accessibility section on its website, email, or by telephone.
- Alternate formats are available upon request for all feedback forms.

2016 Requirements

A Summary of Accessibility Progress in 2016

By January 1, 2016 all of PowerStream's employment practices must be accessible. While many of PowerStream's existing employment practices already meet requirements under the Accessible Employment Standards, we will ensure that all PowerStream's employment practices throughout the employment life cycle meet the standards of accessibility. We are also required to provide or arrange for information in accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities on request.

Information and Communication Standard

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports:

Section 12 of the IASR requires, by January 1, 2016, that all large organizations provide or arrange for information in accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities on request. PowerStream will ensure that requested information is:

- Provided in a timely manner
- Provided at no extra cost
- Provided following consultation with the person making the request to determine the most appropriate format or support

Accessible Employment:

PowerStream will ensure compliance with the 2012 requirement to provide employees with individualized emergency response plans. New employees with accommodation needs will develop individual emergency accommodation plans with their managers. Revisions will be made to the plans for existing employees if their accommodation needs change.

Other requirements for this Standard came into effect for PowerStream by January 1, 2016. PowerStream will ensure that it continues to meet these requirements and will comply with the intent of this Standard to ensure accessibility is incorporated into the entire employment life cycle.

Recruitment:

In compliance with Sections 22, 23 and 24:

- When inviting candidates for an interview, PowerStream will inquire if applicants required any accommodation during the interview process.
- PowerStream makes every effort to ensure job postings are available electronically. Postings can also be printed upon request.

- PowerStream will notify successful applicants of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when offering employment. This notice will be included in the letter of offer to the successful applicant.

Informing Employees with Disabilities of Available Support:

In compliance with Section 25:

- PowerStream will inform all employees of its policies for supporting employees with disabilities, including providing employment-related accommodations.
- New employees will receive this information during the orientation process.
- All employees will be provided with updated information whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations.
- Employees will be assured that their privacy is respected and that any sharing of information about their accommodation needs will be discussed with them and plans for communication made with their consent.

Accessible Formats and Communication Support for Employees:

In compliance with Section 26:

- PowerStream will consult with employees who have disabilities to provide them with the accessible formats and communication supports they require to do their job effectively.

Individual Accommodation Plans:

In compliance with Section 28, PowerStream will develop written accommodation plans on a case by case basis for employees with disabilities. The following will be considered when developing each plan:

1. The inclusion of an employee requesting accommodation in the development of their individual accommodation plan.
2. Assessing an employee on an individual basis.
3. The role of an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist in determining if and how the accommodation can be achieved.
4. The involvement of a representative from the workplace in the development of the accommodation plan, upon request of the employee.
5. The privacy protection of the employee's personal information.
6. The frequency and manner in which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated.
7. The format of the individual accommodation plan based on the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

All accommodation plans are private. Each plan will include information on accessible formats and communication supports required, individual emergency response requirements and any other accommodation needed.

Return to Work:

In compliance with Section 29:

- PowerStream has a return to work process (Policy 3.35).
- Throughout the process, the Health and Safety team works closely with the employee and his or her manager.
- PowerStream ensures that managers understand the accommodations being made as well as privacy/communication concerns and agreements around return to work accessibility requirements.
- PowerStream formally documents this process in compliance with Section 29 of these standards.

Performance Management and Career Development:

In compliance with Sections 30 and 31:

- PowerStream reviews the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities with regard to performance management and career development – in ways that take their accessibility needs into account, including performance plans in accessible formats as requested.

2017 Requirements

A Summary of Accessibility Progress in 2017

When making major changes to existing public spaces, larger organizations like PowerStream must meet requirements under Section 80 of the IASR related to: exterior paths of travel, off-street parking, public spaces for obtaining information and maintenance of accessible public spaces.

Design of Public Spaces

Exterior Paths of Travel

PowerStream must ensure:

- Outdoor sidewalks and walkways, ramps, stairs and curb ramps follow minimum height requirements.
- Slopes and sidewalks will not exceed maximum ratio requirements.
- The surface area of ramps and stairs will be firm, stable and slip-resistant.

Accessible Parking

PowerStream must ensure that off-street parking provides:

- Wider parking spaces for people who use mobility aids such as wheelchairs.
- Standard-width parking spaces for people who use mobility assistive devices such as canes, crutches and walkers.
- Availability of accessible parking spaces compliant with the total number of existing parking spaces.
- Access aisles to allow persons with disabilities to get in and out of their vehicles.

Obtaining Services

Service Counters:

PowerStream must ensure:

- At least one service counter is accessible to people who use mobility aids.
- Service counters are low enough for someone sitting in a mobility aid.
- Service counters have sufficient clear space for someone sitting in a mobility aid, including space for the person's knees.
- Accessible service counters are identified with accessible signage.

Waiting Areas:

PowerStream must ensure:

- Within waiting areas with seating fixed to the floor at least three per cent of seating is accessible to someone using a mobility aid.
- All waiting areas have at least one accessible seating space.

Maintenance

PowerStream must ensure:

- PowerStream's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan includes preventative and emergency maintenance procedures for the accessible parts of PowerStream's public spaces, including posting of regular maintenance schedules and notifying people about alternatives.
- Procedures for handling temporary disruptions in service when an accessible part of PowerStream's public spaces stops working are added to the Plan.

2021 Requirements:

Information and Communications:

Alectra Utilities will ensure by all means necessary that all internet websites and web content conform to WCAG 2.0 level AA (excluding live captioning and audio description).