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	Policy #: 13.1.0
	Policy Owner: Director, Corporate Compliance & Quality

Integrated Accessibility

Statement of Commitment

Lifemark is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are dedicated to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and are committed to promptly meeting the needs of people with disabilities. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the accessibility laws.

Scope

The scope of this policy includes our commitment to accessibility in our customer service and employment standards.

Lifemark is committed to providing inclusive customer service experiences for our clients and others seeking our services.

All workers are expected to comply with the spirit and intent of this policy when providing services to our community or otherwise representing or conducting business on behalf of Lifemark.

Employment Standard

Lifemark is committed to providing a welcoming, respectful, and inclusive environment to our workers and community members with disabilities. Our employment standard will incorporate regulatory requirements and best practices throughout the employment relationship.

Purpose

This policy aims to provide a framework through which Lifemark can meet the needs of people with disabilities following provincial and federal legislation.

Definitions

Lifemark has adopted the following definitions for key terms related to accessibility policies:

Accessibility

The term accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. It describes how widely a service, product, device, or environment is available. Accessibility can be seen as accessing and benefiting from a system, service, product, or environment.


Barrier

Barriers are obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered.

Disability

Ontario’s accessibility law adopts the definition of a disability in the Ontario Human Rights Code. It defines disability broadly:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment,

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deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.

- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- A mental disorder.
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Workers

Worker refers to any person Lifemark pays wages or salary, has control over their assigned work and has the right to control their work. This includes full-time, part-time, seasonal and contract workers. Interns are included in this policy.

Service Animal

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

- It is readily identifiable that the animal is used for reasons related to the person’s disability (such as a guide dog or other animal wearing a vest or harness)
- The person with the service animal provides documentation from a regulated health professional confirming the need for the animal because of a disability.

See the [Service Animals Policy](#) for more details

Support Person

Support Persons are any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend, who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communications, personal care, or medical needs while accessing goods or services.

See the [Support Persons Policy](#) for more details

POLICY STATEMENT – COMMUNICATION STANDARD

Lifemark is committed to ensuring that communications are available in an accessible, readable, or understandable format for people with disabilities.


Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The company will, upon request, provide any communication in an accessible format or provide communication support in a timely manner that considers the person’s accessibility needs due to disability. The company will further advise the public about accessible formats and communication support availability.

Emergency Procedure, Plans or Public Safety Information

The company will, upon request, provide any emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication support.

Policy Statement – Customer Service Standard

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Lifemark is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code, respecting non-discrimination. Lifemark understands that the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or to people with disabilities under any other law. Lifemark is committed to complying with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA and excellently serving all customers, including people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods and services to people with disabilities with high quality and timeliness.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may use their assistive devices when accessing our goods, 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 upon request.

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on-site or will provide devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

Communications

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability upon request. We will work with the person with a disability to determine what method of communication works for them, including communicating via email instead of the phone.

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. If a service animal is excluded by law, we will suggest appropriate alternatives and ensure that the person can access, obtain, use, or benefit from our goods, services, or facilities where possible.

See the [Service Animals Policy](#) for more details

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.


See the [Support Persons Policy](#) for more details

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

Lifemark will notify customers promptly if there is a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities. This posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Training

Lifemark will provide accessible customer service training to:

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- All employees and independent contractors
- Anyone involved in developing our policies
- Anyone who provides customers goods, services, or facilities on our behalf

Team members will be trained in accessible customer service upon hire. Training will include the Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the customer service standard requirements.

- Lifemark policies related to the customer service standard.
- How to interact and communicate with people with several 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.
- How to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help provide goods, services, or facilities to people with disabilities.
- What to do if someone with a disability has difficulty accessing Lifemark goods, services, or facilities.

Workers will be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

POLICY STATEMENT – EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

Lifemark is committed to fair and accessible employment practices consistent with dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity principles.

Hiring

We will notify workers, potential hires, and the public that accommodation can be made during recruitment and hiring.

Workplace Information

- We will notify staff that support is available for those with disabilities. We will develop a process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees.
- Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency.

Talent and Performance Management

Any performance management, career development, and redeployment processes shall consider the accessibility needs of all employees.

Communicate Accessibility Policies

When requested by an employee with a disability, we will consult with them and arrange for an accessible format and communication support for information required to perform their job and for data to be readily available to employees.


Feedback Process on Accessibility Practices

Lifemark welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible services to people with disabilities. Feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Clients and employees can submit feedback in the following ways:

Contact: Human Resources

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Email: HR@lifemark.ca
Phone: 1 (844) 878-4550

All feedback concerning the delivery of services or employment practices to people with disabilities, including complaints, will be responded to promptly.

Notice of Availability of Documents

Lifemark will notify the public that accessible customer service and employment documents are available upon request by emailing hr@lifemark.ca.

Lifemark will provide this document in an accessible format or with communication support on request. We will consult with the person requesting to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format promptly and at no additional cost.

Modifications to This or Other Policies

Any policy of Lifemark that does not respect dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.