



## **ACCESSIBLE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS POLICY**

West is committed to recognizing and addressing the needs of persons with disabilities.

West strives to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility and comply with the objectives and requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “**AODA**”) and the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the “**OHRC**”).

This policy sets out standards designed to maximize accessibility in employment. West may amend this policy at its sole discretion, and as may be necessary to respond to evolving needs and legal developments.

Upon request, West will provide a copy of this policy in an accessible format.

### **Policy Statement**

West strives to promote accessibility throughout the employment relationship, including by:

- creating an accessible workplace for employees and job applicants; and
- treating persons with disabilities in ways that respect their dignity and independence.

Employees and job applicants will be informed of West’s accessibility and accommodation policies. Such policies will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment with West. In addition, employees will be made aware of any changes to West’s accessibility and accommodation policies as soon as practicable after they occur.

### **Recruitment and Selection**

West strives to ensure that all job applicants can participate equally in West’s recruitment, assessment and selection process.

Job applicants, employees and the general public will be informed that accommodations are available for persons with disabilities in the recruitment process. Such information will be included in internal and external job postings. This information will also be communicated directly to job applicants when they are selected to move further in the selection process.

West encourages all job applicants to contact West if they require accommodation during the recruitment process. West will consult with job applicants and provide, or arrange for the provision of, suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account any individualized accessibility needs due to disability.

When making offers of employment, West strives to ensure that job applicants are aware of West’s policies for accommodating employees with disabilities, including by providing job applicants with a copy of this policy upon request.

This policy is also available to all employees on West’s intranet and West’s website.

## **Accessible Formats And Communication Supports**

Employees with disabilities may at any time request that information which they need in order to perform their work, or information that is generally available to other employees, be provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports.

West strives to provide, or arrange for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports for its employees, as and when necessary. West will consult with employees who request accessible formats or communication supports to determine suitable and individualized solutions to any barriers faced by the employees.

## **Emergency Response**

West strives to ensure the safety of employees in the event of a workplace emergency.

Employees with disabilities, including temporary injuries or medical conditions, must alert West to any possible barriers that may exist in the event of a workplace emergency. Employees with disabilities will be provided with individualized emergency response information, if and as required. Employees will be consulted in the development of the individualized emergency response information to ensure it meets individualized accommodation needs.

All information provided by employees will remain confidential, except to the extent disclosure is necessary to assist the individualized emergency response needs.

If employees have individualized emergency response needs, West shall provide, with consent, emergency response information to any person designated by West to provide assistance in the event of a workplace emergency.

Individualized emergency response information will be reviewed as necessary, including in circumstances where there is a change in work location, there is a change in accommodation needs and/or there is a change in general emergency response policies.

## **Performance Management and Career Development**

West strives to ensure that its performance management processes consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.

West strives to ensure that any career development or advancement opportunities take into consideration the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities. If West has a need to reassign employees to other departments or jobs, the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities will be taken into account.

## **Individual Accommodation Plans (IAP)**

West strives to provide appropriate accommodations for persons with disabilities. When employees with disabilities request accommodation, the following process will be followed.

1. *Recognizing the Need for Accommodation:* Employees can request accommodation through their managers or through Human Resources. In addition, managers and human resources can identify the need for accommodation without any request.
2. *Gathering Information and Assessing Needs:* The following principles will guide the information gathering and needs assessment process:
  - a. employees will be active participants and will be in constant communication with their managers and Human Resources;
  - b. the focus will be on abilities, restrictions and limitations and not on diagnosis;
  - c. medical information will be kept confidential and secure, including by using confidential forms and storage and providing access on a “need to know” basis;
  - d. Human Resources may request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at West’s expense, to assist in the accommodation process;
  - e. various potential accommodation options will be evaluated;
  - f. employees may ask Human Resources to have a representative from the workplace assist in the accommodation process; and
  - g. if a requested accommodation is denied, the reason for the denial will be explained by Human Resources.
3. *Establishing the IAP:* After an appropriate accommodation has been identified and assessed, the details will be documented in an IAP, which IAP will include, if and as applicable, accessible formats and communication supports, workplace emergency response information and any other necessary accommodation. The IAP will be provided in a format that takes into account accessibility needs. Medical information will be kept confidential and secure, including by using confidential forms and storage and providing access on a “need to know” basis.
4. *Implementing and Monitoring the IAP:* The IAP will be periodically monitored by employees, managers and Human Resources to ensure its ongoing effectiveness. If the IAP is no longer effective, the foregoing process will be repeated.

West strives to support employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require accommodation in order to return to work. As a result, the foregoing process will also be followed for employees who are returning to work from a disability-related absence.

### **Contact For Questions**

For questions related to this policy, please contact:

West Human Resources  
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