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Approved By: Pail Laperriere	Approval Date: June 2017
Next Review Date: June 2021	

1.0 Purpose

HandsTheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca (Hands) has an obligation to meet the requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standard 191/11* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. The *Integrated Accessibility Standard* requires that a multi-year Accessibility Plan to prevent and remove barriers from the workplace and improve opportunities for persons with disabilities be established, implemented, maintained, posted on the agency website and available upon request, in an accessible format. Hands' multi-year, phased strategy to identify and eliminate barriers for people with disabilities will be reviewed and updated at least every five years.

2.0 Scope

Procedure applies to: (Check all appropriate boxes for broad application)				
<u>Employees</u>	<u>Volunteers</u>	<u>Board</u>	<u>Services (list)</u>	<u>Other (i.e. clients, visitors, contractors)</u>
x	x	x		x

3.0 Responsibility

- 3.1 Employees** are required to participate in training and comply with the accessibility standards.
- 3.2 Supervisors/Managers** are responsible to ensure all employees receive training about requirements of the accessibility standards and comply with the policy, procedure and practices.
- 3.3 Senior Leadership** is responsible to provide an environment which is accessible to and meets the expectations of: employees, volunteers, board members, partners and the community. Persons with disabilities face many types of barriers.

4.0 Definitions

Disability, as per the Ontario Human Rights Code, means:

- a) 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



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the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;

- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) a learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) a mental disorder; or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

Employees means every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of Hands, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.

Persons with Disabilities are individuals who have a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

5.0 Procedure

5.1 Developing the Accessibility Plan

- 5.1.1 Using existing feedback sources such as, client/family surveys, employee surveys, complaints received, accommodation requests and risk assessments; Hands will identify existing and future barriers. Client/family, employee and partner agency consultations may also be used to support content of the Accessibility Plan.
- 5.1.2 The Plan will address the following ten categories where barriers to accessibility may exist and require remedy: architecture; environment; attitudes; finances; employment; communication; technology; transportation; community integration and/or other barriers identified by clients, employees or stakeholders.
- 5.1.3 Themes matching the ten categories will be identified from the information collected. The findings will be reviewed by Senior Leadership and further analysis conducted and/or additional information collected as necessary. Third parties with expertise and experience related to accessibility barriers and remediation may be enlisted.
- 5.1.4 The barriers identified will be prioritized based on an impact assessment that includes, for example:
 - the risk of doing nothing

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- significance of the identified barrier
- potential for other mitigation strategies or individual accommodations to reduce the barrier
- urgency of remediation for current stakeholders: clients, employees, volunteers, other stakeholders
- benefits to the broader population
- cost of the identified remedy versus cost of ongoing accommodation
- time to implement a remedy.

5.2 Developing the Action Plan

- 5.2.1 All prioritized actions will be included in the Accessibility Plan with estimated implementation timelines.
- 5.2.2 Timelines for longer-term initiatives will be balanced with other operational priorities.

5.3 Implementing the Accessibility Plan

- 5.3.1 The Director of Corporate Services will be the lead for the agency both in developing, deciding on priorities and timelines and for implementing the plan.
- 5.3.2 The Director of Corporate Services with assigned employees will monitor progress against the Plan and report regularly to Senior Management on a quarterly basis.
- 5.3.3 An annual progress report will be provided to the Board of Directors.

5.4 Reviewing the Accessibility Plan

- 5.4.1 On an annual basis, the Director of Corporate Services with assigned staff, will review information collected over the course of the year from feedback mechanisms related to accessibility. Minor revisions to the Accessibility Plan may be made as a result.
- 5.4.2 At least every five years, the Accessibility Plan will be reviewed in its entirety and updated with input from relevant stakeholders.

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5.5 Posting the Accessibility Plan

5.5.1 The Accessibility Plan will be posted on the agency website in an easily understandable format.

6.0 Linkages (cross reference to Policies, other procedures, legislation, regulations)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
Integrated Accessibility Standard 191/11

7.0 Policy Change History

Revision number	Date of Approval	Description of Change
		Revised to reflect...