



Accessibility Policy

St. Joseph Communications (SJC) is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for all stakeholders, including clients, associates, job applicants, suppliers, and any visitors who enter the premises, work for the company, access information provided by the company, or use the company's goods and services.

SJC will work to break down the barriers that prevent or limit persons with disabilities from employment, receipt of goods and services, the built environment, and information and communication through the implementation of accessibility standards.

Definitions

- Accessible formats: Include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- Assistive device: A technical aid, communication device, or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities.
- Communication supports: Captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications.
- Conversion-ready: An electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an acceptable format.
- Disability: The temporary, prolonged, or permanent reduction or absence of the ability to perform certain commonplace activities or roles sometimes referred to as activities of daily living.
- Service animal: An animal that can be recognized by visual indicators such as a vest or harness that is being used by an individual with a disability for reasons relating to the person's disability.
- Support person: Another person who accompanies an individual with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods and services.

Guidelines

Employment

SJC will make every effort to identify, remove, and prevent barriers by developing inclusive employment procedures that support persons with disabilities with accommodations during the recruitment and selection stages, and throughout the employment life cycle.

Recruitment and Hiring

SJC understands that improving workplace accessibility and ensuring an accessible recruitment and selection process for applicants with disabilities can expand the pool of talented candidates. Upon request, the company will provide candidates with reasonable accommodations during the interview and selection process. Where an accommodation is requested, the company will consult with the applicant to arrange suitable accommodations, such as providing the application in an alternate or accessible format.

The company interview process will focus on experience and skills and will not discriminate against candidates who have a disability or require an accommodation. SJC is committed to hiring decisions that are unbiased and based on qualifications and past experience. Successful candidates will be made aware of policies and supports for accommodations upon completion of the recruitment process.

Training and Development

SJC recognizes that skills development and career planning can enrich the employment experience, increase engagement, and reduce turnover for individuals with disabilities. The company will align training and development programs to meet the needs of associates with disabilities and provide training as soon as reasonably practicable upon the person being assigned to applicable duties. Training programs will be designed with flexibility to allow customization for the individual requirements of the associate, such as providing training materials in accessible or conversion-ready formats that take into account the need of the associate. The company will consider associate barriers when implementing performance management processes, or when offering career development, employment support, or advancement opportunities.

Communication

SJC will provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for associates, upon request. The company will consult with the associate to determine the specific barrier and the best way to provide support. Such accessible formats and communication supports are conversion-ready and will be provided in a timely manner and at no additional cost to associates.

When communicating with or providing information to an associate who requires accommodation or assistance due to a disability, the company will ensure that all communication with the individual is completed in a manner that takes into account the individual's disability. Where an assistive device is used, the company will reasonably accommodate the use of the device.

Emergency Response

If necessary or if requested, SJC will create individualized workplace emergency response plans for associates with disabilities. The emergency response plan will consider the unique challenges created by the individual's disability and the physical nature of the workplace and will be created in consultation with the associate. If an associate with a disability requires assistance from a support

person during an emergency, the company will designate a fellow associate to act as such.

Customized emergency response plans will be reviewed when:

- The associate moves to a different physical location in the organization;
- The associate's overall accommodation needs, or plans are reviewed; or
- The company reviews general emergency response policies.

Accommodation

The duty to accommodate is required of all employers, in all jurisdictions in Canada, and encompasses providing respect and dignity, individualized accommodation, integration and participation, and barrier-free designs. SJC will provide individual accommodations to support the needs of associates with disabilities. Personalized accommodation plans will be designed to allow associates to contribute and participate in job related functions and activities to the best of their abilities. The process of accommodating individuals will take a consultative approach and is a shared obligation of the company, the associate, and any applicable professionals required to assist the associate throughout the process.

Return to Work

SJC is committed to a supportive return-to-work program and will develop and implement return-to-work processes for associates who are absent from work due to a disability and require accommodations in order to return to work. The company will work with the associate to develop an individualized return-to-work plan and support the associate in the transition period by addressing any barriers. The return-to-work process will outline the steps the company will take to facilitate the associate's return to work and use documented individual accommodation plans.

Redeployment

If an associate cannot be accommodated in their current position, even with accommodations to either the job processes or hours, SJC will consider redeployment by placing the associate in an alternative position within the company. The company will work human resources, management and facilities and the associate to determine whether there is another available position. If the accommodation requires a substantial change in the position, involving duties or hours, the position may be redesigned.

Inability to Accommodate

SJC will provide workplace accommodation up to the point of undue hardship. Undue hardship may occur where it is established that no forms of appropriate accommodation exist, or where the creation of accommodation would create a health and safety hazard or cause unreasonable costs for the organization.

Where a necessary accommodation is found to cause undue hardship on the organization, the company will work to find a fair and equitable compromise that

meets the needs of the associate and the organization to the greatest extent possible. Measures taken may include:

- modified duties
- changes to workstations
- flexible work hours or break times
- assistive devices

Customer Service

Access to Goods and Services

SJC will seek to provide barrier-free access to the company's goods and services for all customers. Where barriers cannot be removed, alternate means for accessing goods or services will be provided to the best of the company's ability.

Support Persons and Service Animals

If a client with a disability is accompanied by a support person, SJC will ensure that both persons may enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person. A customer with a disability accompanied by a service animal will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

The company will waive admission fees to support persons, or when not possible, ensure the support person is notified of admission costs in advance. The company will attempt to accommodate the customer and support person to sit with one another. In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer before any potentially confidential information is mentioned in front of the support person.

Communication

SJC understands the importance of accessible digital and non-digital forms of communication and will do its best to provide accessible types of communication and information to all individuals with disabilities. Such accessible formats and communication supports will be provided upon request, in a timely manner and at no additional cost.

Training

All SJC Associates complete training compliant with requirements of the AODA for Customer Service, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

New hires receive this training as part of their onboarding and training is refreshed on a regular basis. SJC maintains a record of all training completion dates.

Billing

SJC is committed to providing accessible billing to all of our clients. Upon request, invoices will be provided in hard copy, large print or email.

Emergency Notifications

SJC will provide emergency and public safety information, plans and procedures, maps and warning signs at evacuation points, and any other emergency alert information, in accessible formats or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

The company will:

- Work any individuals requesting information and to see how to best meet their needs;
- Ensure emergency information can be seen, read, and heard by anyone, including people with disabilities; and
- If a person with a disability requires assistance from a support person in case of an emergency, make sure an associate is available to act as such.

Customer Feedback

Customer feedback can lead to improved service, increased clientele, and a reduction in complaints. SJC will ensure that feedback can be provided by customers with disabilities through a variety of mechanisms, such as in person, by phone, e-mail, text message, or social media. Feedback forms, along with alternate methods of providing feedback verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (handwritten, delivered, website, or e-mail), will be available upon request.

Customers who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

Building Accessibility

SJC will always continue to work to ensure that the built environment, including building interior and exterior, are designed to facilitate barrier-free access to goods or services for customers and associates. If areas of the built environment are not accessible for certain individuals with disabilities, the company will work with the individual to provide an alternate means of access.