

Policy #	300 - 154 v0.3	Original approval date:	01/06/2015
Category:	Human Resources	Effective date:	01/06/2015
Prepared by:	Robert Wesley	Last reviewed date:	24/05/2016
Approved by:	Anne Babcock	Next scheduled review date:	05/01/2019

Workplace Accommodations

1. Preamble

There are multiple pieces of legislation which govern WoodGreen's responsibilities to accommodate an employee due to a temporary or permanent disability. WoodGreen has an obligation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to work proactively with employees to provide accessibility across all stages of the employment life cycle. Additionally, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA) establishes obligations on WoodGreen in relation to supporting staff who have been injured or suffered a disability as a result of workplace accident. Additionally, the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) requires WoodGreen to accommodate staff to the point of undue hardship to perform the essential duties of their job. By removing barriers, WoodGreen can create a workplace that is accessible and allow employees to reach their full potential.

Definition of Disability

- 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 the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness, or physical reliance on guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
 - b) A condition of mental impairment or development 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 WSIA, 1997
- (As defined in the OHRC, 1990)**

Definition of Accommodation

An accommodation is a change, modification, alternation or adaptation in a policy, procedure, practice, program, or facilities that provides an individual with a disability the opportunity to perform the essential duties of the job or participate in the screening process for a job vacancy.

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2. Policy

WoodGreen will review and respond to all requests for job accommodations from staff where measures or supports are necessary to permit the individual to perform the essential duties of their job. WoodGreen will take an individualized approach when determining the accommodation measures that take into account the nature of the disability, the nature of the employee's job, the work environment, and any funding that may be available to implement accommodation supports. These measures could include the removal of certain tasks, the modification of certain performance expectations or the provision of assistive devices to support the individual. The measures will be outlined in an individual accommodation plan which outlines the accommodation needs of the employee and the accommodation measures that are being implemented which will be reviewed no less than once annually to ensure that it continues to meet the individual and program needs or when the employee changes jobs or locations.

WoodGreen will provide an employee with a disability who might need help in an emergency with an individualized emergency response plan upon request, in accordance with the AODA.

Where an employee with a disability so requests, WoodGreen provide accessible formats or communication supports for the provision of information that is necessary for the employee to perform his/her job or information that is generally available to employees in the workplace, in accordance with the AODA.

A prospective job applicant, upon self-identification to Human Resources, will be accommodated for a disclosed disability on a good faith basis to allow them to fully participate in the recruitment process, in accordance with the AODA. Should the applicant be successful, our standard process for accommodation would be implemented upon hire.

WoodGreen will include language in our job postings that informs existing employees and prospective job applicants that accommodation for applicants with disabilities is available during the recruitment process, in accordance with the AODA.

WoodGreen will including language in the job offer letters advising the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities, in accordance with AODA.

WoodGreen will work with the employee to determine if adjustments are needed to our standard performance management process as a result of their accommodation needs, this may include providing information in a format that is accessible to the employee.

WoodGreen Community Services
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WoodGreen will take into account the accessibility needs of the employee and any accommodation plans when providing career development and advancement opportunities or when redeploying employees as a result of layoff or operational changes.

2. Process and Procedure

All job postings will include language directing clients who required accommodations in the recruitment process to contact Human Resources. Human Resources will work the hiring Manager to implement accommodation measures in the recruitment process in relation to the materials or processes used to ensure equal opportunity to the posting to prospective applicants. Additionally, all requests for interviews will be confirmed via email and will include direction to the applicant directing them to contact Human Resources if they require accommodation in the assessment process.

An employee who is requesting accommodation must submit a completed Request for Accommodation form to their direct supervisor. Upon receipt this document will be forwarded to Human Resources who will coordinate with a third party disability management consultant to confirm that the individual has a medically supported accommodation need and clarify the restrictions or limitations. It is the employee's responsibility to provide initial medical information to the third party disability management company to substantiate the disability and provide objective medical evidence to support the restrictions and limitations. In situations where the employee has identified their preferred accommodation measure, the disability management consultant will explore if there are other measures that the employer might implement that would allow the organization to accommodate the medical condition.

Upon receipt of medical information from an employee in support of a request for workplace accommodation, WoodGreen reserves the right to request that the employee seek further information or clarification from his or her treating physician or specialist, or to provide consent for WoodGreen to seek such information directly. WoodGreen reserves the right to request that an employee attend an independent medical evaluation (IME) with an outside medical or other expert at the company's expense. The decision of whether an IME shall be requested in any particular situation shall be made at the sole discretion of WoodGreen.

When developing an individualized accommodation plan, WoodGreen will look at measures to support the individual to do the essential duties of their job. When determining the appropriate accommodation measures, WoodGreen will consider the required length of the accommodation (temporary versus permanent), the ease of implementation, the cost, and program disruption.

The employee will have an opportunity to review the accommodation plan before it is finalized and provide comments for management's consideration. An employee with disability may request the participation of a representative from the union, if they are bargaining unit member, by

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submitting the request to Human Resources via email. If the employee with a disability is not a member of the bargaining unit, they he/she may request the participation of a representative from the workplace to provide support during return to work meetings. WoodGreen will consider the input provided by the employee and support person/union representative prior to finalizing the individual accommodation plans.

Where and employee with a disability so requests, WoodGreen shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats of communication supports for, information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. This request would be included and documented in the formal accommodation plan developed in response to a request for workplace accommodation.

Individualized accommodation plans will be reviewed and updated at least annual but more often if there are changes to the employees restrictions or limitations; or employee changes positions or worksites.

3. Communication

WoodGreen's Accommodation Policy will be included in the New Hire Package for the reference of all new staff who join the organization after its implementation.

WoodGreen's Accommodation Policy will be posted on Sharepoint and any changes to the policy will be highlighted through agency announcements and the staff newsletter.

Each individual who submits a Request for Accommodation will receive a written request to their response and when necessary an Individualized Accommodation Plan will be developed. It may be necessary to share information with regards to an employee's restrictions or limitations with their co-workers in order to ensure compliance of the plan.