

Winnipeg Supply Service Experts Accessible Employment Policy

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Introduction:

Winnipeg Supply Service Experts (the “Company” or “Service Experts”) is committed to providing a workplace environment that is inclusive and respectful, and where all employees have an equal opportunity to contribute. The Accessible Employment Policy (the “**Policy**”) applies to all employees who seek to be (job candidates) or are working for the Company (“**employees**”).

This Policy applies to employees in Manitoba.

The Company is committed to complying with the *Accessible Employment Standard Regulation*, under the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (the “**Regulation**”), and to create an inclusive, barrier-free employment process. We seek to accommodate the needs of our employees, and our policies, practices, and measures reflect principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

The following policy statements, organizational practices, and measures are intended to meet the requirements of the Regulation.

Remove Barriers to Recruitment and Selection

Policy Statement:

During recruitment, we inform all potential applicants through our internal and external job postings that reasonable accommodations are available during the selection process, and we respond in a timely manner to requests for accommodations.

Practices and Measures:

- We include a statement on all job postings that reasonable accommodations are available to applicants with disabilities, and we seek their advice on how best to accommodate their needs. This statement advises that *“Service Experts is committed to an inclusive, barrier-free recruitment process. Service Experts has an Accommodation Employment Policy. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in the selection process. If you require an accommodation, please contact the Human Resources Department and we will work with you to meet your needs”*.
- When an applicant has made a request for an accommodation during the selection process, we:
 - Consult with the applicant to determine the appropriate accommodation.
 - Put the appropriate accommodation in place during the assessment or selection process.

Mention Workplace Accommodations When Offering Employment

Policy Statement:

When hiring, we inform selected applicants of our measures, policies, and practices for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Practices and Measures:

- We include information about workplace accommodations and accessible employment policies and practices in our offer letters to all selected applicants by stating “[p]lease note that the Company has an accommodation process in place and provides accommodations for employees with disabilities. If you require a specific accommodation because of a disability or a medical need, please contact [hiring manager] so that arrangements can be made for the appropriate accommodations to be in place before you begin your employment”.
- We include information about workplace accommodations and accessible employment, policies, and practices in our new hire onboarding materials via on our applicant tracking system.

Inform Employees About Accommodation Policies and Practices**Policy Statement:**

We keep employees informed about our accommodation measures, policies, and practices for employees with disabilities via our internal intranet site. We also provide updates to employees when this information changes.

Practices and Measures:

- We provide information to employees about our policies for employees with disabilities and any updates in multiple ways, such as:
 - Posting on our internal intranet site.
 - By informing management employees (in-person, by phone, through email, during training sessions, and/or during regional meetings) who are then responsible for cascading this information to their team members.

Communicate in a Way that Meets the Needs of Employees**Policy Statement:**

We aim to meet the communication needs of our employees by providing workplace information and communications in ways that are easy to access for everyone.

If requested by an employee with a temporary or permanent disability, we:

- Consult with the employee to identify the accessible formats or communication supports needed when providing information to the employee.
- Ensure that identified accessible formats or communication supports are continually used when providing information to the employee.

Practices and Measures:

- To meet an employee's communication needs, we ask the employee what accessible format or communication support is most appropriate for them.
- The Company provides information to employees in multiple ways in order to meet employee needs, including in writing via email, electronically via the intranet site, as well as verbally by providing information to management employees who present it to their team members during team meetings.

Provide Individualized Accommodation Plans**Policy Statement:**

The Company's policy is to provide reasonable accommodations by developing and documenting individualized accommodation plans for employees with disabilities who request them.

Practices and Measures:**Request for an Individualized Accommodation Plan**

The Company supports employees by providing reasonable accommodations in the workplace. Employees may make a verbal or written request to their manager for an individualized accommodation plan. The employee's manager will then partner with the Human Resources Department to complete the individualized accommodation plan.

Assessment of Employee and Accommodation Required

The Company will assess the employee and possible accommodations on a case-by-case basis.

The employee's manager may request that the employee provide documentation from a health care practitioner or other practitioner specializing in workplace accommodation who supports the need for the accommodation.

The Company may request, at the organization's expense, an evaluation by an independent regulated health care professional or other practitioner in the area of workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Assistance for the Employee in Developing the Individualized Accommodation Plan

An employee may request that the following individual assist with developing the plan:

- An individual who is knowledgeable about workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Implementation and Review of the Individualized Accommodation Plan

The individualized accommodation plans include but are not limited to the following:

- description of restrictions and limitations;
- job-related tasks that are affected by these restrictions and limitations;
- sources of expert input into the individual accommodation plan;
- description of the accommodation measure(s);
- dates the accommodation measure(s) are to be in place;
- date when the plan will be reviewed and, if applicable, updated;
- roles and responsibilities of the employee and management.

Our employees will participate and cooperate in the accommodation process by:

- following the agreed upon individualized accommodation plan;
- providing applicable information regarding restrictions and limitations;
- providing revised documentation and/or taking part in assessments as needed;
- offering ongoing feedback related to how the modifications are working, asking for additional modifications, and/or advising when the accommodation is no longer required.

The employee's manager will implement the individualized accommodation plan as stated on the form under the "dates the accommodation measure(s) are to be in place" section. If no end date is expected, the accommodation measure(s) will be reviewed at least once annually.

The employee's manager will also review the employee's individualized accommodation plan, and update the document if required, when:

- the employee's workspace is modified or relocated;
- the employee's job duties have changed;
- other workplace changes have occurred that affect the accommodation; or
- the employee has made a request to review and update the accommodation plan earlier than outlined in the plan.

Accessible Formats

The Company meets the communication needs of our employees by providing them with a copy of their plan in a format and with any communication supports to meet the needs of the employee.

Reasons for Denying a Request

The Company may deny an employee's request for an individualized accommodation plan if:

- The employee's health care professional(s) does not support the employee's self-assessed requirement for a workplace accommodation.
- An independent health care professional(s) contracted to conduct an assessment does not support the employee's self-assessed requirement for a workplace accommodation.
- Evidence shows that the accommodation request would cause undue hardship to the Company (for example: creates a major and measurable cost to the Company or presents a serious health and safety risk).

If a request for a reasonable accommodation request is denied, the Company will provide the employee with the written reason(s) for the denial.

Employee Privacy

We maintain employee privacy regarding accommodation plans and personal health information by following the practices outlined in the “Maintain Privacy” section below.

Manage Performance

Policy Statements:

The Company ensures our performance management process takes in to account the following:

- That an employee may be temporarily or permanently disabled by one or more barriers in the workplace.
- An employee's individualized accommodation plan, if applicable.
- That the accommodations provided for an employee may not fully address a workplace barrier.

Practices and Measures:

- The employee's manager:
 - meets with the employee at least once annually to discuss performance;
 - speaks with the employee when they do not follow Company policy or meet expectations, and conduct a verbal or written warning of consequences, including disciplinary action, as applicable;
 - will discuss existing workplace accommodations and propose modifications or new workplace accommodations if it is believed this could help improve the performance of an employee with a disability.
- Prior to imposing disciplinary measures, the employee's manager collaborates with the Human Resources department to determine whether there is a correlation between concerns about job performance and workplace barriers.

Put Return to Work Processes in Place

Policy Statements:

Our return to work policy reflects our commitment to providing a safe and healthy working environment for employees who are, or have been, absent from work due to a disability and require reasonable accommodations to return to work.

Our return to work policy ensures reasonable accommodations for employees who are at work or absent due to a disability. We will make efforts to modify employees' duties and work schedules based on their functional abilities. Our aim is to increase duties safely to help employees reach their full potential.

Practices and Measures:

- The Company works closely with our insurance provider and/or the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba to facilitate appropriate return-to-work procedures.
- When applicable, the Company offers meaningful and productive modified or alternate duties that are safe and within the employee's functional abilities.
- The employee's manager supports the employee who have been absent due to a disability and participates in the return to work process.

Provide Workplace Emergency Response Information

Policy Statements:

We notify all employees of steps to be taken during emergencies, to ensure the safety of employees who are temporarily or permanently disabled. We ensure workplace emergency response information is specific to each employee's needs and the physical nature of the employee's workspace. Once we are informed that an employee requires assistance during a workplace emergency, we offer the employee individual workplace emergency response information as soon as possible.

We review the workplace emergency response information provided to an employee each time:

- the employee is moved to a different workspace;
- the employee's workspace is modified; or
- we review our general emergency response plans and make changes that would affect the employee's response to an emergency in the workplace.

If an employee who receives workplace emergency response information requires the assistance of another individual during an emergency, we obtain consent from the employee on who will assist, and we inform that selected individual on how to assist.

Practices and Measures:

- On an annual basis, we ask employees whether they need assistance during an emergency and remind them of the office or building's emergency plan.
- We regularly discuss general accessibility and identify barriers during Workplace Safety and Health meetings.

- In a situation where an employee cannot descend the stairs to exit the building during an evacuation, with permission from the employee, we identify someone to remain with this person in the designated safe area.
- The Fire Warden (if applicable) ensures communication with these employees during the emergency by cell phone.
- The individual acting as Fire Warden notifies the fire department about the number and location of employees who remain in the building.

Maintain Privacy

Policy Statements:

We protect the privacy and confidentiality of employee's personal information, including personal health information. We only collect, use, and disclose information as required for the purposes of the Regulation, unless otherwise agreed to by the employee.

We also comply with applicable privacy laws, including *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Manitoba) and *The Personal Health Information Act* (Manitoba).

Practices and Measures:

- We follow appropriate protocol when storing confidential employee information.
- We protect our employees' personal information, including personal health information, by limiting access to personal information to the Human Resources Department and to the employee's manager(s).

Providing Training

Policy Statements:

We provide training on how to accommodate employees with a disability to individuals with the following responsibilities:

- Managing the work of employees.
- Hiring, promoting, redeploying, or terminating employees.

Training content includes:

- If a manager is approached by an employee stating they have a disability, whether permanent, temporary, visible or invisible, and/or if they believe they may need help during an emergency, managers are to inform their General Manager and Human Resources contact.
- How to make employment opportunities accessible to people with disabilities.

- How to interact and communicate with individuals who face barriers, use assistive devices, or are assisted by a support person or service animal.

Practices and Measures:

- We train new hires during the onboarding process via our applicant tracking system.
- The applicant tracking system maintains records of who has taken training and when.
- If a significant update occurs, we provide refresher training to all employees, including management.

Written Record of Accessibility and Training Policies

Policy Statements:

We keep a written record of our accessibility and training policies.

Practices and Measures:

- We will let the public know that our accessibility and training policies are available in the following ways:
 - posted on our Company and careers websites; and
 - through employees or management (in-person, by phone, or through email).
- We provide our policies within a reasonable timeframe, and in a format that meets the needs of individuals with a disability, at no additional cost.

This Policy is available in alternate formats, upon request.