



Emergency Response Plan (AODA) For Employees with Disabilities

Policy Statement:

This policy outlines the responsibility and process of identifying employees who require assistance in the event of an emergency situation and developing a plan to ensure that all employees are able to evacuate a hazardous environment.

It is an expectation that all employees involved in assisting employees with disabilities during an emergency response, do so in a safe manner. Employees must also ensure that the environment, equipment, and tools used during the emergency response are safe and in good working condition.

Definitions:

Employee requiring assistance: Employee/s with a permanent or temporary disability that may affect their ability to evacuate the building safely during an emergency. Examples of conditions that may affect safe evacuations may include, but are not limited to; inability to climb/descend stairs, inability to hear emergency alarms and/or see signs, emergency equipment and evacuation directions.

Buddy or Buddies: the staff member (buddy or buddies) assigned during the planning stage, which will assist the employee requiring assistance during an evacuation.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Fire Wardens Committee

- Ensure that Code policies/procedures incorporate general procedures and considerations for persons that require assistance to evacuate a hazardous environment in accordance with this policy.
- Include this procedure into the review of all general emergency response policies.

Department Manager

- Ensure employees are trained and aware of the general emergency response plan for employees requiring assistance.
- Be aware of employees with permanent disabilities and/or those who require temporary assistance to evacuate in the event of an emergency.
- Notify the Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety Manager and other stakeholders as required, in order to develop and communicate individual emergency response plans.
- Discuss with the person that requires assistance to determine the level of assistance required to evacuate a floor area in the event of an emergency and determine the need to create individualized emergency response plans based on the procedure below to achieve the established emergency procedures for the unit and building.

Department Manager Continued

- Assign a buddy or buddies to the employee requiring assistance.
- Review the individualized emergency response plan when an employee moves to a different location within the organization.
- Designate fire wardens and ensure that they are aware of persons that require assistance and what measures are needed for that person to evacuate the building safely in the event of an emergency.

Department Staff

- Participate in training on the general emergency response plan for employees requiring assistance.
- Assist those with special needs.
- Follow procedures as required.
- If assigned to be a buddy, communicate to the staff member that requires assistance if you will be away and unable to provide assistance.

Staff that Require Assistance

- Inform your Supervisor or Manager if you require assistance in the event of an emergency situation.
- Work with your Supervisor or Manager to determine an individualized plan that will achieve the results intended by the building's established emergency procedures.
- Inform your Supervisor or Manager when your condition changes, requiring different, more or less assistance.
- During an emergency that requires an evacuation, communicate to staff members if additional assistance with evacuation is needed.
- Maintain communication with your buddy or buddies.

Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety

- During employee health reviews for new hires, identify permanent/temporary disabilities that may require special assistance during an evacuation.
- Review, update and communicate the general emergency response plan for employees requiring assistance.
- As part of the return to work planning process, identify the specific functional limitation (i.e. inability to descend stairs) that would warrant an individualized emergency response plan.
- During the return to work/permanent accommodation planning, have the manager identify how the emergency response measures for that individual will be applied within their department. In collaboration with the manager and employee, review any restrictions and how they would impact there the employee's ability to evacuate (i.e. inability to descend stairs).

Human Resource Representative

- Document the employee's individualized emergency response plan in their disability management file.
- Accommodate the needs requested by the employee.
- Conduct periodic meetings with the employee to ensure all accommodations are continually met.

Procedure

- If there is an immediate threat on the floor that requires evacuation, the buddy and or buddies assigned to the person requiring assistance will assist in the evacuation as planned.
- In the event that the assigned buddy or buddies is not available during the time of the incident, the person requiring assistance will identify themselves to the Fire Wardens or any staff member in the area so a buddy or buddies can be assigned and assist the employee.
- Employee/s in wheelchairs will be assisted to the closest exit stairs.
- The buddy and or buddies will assist the employee, in the emergency evacuation chair, up or down the stairs towards the building exit.
- If in the process of descending/ascending the exit stairs the person is unable to continue, or if the person is in a wheelchair, the buddy and or buddies will stay on the landing or stop at the next landing and position the employee so that the pathway is not obstructed for others evacuating the floor.
- The buddy and or buddies is to stay with the employee requiring assistance until the area has been cleared by the emergency responders in charge of the incident.
- **DO NOT WAIT AT ELEVATOR LOBBIES:** Elevator use for persons requiring assistance is not permitted, unless authorized by the municipal emergency responders.