

Financial Services Tribunal

Accessibility and Accommodation Policy

Introduction

The Financial Services Tribunal (the “FST”) is an expert and independent adjudicative tribunal established under the *Financial Services Tribunal Act, 2017* (the “Act”). The FST is committed to the principles of accessibility and accommodation.

In accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “AODA”), the FST has established this policy to govern the provision of its services to persons with disabilities.

Statement of Commitment

The FST is committed to treating all persons with respect in a manner that promotes and fosters their independence. Accommodation will focus on the individual and be provided in accordance with the principles of dignity, individualization and inclusion.

The FST is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible environment in which all persons have equitable access to our services. We will meet our obligations under the AODA and will aim to do so in a timely manner.

The FST will make available alternative hearing options such as written, electronic (telephone and video conferencing) and in-person hearings where appropriate in accordance with the Rules of Practice and Procedure for Proceedings Before the Financial Service Tribunal and FST practice directions.

The FST is committed to providing accommodation for needs in accordance with the principles of the Human Rights Code recognizing every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities, without discrimination because of: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, marital status, family status and disability.

The Financial Services Tribunal will work cooperatively, and in a spirit of respect, with all partners in the accommodation process.

Customer Service

The FST is committed to providing excellent customer service to all parties, representatives, witnesses, and other persons who seek to use our services.

Access for all persons will be provided in a manner that ensures that everyone is able to fully and equitably participate in our processes.

The following principles will guide the FST in making its processes accessible:

- Services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all persons.
- Services will be provided in a manner that fosters physical and functional access to the FST processes and promotes the inclusion and full, meaningful participation of all persons.
- All persons will be given fair opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the FST services. Where required for *Human Rights Code* related needs, customized accommodation will be provided, unless it causes undue hardship.
- Accommodation is a shared responsibility, and a collaborative process. The FST is committed to ensuring it has the capacity to work with the parties, representatives, service providers and other persons to provide appropriate accommodations for all *Human Rights Code* related needs.

Assistive Devices/Support Services

The FST will work with people to accommodate personal support services they use to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs. Please note that the Financial Services Tribunal cannot arrange these services. If any person requires an assistive device to participate in a hearing or pre-hearing, they should contact the FST in advance.

Support Persons/Animals

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person or animal will be allowed to have that person or animal accompany them on our premises and the FST will ensure that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to their support person or animal while both are at the Tribunal.

Requests for Accommodation

Accommodations are arrangements to allow everyone, regardless of their abilities, to participate fully in the tribunal process. The FST has staff who are fully informed of this policy and will receive and respond to inquiries and requests for accessibility and/or accommodation. If any person requires an accommodation, they should contact the Registrar's Office at contact@fstontario.ca or by calling (416) 590-7294.

Notice of Service Disruption

The FST, when possible, will provide notification if there is a disruption at its facilities or in services usually used by persons with disabilities. The reason for the disruption will be provided, along with the expected length of time of the disruption and if alternative facilities or services are available. The FST may not be able to give advance notice if it is an unplanned or emergency disruption.

Information and Communication

The FST will provide information to and communicate with individuals in a way that considers their accessibility needs. When requested, information about the FST and its services and case documents in accessible formats or with communication supports will be provided.

Alternative Formats/Contact Information

If you require this Policy in an accessible format, please contact the FST Registrar at contact@fstontario.ca.

Adoption

This Accessibility and Accommodation Policy will be reviewed every three years.

This Accessibility and Accommodation Policy was adopted by the FST Members on August 3, 2021.