



## Fair and Equitable Transportation (Taxi) Services in Every City of Ontario

*Full Service Equivalency – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and Ontario Human Rights Code Compliance: Spinal Cord Injury Ontario’s Position*

### **Position Statement:**

Ontarians with physical disabilities have the right to barrier-free public transportation services in every municipality in Ontario. Transportation is essential to quality of life, health, employment, and community participation. Spinal Cord Injury Ontario calls on every municipality in Ontario to provide accessible taxi services that deliver the same quality and level of service available to the general population. Specifically, ensure Ontarians with physical disabilities receive:

- **Same wait times for services as everyone**
- **Same fares as everyone**
- **Same hours of service as everyone**
- **Same customer service and satisfaction levels as everyone**
- **Same accommodation for short and long trips as everyone**
- **Same ability to access a cab as everyone**

### **Authority to Act:**

Every municipality in Ontario regulates taxi services and has the authority to mandate the industry to provide a fair and equitable service to Ontarians with physical disabilities. Spinal Cord Injury Ontario’s position is that every municipality must exercise this legal authority and obligation to:

- 1) **Mandate that each transportation broker/service provider must fulfill requests for fair and equitable on-demand service (same as the general public) with penalties for non-compliance.**
- 2) **Ensure that all drivers receive accessibility awareness training to improve customer service within the taxi industry.**

### **Service Equivalency:**

The industry standard to access taxi services (by phone or mobile application) in every municipality slightly varies. For example the industry standard for the city of Toronto is 9 minutes.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of the service model, the expectation is that people with disabilities receive access to accessible taxis in the same standards as municipalities set for everyone.

### **Ontario Law:**

**AODA Compliance** (Section 80: Duties of Municipalities, Taxicabs ) reads: “All municipalities must identify what progress they have made in meeting the need for on-demand accessible taxicab service equivalency , including any steps that will be taken to meet the need. This information must be included in municipalities’ Accessibility Plans”.<sup>2</sup>

**The Ontario Human Rights Code** (Section 1) reads: “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, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability”.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2014/ls/bgrd/backgroundfile-66167.pdf> pg. 69

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aoda.ca/a-guide-to-the-integrated-accessibility-standards-regulation/#sect80>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90h19\\_e.htm#BK2](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm#BK2)

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