

# **Financial Services Tribunal**

## **Accessibility and Accommodation Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Financial Services Tribunal (FST) is an expert and independent adjudicative tribunal established under the *Financial Services Tribunal Act, 2017* (Act). The FST carries out adjudicative functions in connection with appeals or reviews of the decisions or notices of proposal or notices of intended decision of the Chief Executive Officer of the Financial Service Regulatory Authority under applicable legislation.

The FST is committed to the principles of accessibility and accommodation in discharging its duties under the Act.

In accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, 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 and 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 *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* 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 expressed in the *Ontario 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, sexual orientation (including pregnancy), gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability or the receipt of public assistance.

The FST will work cooperatively and in a spirit of respect with all partners in the accommodation process and will consider accessibility in its service delivery, procurement, and operational planning to promote an inclusive environment.

## **Service**

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

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

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

- Service will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all persons.
- Service will be provided in a manner that fosters physical and functional access to the FST process 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 service. 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**

An accommodation is an arrangement to allow everyone, regardless of their abilities, to participate fully in the tribunal process. The FST staff 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](mailto: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 requiring accommodation. 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](mailto:contact@fstontario.ca).

### **Adoption**

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

This revised Accessibility and Accommodation Policy was adopted by the FST Members on September 17, 2024.

*First adopted on August 3, 2021*