

Accessible Customer Service Policy

Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

Goods and services provided by Brampton-Caledon Community Living (BCCL) will respect the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of goods and services at premises owned and operated by BCCL.
- b) This policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/ or third parties that act on behalf of BCCL, including when the provision of goods and services occurs off the premises of BCCL.
- c) The section of this policy that addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at premises owned and operated by BCCL.
- d) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the BCCL's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.

Definitions

Assistive Device – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that people bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Disability – the term disability as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, refers to:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;

- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Guide Dog – is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Animal – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Service Dog – as reflected in *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562* a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability;
- or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

General Principles

In accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities;
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

BCCL will promote policies, practices and procedures that respect the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all persons receive the same value and quality;
- allowing persons with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

B. Assistive Devices Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by BCCL.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services.

Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A person with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

Exclusion Guidelines:

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law (see applicable laws below) BCCL will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario: If there is a conflict between a provision of this Act or of a regulation under this or any other Act relating to banned breeds (such as pitbulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by a municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive in relation to controls or bans on these breeds prevails.

Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, BCCL may request verification from the person.

Verification may include:

- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or,
- a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

Care and Control of the Animal:

The person that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

Allergies:

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, BCCL will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

C. Support Persons

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, BCCL will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the person is not prevented from having access to the support person.

In situations where confidential information may be discussed, consent will be obtained from the person, prior to any conversation where confidential information may be disclosed...

Admission Fees:

If payment is required by a support person for admission to a sponsored event, BCCL will ensure that notice is given in advance by posting notice of admission fees for support persons where BCCL fees are posted.

D. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of BCCL. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that persons with a disability rely on to access or use BCCL's goods or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

Notifications will Include:

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

Notifications Options:

When disruptions occur BCCL will provide notice by:

- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the BCCL website;
- contacting persons with appointments;
- verbally notifying persons when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

E. Feedback Process

BCCL shall provide people with the opportunity to provide feedback on the services it provides to people with a disability. Information about the feedback process will be readily available and notice of the process will be made available at reception areas and on our website. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (hand written, delivered, website or email), will be available upon request.

Submitting Feedback:

Submit feedback to:

- Joan McGovern, Human Resources Manager
- (905) 453 8841 Extension 1229
- 34 Church Street West, Brampton, Ontario L6X 1H3
- joanm@bramptoncaledoncl.ca
- www.bramptoncaledoncl.ca

Persons who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite feedback form or verbally can do so to any BCCL employee.

People that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

F. Training

Training will be provided to:

- a) all employees, volunteers, and agents who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of BCCL; and,
- b) those who are involved in the development and approval of policies, practices and procedures that may affect services to persons with a disability.

Training Provisions:

As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- A review of the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:
 - use assistive devices;
 - require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal; or
 - require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees).
- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities.
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.
- BCCL's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible service to persons with disabilities.

Training Schedule:

BCCL will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractor who deal with the public or act on our behalf during orientation or specific training sessions. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

Record of Training:

BCCL will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees who attended the training.

Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

Documents related to the *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service* will be available upon request and in a format that takes into account the person's disability. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place owned and operated by BCCL, the BCCL's website and/or any other reasonable method.

Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

- Joan McGovern, Human Resources Manager
- (905) 453 8841 Extension 1229
- 34 Church Street West, Brampton, Ontario L6X 1H3
- joanm@bramptoncaledoncl.ca
- www.bramptoncaledoncl.ca

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

Acknowledgement & Agreement

I, _____ (Employee Name), acknowledge that I have read and understand the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy of Brampton-Caledon Community Living (BCCL).

Further, I agree to adhere to this Policy and will ensure that employees working under my direction adhere to these guiding principles. I understand that if I violate this Policy, I may face corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Referenced Documents:

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Blind Person's Rights Act, 1990
- Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario
- Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990