

SECTION:	SUBJECT:	REVISED DATE:
ORGANIZATIONAL	AODA – ACCESSIBILITY POLICY	NOVEMBER 2024
		ORIGINAL DATE:
		NOVEMBER 2011

POLICY:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure equal access and participation for people with disabilities in the workplace in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and Ontario’s accessibility laws.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to the provision of services at locations owned and/or operated by BCCL.

This policy applies to all BCCL workers, which includes employees, volunteers, student placements, host family, and third-party personnel.

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 dev 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 locations listed in *The Blind Persons' Rights Act in Ontario*, 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.

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.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Employer:

BCCL will treat people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. BCCL will remove and prevent barriers to accessibility and meet our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and Ontario's accessibility laws.

Management:

Managers are responsible for ensuring that workers comply with the Accessibility policy.

Worker:

Workers are responsible for adhering to the Accessibility policy.

COMMUNICATION:

This policy will be communicated to all workers upon hire and made available for further reference on the BCCL internal policy site.

PROCEDURES:

Training

BCCL is committed to training all workers in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

Training includes:

- purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the customer service standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing services to people with disabilities.
- how to assist a person with a disability that is having difficulty in accessing BCCL services or locations.

BCCL trains workers on AODA during induction as part of their orientation, after hire, and communicates changes to the policies as required.

BCCL maintains records of the AODA training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

THE USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing BCCL services or locations.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access BCCL services or locations.

BCCL will ensure that its workers are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our services or locations.

COMMUNICATION

BCCL workers will communicate and work with people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability to determine what method of communication works best for them.

THE USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS

BCCL welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our locations that are open to the public and third parties.

When BCCL cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our worker may ask for documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access services or locations:

- explain why the animal is excluded
- discuss with the customer another way of providing services or accessing locations.

THE USE OF SUPPORT PERSONS

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our locations.

In certain cases, BCCL might require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of:

- the person with a disability
- others in the locations

Before making a decision, BCCL will:

- consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
- consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
- determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others in the facility.

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

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to BCCL services or locations, BCCL will notify customers including people with disabilities promptly. This clearly posted notice will

include information about the services that are disrupted or unavailable, the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative locations or services, if available.

Notifications Options:

When disruptions occur, BCCL will provide notice by:

- posting notices in conspicuous places at the locations affected
- BCCL website: www.bramptoncaledoncl.ca
- contacting persons with scheduled appointments
- verbally notifying persons when they are scheduling an appointment; or
- if requested, by an accessible method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

FEEDBACK POLICY

BCCL welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

The BCCL website details the feedback process.

BCCL ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

BCCL notifies the public that documents related to accessible services, as outlined in the Accessibility policy are available upon request. Requests can be made in the following ways:

- Verbally in person at 34 Church Street West, Brampton, Ontario L6X 1H3 or by telephone 905 453 8841 Ext. 0
- Deliver the handwritten or typed request to: 34 Church Street West, Brampton, Ontario L6X 1H3 or email info@bramptoncaledoncl.ca or fax 905 453 8853, or teletypewriter (TTY) 905 456 6911.

BCCL will provide these documents in an accessible format upon request. We will work with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

BCCL has a process for receiving and responding to feedback and the process is available to persons with disabilities upon request.

BCCL communicates with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, BCCL will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats:

- in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

BCCL will work with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format. If the organization determines that information is unconvertible, the organization shall provide the requestor with:

- an explanation as to why the information are unconvertible; and
- a summary of the unconvertible information

BCCL notifies the public about the availability of accessible formats as outlined in the Accessibility policy. Requests can be made in the following ways:

- Verbally in person at 34 Church Street West, Brampton, Ontario L6X 1H3 or by telephone 905 453 8841 Ext O
- Deliver the handwritten or typed request to: 34 Church Street West, Brampton, Ontario L6X 1H3 or email info@bramptoncaledoncl.ca or fax 905 453 8853, or teletypewriter (TTY) 905 456 6911

BCCL is working towards our commitment to ensure that our website is accessible to all users including individuals with disabilities.

BCCL is working towards adhering to internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA, which sets standards for making web content more accessible. These guidelines address a wide range of accessibility needs such as ensuring text is readable, providing alternatives for non text content such as images or videos, and ensuring that website navigation is user friendly for individuals with disabilities.

EMPLOYMENT

BCCL notifies workers, job applicants, and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment as outlined in our job advertisements. BCCL notifies job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. BCCL will consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation during the hiring process.

BCCL notifies successful applicants of policies for accommodating workers with disabilities when making offers of employment.

BCCL notifies workers that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. BCCL will provide updated information to

workers whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that take into account a worker's accessibility needs due to a disability.

BCCL will consult a worker when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the accessibility needs due to disability. BCCL will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format specifically for:

- information that is needed in order to perform the worker's job
- information that is generally available to workers in the workplace

Where needed, BCCL will also provide customized emergency information to help a worker with a disability during an emergency. With the worker's consent, BCCL will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that worker during an emergency.

BCCL will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the worker's disability.

BCCL will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- when the worker moves to a different location in the organization
- when the worker's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- when BCCL reviews its general emergency response policies.

BCCL has a process to develop individual accommodation plans for workers.

BCCL has a process for workers who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

BCCL's performance management, career development and redeployment processes takes into account the accessibility needs of all workers.

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

BCCL will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Our public spaces include:

- Accessible off-street parking
- Service-related elements like service counters and waiting areas

REVISIONS TO EXISTING POLICIES

Any policies within the organization that do fail to uphold the principles of dignity, independence, inclusion and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be revised or removed to ensure alignment with these values.

The BCCL AODA - Accessibility policy is publicly accessible, and alternate formats are available upon request to accommodate all needs.

PROCUREMENT

BCCL incorporates accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring services or if it is not possible and practical to do so, we will provide an explanation upon request.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT & UNDERSTANDING OF THE AODA – ACCESSIBILITY POLICY.

I, _____, acknowledge receipt of Brampton Caledon Community Living's AODA – Accessibility policy. I understand my duties and responsibilities and the procedures to follow under this policy.

Signature/Worker

Date