



POLICY & PROCEDURE

Department Employee Relations	Policy Number ER-05-015
Category 5 Accessibility For Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)	Issuing Authority Elizabeth Bryce
Subject Customer Service Accessibility	Effective Date February 17, 2025
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STANDARD:

The Home is committed to respecting the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities including Residents, Employees, visitors and other persons. We are also committed to providing people with disabilities the same opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the goods, services, and facilities that we make available to others.

DEFINITIONS:

For the purposes of this policy, the Home adopts the definitions set out in the AODA and Regulation 429/07, including the following:

“Disability”, means:

- (a) “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 coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impairment, 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) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- (b) a mental disorder, or
- (c) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”).

“Service Animal”, means:

An animal that is used by a person for reasons relating to his or her disability, in cases that are either readily apparent or confirmed by a letter from a regulated health professional.



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“Support Person”, means:

A person that accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist him/her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services and facilities.

PROCEDURE:

A. COMMUNICATION

1. We are committed to communicating with persons with disabilities in a respectful manner that takes into account their disability, thereby enabling them to access the goods, services and facilities provided by the Home/Community
2. We will communicate with persons with disabilities through a variety of formats, including, but limited to, large print materials, telephone, e-mail and in person.
3. When preparing materials for distribution, we will consider the format of the material and its accessibility to the target audience. We will also provide information about events and services in a variety of formats.
4. On request, we will provide information in alternative formats, wherever possible.

B. ASSISTIVE DEVICES

1. We are committed to supporting persons with disabilities to use assistive devices when necessary to access our goods and services.
2. If a person with a disability is not able to access goods, services or facilities using an assistive device, we will take all reasonable steps to assist the person in accessing the goods, services, or facilities, including the identification of alternative means to access the goods, services, or facilities.



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C. USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS AND SUPPORT PERSONS:

1. We are committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. Accommodation will be made for service animals, taking into consideration the safety of others and any applicable laws that exclude service animals. If a service animal is excluded by a law, we will put in place other measures to ensure that the person with a disability is able to access our goods, services, and facilities. **Note:** If you cannot easily identify that the animal is a service animal you can ask the person to provide documentation from a regulated health professional including: psychologist, psychotherapist, audiologist, speech-language pathologist, chiropractor, nurse, occupational therapist, physician, optometrist, registered psychotherapist and mental health therapist.
2. We are committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. The person with a disability and the support person will be permitted to enter the premises together and the person with the disability will not be prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises. In certain limited instances, we may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if the support person is needed to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability or others on the premises.
Note: In cases where the Home/Community requires a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for health or safety reasons the Home/Community will consult with the person with the disability to understand their needs; consider health and safety reasons based on available evidence; determine if there is any other way to protect the health and safety of the person or others on the premises; in this situation waive any fee that may exist for the support person.



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D. TEMPORARY SERVICE DISRUPTIONS:

- 1) We are committed to making all reasonable efforts to provide notice of a planned or unexpected disruption in our goods, services, or facilities. The notice of the disruption will:
 - i) Include information about the reason for the disruption, including its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, and
 - ii) Be posted at a conspicuous place on the premises, including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption, or communicated in alternative manner that is reasonable in the circumstances.

E. TRAINING OF STAFF:

We will ensure that staff, volunteers and contractors receive training about our provision of goods services and facilities to persons with disabilities. Training will include the require AODA standards

F. RECORDKEEPING:

Records will be kept of the training provided under Surge Learning annually.

G. FEEDBACK PROCESS:

1. We are committed to seeking and responding to feedback on the provision of our goods, services, and facilities to persons with disabilities. The feedback process will be made accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.
2. We welcome feedback as it encourages continuous improvement in our goods, services and facilities and gives us opportunities to improve our performance.



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3. Feedback about the delivery of goods, services and facilities to persons with disabilities may be provided by completing the Accessibility Feedback form; online; or via email, telephone, or mail.
4. We will ensure that we review all feedback provided and will deliver a response within fourteen (14) days.

H. NOTICE and DOCUMENTATION of POLICIES, PRACTICES and PROCEDURES:

1. We will ensure that we notify all persons receiving goods and services or facilities from the Home/Community that the documents required by Regulation 429/07 and amendments that came into effect in July 2016 are available upon request.
2. The above notice will be posted at a conspicuous place on the premises or communicated in another manner that is reasonable in the circumstances.
3. The Home will submit an Accessibility Compliance Report in accordance with requirements of the AODA.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES:

1. *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, including Regulations 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.*
2. *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service: Getting Started Guide for Employers* (Prepared by Government of Ontario)