

POLICY: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service **PAGE:** 1 of 3

SECTION: Human Resources

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Sept. 22, 2011

BOARD APPROVED DATE: Sept. 22, 2011

1. PURPOSE:

Community Living London is committed to ensuring that supports and services provided by employees, students and volunteers are offered in a manner that is based upon the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. All supports and services are offered in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians Act 2005 (AODA) and Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service).

2. POLICY:

Community Living London strives at all times to provide its support, services and information in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all customers including people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as others. It is our expectation that all contractors hired by the agency adhere to the legislated customer service requirements.

3. PROCEDURES:

Community Living London is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

Communication

- We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their ability.
- We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people of all abilities.
- We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service and will offer to communicate by various means, (e.g. in person, e-mail, Bell IP relay service and Bell relay service 1-800-855-0511).
- Request for Alternate Format form will be made accessible at all points of contact (Reception, Website, etc.) and reasonable effort will be made to meet the request.

Assistive devices

- We are committed to serving persons who use assistive devices to access our programs and services.
- Applicable staff will be trained on any assistive devices available on our premises.

Billing

- We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request: (hard copy, large print, e-mail).
- We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or e-mail.

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Service Animals:

- A person with a disability accompanied by a service animal is permitted to enter Community Living London's premises with the animal unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. Should a service animal be excluded from the premises then Community Living London shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and/or services.
- Section 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards on Customer Service indicates that an animal is a service animal if (1) it is readily apparent that the animal is being used for reasons related to a person's disability; or (2) if the person provides a letter from the doctor or nurse confirming that the animal is required for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Persons:

- If a support person accompanies a person with a disability, the organization ensures that both parties are permitted to enter the premises together, and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person.
- Where fees for programs, goods and services are advertised or promoted by the organization, it will provide in advance, notice of the amount payable, if any, in respect of the support person.

Disruption of Services:

Community Living London will give notice of temporary disruptions to service or facilities used by persons with disabilities including the reason(s) for the disruption. The notice shall be posted at the facility and on the web site when appropriate. If the service disruption is unplanned or is due to inclement weather, the public will be notified of program cancellation through Radio (CFPL 980 AM or Q 97.5 FM) and Community Living London's website. When the disruption is planned, advanced notice will be provided.

Training for Staff:

All employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or third parties, and those involved in developing customer service policies, practices and procedures, receive Accessible Customer Service training. The organization keeps records of the training provided, including dates training is provided and number of persons trained. The training will be provided upon hire and then on an as-needed basis should there be changes in policies, practices and procedures. The training includes the following:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the requirements of the customer service standard;
- How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disability;
- 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 equipment or devices available on the organization's premises or provided by the organization that may help with the provision of goods and services;
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the organization's programs, goods or services; and

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- The process to provide feedback to the organization about the provision of services to persons with disabilities in any department and how the organization responds to the feedback and takes action on any complaint.

Notice of Availability of Documents:

This document and other policies and practices related to the provision of goods and services for people with disabilities will be advertised through a variety of methods (Agency's website and Reception areas) to ensure the public is aware of their existence. These documents will be made available on request and when an alternate format is requested all reasonable effort will be made to provide them in the requested format.

Feedback Process:

The ultimate goal of Community Living London is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving all customers, including customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way Community Living London provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by e-mail, verbally, and using the feedback form. All feedback will be directed to the Executive Director or designate. Customers providing their contact information can expect to hear back in 3 business days.

Modifications to this or other policies

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. To this end, all policies will be reviewed by management and to ensure compliance to relevant legislation.

Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to, any member of management or the President of the Board of Directors of Community Living London.

Please Refer to:

Alternative Format Request Form
Customer Service Feedback Form
Complaint/Concern Form
Response to Complaint/Concern Policy