



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

POLICY NO:	1-1-03
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DATE:	February 2012
REV. DATE:	July 2016

SUBJECT: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY - SERVICE STANDARDS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

POLICY:

Ongwanada is dedicated to supporting people with developmental disabilities and their families, recognizing their independence and dignity. Ongwanada is further committed to the delivery of accessible, quality service to all individuals with visible and non-visible disabilities, including visitors and members of the public, in keeping with its obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005, S.O.2005, and c.11. To that end, the organization will ensure that those aspects of its operations open and accessible to members of the public are in compliance with the Act. Publically accessible services are located only at Ongwanada Resource Centre, 191 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston and include pharmacy, cafeteria, diagnostic imaging, hydrotherapy pool and snoezelen room services. Service standards for persons with disabilities are available to the public online through the Ongwanada website and through a hard-copy brochure.

The latest approved version of this policy is found on the Ongwanada website.

Definition:

"Disability"¹:

- 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 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,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) a mental disorder, or
- e) 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").

Core Principles for Accessible Customer Service

Dignity

Dignity means providing service in ways that allow the customer to maintain his or her self-respect and the respect of other people. It means not treating persons with disabilities as an afterthought or forcing them to access lesser service, quality or convenience. It means providing service in ways that show customers are valued and deserving of effective and full service. It means understanding and respecting the various ways people can effectively access and use services.

Independence

Independence means providing service in ways that ensures people are able to do things on their own, in their own way, without unnecessary help or interference or influence from others. It means providing individuals with the freedom to make their own choices about how to receive services.

¹ Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07



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Integration

Integration means providing service in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers. It means that policies, practices and procedures are designed to be accessible to everyone including people with disabilities.

Equal/Equitable Opportunity

Equal opportunity means providing services in ways that allow individuals with disabilities to have the same chances, options, benefits and results of Ongwanada services as others. It means that persons with disabilities should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain service or to access lesser quality of service or experience greater inconvenience.

1.0 PROCEDURE

1.1 Assistive Devices / Service Animals

A person with a disability is permitted to use their own personal assistive devices or those which may be offered while accessing our services.

A person with a disability is permitted to bring their service animal on to the publically accessible areas of the premises, except where another law specifically excludes animals from the premises. Service animals should not be touched, fed or interacted with while the animal is working. If a service animal is excluded by law, then other measures will be made to provide access to services to the person with a disability.

1.2 Support Persons

A person with a disability may be accompanied by their support person when on the publically accessible areas of the premises. If there are fees for specific services or events, the person will be advised ahead of time what, if any admission will be charged for a support person.

1.3 Temporary Disruption of Service

The public will be advised to the extent possible when facilities or services that people with disabilities may use or may access are temporarily unavailable, whether planned or unplanned. Notification will indicate the reason for the disruption, the expected duration, and a description of alternate facilities or services, if available. Written notifications will be placed on the appropriate entrance doors and on the Ongwanada website.

1.4 Information and Communication

Written and personal communication with persons with disabilities will respect their needs and take into account their disability. Appropriate, respectful "people first" language will be used. Upon request, information will be provided in an appropriate, accessible format.

1.5 Training

1.5.1 Staff training on accessible, quality service will be provided to all employees, volunteers and others who may work within the Ongwanada Resource Centre.



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1.5.2 Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Ongwanada's policy related to accessible customer service
- How to interact 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 any equipment or devices available at Ongwanada to assist with providing goods or services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing Ongwanada's goods or services.

1.5.3 A training log will be maintained identifying:

- the names of staff receiving training and
- the content of the training

1.6 Feedback Process

Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public through:

- the Ongwanada Website
- signage in common areas of the buildings available to the public
- brochure (standard and large print)

Upon request, Ongwanada will ensure the feedback process is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible format and communication supports.

In an effort to provide quality care to our clients and the Kingston community, Ongwanada shall promptly investigate any reported complaint related to the delivery of services and take action as deemed appropriate.

1.6.1 Initiating a Complaint

Complaints regarding services may be submitted in person, by telephone, in writing, or by email or other appropriate means to the Chief Financial & Administrative Officer containing the following information:

- A clear description of the event giving rise to the complaint
- The date, time, location and parties involved in the event
- Resolution being requested (if any)
- The complainants full mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address.

The Chief Financial & Administrative Officer will initiate an investigation of all complaints related to services, and who will, if required, initiate appropriate measures to address the complaint.

1.6.2 Feedback and Follow-up



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The Chief Financial & Administrative Officer /delegate shall:

- a) Report back to the complainant the findings of any investigation and how Ongwanada has acted on the complaint.
- b) Ensure documentation of any approved action or follow-up.

All complaints shall be investigated and feedback given to the person initiating the complaint within 14 days.

1.6.3 Corrective Action

- a) The Chief Executive Officer/delegate shall review any recommended corrective action items from the Chief Financial & Administrative Officer.
- b) Any corrective action taken as a result of a complaint shall be monitored by Chief Financial & Administrative Officer.
- c) The complainant with the disability will be consulted to determine if the corrective action meets their needs.

1.6.4 Reporting of Complaints

All records of complaint will be monitored through Ongwanada's Continuous Quality Improvement process. If a pattern of recurring complaints is recognized, steps will be taken to analyze the overall problem and make appropriate changes.

Multi-Year Plan

- 1.0 Ongwanada's Planning Committee will prepare a five-year plan, in consultation with individuals with disabilities. This plan will be posted on the Ongwanada website and a status update will be completed on an annual basis.

2.0 LEAD PERSON

Lead Person: Chief Executive Officer
 Delegated Manager: Chief Financial & Administrative Officer

3.0 FORMS

Application For Use of the Hydrotherapy Pool

4.0 RELATED POLICIES

2-1-10 Client Rights
 1-14-01 Continuous Quality Improvement



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- Legislation: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- References: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005, S.O.2005, c.11.
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), under Part IV.I of O Reg. 191/11
Guide to Accessibility Standards for Customer Services, Ontario Regulation 429/07
Human Rights Cost, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19

5.0 NEXT REVIEW DATE July, 2019 or as required by updates to regulations



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Appendix A

"Barriers"

A barrier is anything that keeps someone from fully participating in all aspects of society. Barriers can be visible or non-visible. Furthermore, while barriers are often unintentional, they can restrict access to good and services. Common barriers include:

Attitude

Attitudinal barriers are about our assumptions, beliefs, thoughts and fears. Attitudes can be shaped by our knowledge, previous experience, stereotypes and what we hear and see from media and others. Attitudes can significantly impact how we view, interact and treat people with disabilities.

Architectural or Structural

Architectural or structural barriers may result from design elements of a building such as stairs, doorways the width of hallways, and room layout. Everyday practices such as where boxes are stored, if accessible pathways are obstructed, the layout of an office or a meeting room can also create barriers.

Information or Communication

Information or communication barriers affect access to public information, opportunities to express oneself and access to essential services. Communication barriers interfere with the ability of people to participate in life and to obtain services.

Only providing printed material in small print size, low colour contrast between text and background or not facing the person when speaking - can make it difficult for a growing number of people to receive or convey information. Only accepting information in paper format, and not allowing or using electronic communication and information sharing can equally present barriers to people with a range of disabilities.

Technology

Technology, or lack of it, can prevent people from accessing information. Common tools like computers, telephones and other aids can all present barriers if they are not set up or designed with accessibility in mind. Using only recorded messages, sending out documents or information as images or inaccessible pdf's, requiring people to use an online service but having an inaccessible website can also create barriers for people with disabilities.

Systemic

Systemic barriers arise when policies, practices and procedures support some groups without considering or understanding the needs of others. Having policies that treat everyone the same, regardless of circumstance can create barriers for some groups. For example, a policy that does not allow for persons to obtain a copy of a lease agreement ahead of the actual lease signing meeting can create barriers for people with vision loss or learning disabilities who may not be given the opportunity to read or review the lease before signing.



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Service Standards for Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Assistive devices

We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

Information and Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are permitted on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. If it cannot be easily identified that the animal is a service animal, the person may be asked to provide documentation from a regulated health professional. The documentation must confirm that the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Support persons

A person with a disability may require a support person for health and safety reasons i.e. use of the hydrotherapy pool. Prior determination will be completed by the person's physician and recorded on the *Application For Use of the Hydrotherapy Pool*. The admission fee or fare for the support person will be waived.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, **Ongwanada** will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at Ongwanada buildings open to the public, on our website and social media.

Training for staff

Ongwanada will provide training to employees, volunteers and others whose principal location is the Ongwanada Resource Centre. Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service plan and policy.

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The training will be available on the Ongwanada website. Upon request, the training will be available in accessible formats.

Feedback process

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way **Ongwanada** provides goods and services to people with disabilities can **be submitted verbally, in writing or by e-mail to the** Chief Human Resources & Information Officer. Customers can expect to hear back in **14 business days**. Complaints will be addressed according to Ongwanada's complaint management procedures.

Upon request, Ongwanada will accessible formats and communication supports ensuring the feedback process is accessible.