

**CENTRETOWN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

ORGANISATIONAL

No: ORG 1-18	Title: CCHC ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (AODA)		
Approved By: Management	Signature: 		
Approved: November 2013	Next Review: November 2017	Page: 1 of 4	

POLICY

CCHC welcomes and encourages people with disabilities to use its services and will provide access in a way that respects their rights to dignity, independence and integration.

This commitment is consistent with CCHC's mission to deliver services in a welcoming and supportive environment and with CCHC's core values of equity, accessibility, diversity and fairness in the treatment of all individuals. CCHC will establish practices and procedures that support the accessibility standards established under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA") on customer service, information and communication, employment and the built environment.

CCHC will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of people with disabilities. Reasonable efforts are defined as providing the best possible service within the context of: available resources, balancing the needs of people with disabilities or others who may encounter barriers to access with those of the community at large, safeguarding the health and safety of CCHC service providers.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that CCHC meets or exceeds the standards set by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA") and its regulations. The policy applies to the delivery of all programs and services provided by the Centre.

DEFINITION

CCHC uses the definition of disability as per the AODA. A disability can include:

- a) physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement;
- b) mental impairment or developmental disability
- c) learning disability
- d) mental disorder; and
- e) an injury or disability for which government benefits are received.

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PROCEDURES

1. Commitment to Accessible Standards

1.1. CCHC will consider the individual needs of people with disabilities in delivering service by:

- Considering individual and special needs when following CCHC policies and procedures
- Communicating with people in a way that meets their needs
- Welcoming feedback and suggestions about services in a variety of formats
- Welcoming accompanying support people
- Offering a range of assistive devices such as wheelchairs
- Welcoming service animals
- Letting people know if services are not available where possible, for example, if a program is going to be closed or if the website is not available
- Ensuring that emergency responses address accessibility
- Training staff and volunteers to provide the best possible service
- Providing a forum for addressing concerns or challenges associated with accessing our services including phone numbers and key contact information
- Providing opportunities for continuous improvement and regular review of accessibility policies and procedures

2. Principles

- 2.1. **Dignity** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people. People with disabilities are not treated as an afterthought or forced to accept lesser service, quality or convenience.
- 2.2. **Independence** – allowing a person with a disability to do things on their own without unnecessary help, or interference from others.
- 2.3. **Integration** – service is provided 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 clients, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable the person to access services.
- 2.4. **Equal opportunity** – people with disabilities have an opportunity equal to that given to others to access services.

3. Accountability

3.1. The CCHC Board of Directors and Management Team are accountable to employees, clients, the community served and to the Government of Ontario for meeting the standards set by the AODA and its regulations.

4. Communication

4.1. Program staff and volunteers will communicate with people with disabilities in a way that is considerate of their needs.

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5. Training for Staff and Volunteers

5.1. CCHC will continue to train staff and volunteers to meet the needs of people with disabilities. This includes the mandatory training requirements in the AODA and its regulations.

6. Feedback process

6.1. CCHC welcomes customer feedback and makes information available to all customers on how to provide feedback. Feedback is accepted by CCHC in a variety of formats. Staff assistance is available to support all residents, including people with disabilities, in providing feedback.

7. Requests for Accommodation under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*

7.1. CCHC will continue to meet the standards set by the Ontario Human Rights Code. Where a request for accommodation is made, CCHC will strive to provide accommodation in a way that most respects the dignity of the person. CCHC recognizes that people with disabilities may require individualized accommodation and that each person's needs are unique. Accommodation will be provided unless CCHC experiences "undue hardship" as defined in the Code.

8. Specific Directives – Customer Service Standard

8.1. The following directives address the requirements established by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 ("Customer Service Standard").

a) Provision of Services

In keeping with CCHC values of providing free and equitable access in a welcoming and supportive environment, CCHC will:

- Provide services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities and provides them with an equal opportunity to learn about, use or benefit from CCHC's services.
- Integrate services for people with disabilities. CCHC understands that equitable access sometimes requires different treatment including separate or specialized services. However, such services will be offered in a way that respects the dignity and full participation of people with disabilities.

b) Service Animals

CCHC continues to welcome service animals that are needed to assist people with disabilities.

c) Support people

CCHC welcomes people with disabilities and accompanying support people to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or to access goods or services.

d) Assistive Devices

CCHC offers a broad range of assistive devices to meet the needs of people with disabilities and will make reasonable efforts to permit the use of assistive devices that enable people with disabilities to use CCHC's services. CCHC defines an assistive device as a tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person

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with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities such as moving, communicating or lifting (examples include walkers, magnifiers for reading, etc.).

e) Employee Training

Under the OADA legislation, CCHC is required to provide staff with accessibility standard training, and will do so as follows:

i) Current Employees

Current CCHC employees will take part in an interactive training program using the e-learning tool provided by the Ministry of Child and Social Services entitled, Serve-Ability: Transforming Ontario's Customer Service.

ii) New Employees

All new employees will receive the same training as above on an individual basis as part of the Centre's orientation process. This training will be coordinated by the Human Resources Assistant who has been provided with the resources necessary (desk and laptop with the e-learning module) to deliver the training.

iii) Content of Employee Training

- Introduction to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability legislation
- Goal and mandate of the AODA
- Overview of AODA Standards and related legislative requirements
- Definition of disability and types of disabilities
- Barriers to accessibility
- Principles of effective client services
- Proper etiquette for interacting with people with disabilities
- How to recognize and respond appropriately to people using personal supports, service animals and assistive technology

f) Notice of temporary service disruption

CCHC will provide notice of service disruptions that affect clients with disabilities, including the reason for the disruption, the length of the disruption, and a description of available alternatives, if any. In the event of an unplanned disruption, notice will be provided as quickly as possible.

g) Information and Documentation on Accessible Customer Service

CCHC will document its policies, practices and procedures as required by the Customer Service Standard. These documents will be posted on the Centre's website and made available in a variety of formats upon request.

REFERENCES

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#), S.O. 2005, c.11