

POLICY STATEMENT

PURPOSE

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the 'AODA') and Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" which came into effect January 1, 2008.

It is the policy of Community Living Dufferin that people with disabilities achieve accessibility to the provision of services, provided by Community Living Dufferin, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, inclusion, and equality of opportunity as set out in the regulation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **Assistive Devices** – as defined in the Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, is a technical aide, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to walkers, canes, wheelchairs, hearing aids or oxygen tanks.
2. **Barrier** – as defined in the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.
3. **Disability** – as defined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Human Rights Code is:
 - 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,
 - a condition of mental impairment or developmental disability,
 - a learning disability, or a 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 benefit were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997;

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4. **Guide Dog** – as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07 and section one (1) of the Blind Persons Rights Act is a dog trained as a guide for a person who is blind and having qualifications prescribed by the regulations under the Blind Persons Rights Act.
5. **Premises** – all locations owned and operated by Community Living Dufferin where people have access including but not limited to family members of people supported, volunteers, and staff.
6. **Service Animal** – as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07 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
7. **Support Person** – as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07 in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES:

1. Providing Services to People with Disabilities

Community Living Dufferin is committed to excellence in providing supports and services to people with disabilities and will carry out all functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

- The services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of services to persons with disabilities and others must be inclusive unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the services.
- Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the services.

2. Communication with Persons with Disabilities

When communicating with people with disabilities, Community Living Dufferin will do so in a manner that will take into account their disability.

3. Assistive Devices

The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from Community Living Dufferin's services will be recognized unless otherwise prohibited due to health and safety of privacy issues. In these situations, Community Living Dufferin may offer a person with a disability other reasonable, measure to assist him or her in obtaining and using Community Living Dufferin's services where applicable.

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It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operating in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

4. Use of Guide Dogs, Services Animals and Support Persons

Community Living Dufferin is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. Community Living Dufferin will ensure that all employees and volunteers dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or service animal. In areas where animals may be excluded by policy restrictions or law CLD will ensure that an alternative measures are available to ensure people can access services.

Community Living Dufferin is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person and will be allowed to enter Community Living Dufferin's premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

Fees will not be charged for the support person for admission to recreation programs. Where admission fees for the support person are applicable, Community Living Dufferin will provide advance notice of the fee.

Community Living Dufferin may deem it necessary to require a support person for a person with a disability in order to protect the health and safety of that person or of others on the premises. This will only occur after consultation with the person with a disability and when it's the only means to allow the person with a disability to access Community Living Dufferin's services.

5. Service Disruptions

Community Living Dufferin will provide notice to applicable people in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at the applicable premise or by communicated by other methods as it is reasonable under the circumstances which could include a website notice or direct customer contact. In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

An example of a Notice of Disruption is a form referenced in this policy as "Notice of Service Disruption" (ADPF 7.1) to this policy.

6. Feedback Process

The goal of Community Living Dufferin is to meet expectations of people who are supported while welcoming family members and other visitors. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcomed and appreciated. Feedback may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements.

Feedback regarding the provision of services to people with disabilities can be made in person, by phone, e-mail, in writing or through the mail. A form for feedback or suggestions is available through the CLD website under “policies” as well as on site as a form associated with this policy, “Feedback and Concerns Form” ADPF 7.1. All feedback will be directed to the Executive Director or Director of Adult Services. Community Living Dufferin will address the feedback within five (5) business days of its receipt. The Executive Director or the Director of Adult Services will inform the person submitting the feedback form of the outcome of the review process.

Once the concern has been addressed the Feedback and Concerns Form will be directed to the Systems Manager who will use the information to identify and address systems issues discovered during the review process.

Training for Staff

Community Living Dufferin will provide training to all employees and volunteers who support people with disabilities or come in contact with any other person who may access our premises, and all those who are involved in the in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedure.

This training will be provided during the six (6) month probationary period for employees. It will be the responsibility of the Manager of the Department to ensure that employees are familiar with the Customer Service Standard following the initial staff training in April 2010.

Training will include:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard
- 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 service animal or support person
- How to use the equipment or devices available on Community Living Dufferin’s premises or otherwise that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Community Living Dufferin’s goods and services
- Community Living Dufferin’s policies, practices, and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

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- Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities.

Following the training, there will be a short review of the material in the form of a quiz and an acknowledgement of the training provided by the employee, trainer, and Director or Manager.

7. Questions Regarding the Policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellent to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of the policy is not understood, an explanation will be provided upon request to the Executive Director or Director of Adult Services.

Community Living Dufferin shall provide notice that upon request, it will provide a copy of the policies, practices and procedures required under Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person. A copy of this policy is available upon request by contacting the Director of Adult Services and a copy is also available on Community Living Dufferin’s website www.communitylivingdufferin.ca

If Community Living Dufferin is requested to provide a person with a disability a document or information, Community Living Dufferin will take into the communication needs of the person with a disability and endeavors to provide the information to the person in a format that takes into account the person’s disability.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person

FORMS FOR USE WITH THESE PROCEDURES

ADPF 7.1 Feedback and Concerns Form
ADPF 7.2 Notice of Service Disruption

CORE COMPETENCIES RELATED TO THIS POLICY

Advocating for Others
Interpersonal Relations and Respect

Procedures Approved by Executive Director: Date: April 1, 2010	Policy Approved by the Board of Directors Date: April 1, 2010
Procedures Updated: August 2010 May 10, 2012, February 3, 2016, Aug 19, 2016	Policy Updated: