

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Client Service Standard [Approved 2014 09 17]

Purpose

To provide accessibility guidelines in order to meet KCHC's responsibilities under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA") and Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service).

A. Policy Statement

KCHC is committed to providing appropriate client service to clients with disabilities.¹ This Policy is based on and adheres to the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for clients with disabilities.

Staff will respond to clients requiring accessible client service in a respectful manner, with the appropriate accessibility tools that KCHC has available.

This policy is available in alternate formats upon request.

B. To Whom this Policy Applies

This Policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and contractors who provide services to clients within KCHC or on its behalf (collectively referred to as "staff").

C. "Disability" Defined

This Policy adopts the definition of "disability" provided by the Human Rights Code, s. 10 (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 co-ordination, 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")

¹ In this policy, "client" includes "customer," as that word is used in the AODA and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07.

D. Confidentiality

All interactions between KCHC employees and clients about the application of this policy shall be considered confidential and may be disclosed only as required to provide appropriate client service or as required by law.

E. Feedback

The goal of this policy is to meet service delivery expectations while serving clients with disabilities. Comments on how well those expectations are being met are appreciated.

KCHC will inform clients of methods for giving feedback. If a method is not suitable, clients may request another way of providing their comments.

Privacy will be respected and all feedback will be reviewed for action that may be taken to improve KCHC services. Feedback received by KCHC will be directed to a contact person at the appropriate program.

F. Complaints

Complaints shall be dealt with according to the Client Services Policy Manual, “J. Complaint Policy and Procedure.” Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide the response in a format that is accessible to the person who provided the comments.

G. Documentation to Be Made Available

This document is available to any member of the public on the website and will be made available in any accessible format by request.

H. Practices and Procedures

KCHC is committed to using reasonable efforts in providing services to all clients including clients with disabilities and will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

(i) Communication

KCHC is committed to ensuring its staff are aware of how to interact and communicate with clients with various types of disabilities in ways that take into account the person’s disability and will provide appropriate training to its employees.

(ii) Personal Assistive Devices

KCHC is committed to ensuring its staff is aware of and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients with disabilities while accessing our services.

KCHC will ensure its staff dealing with clients with disabilities receive training on how to interact with clients who may utilize various assistive devices while accessing our services.

KCHC will inform clients of the assistive devices that are available at their various locations and ensure staff know how to use them.

(iii) Guide Dogs and Service Animals

A “guide dog” is a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by R.R.O. 1990, Regulation 58 (“Guide dogs”) under the *Blind Persons’ Rights Act*.

An animal is a “service animal” for a person with a disability if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reason relating to their disability or if the person provides a letter from a physician or a nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

KCHC is committed to ensuring its staff welcomes clients with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or service animal in the areas of our premises that are open to the public.

KCHC will ensure its staff dealing with clients are trained on how to interact with clients with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or service animal.

On rare occasions, such as when other laws need to be considered, a manager may determine that a support person is required, or that a guide dog or service animal cannot enter an area of the premises. In these cases, managers will suggest appropriate alternatives and provide assistance.

(iv) Support Persons

A “support person” is a person who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services.

KCHC is committed to ensuring its staff are welcoming to clients with disabilities. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to that person while on our premises.

KCHC will ensure its staff dealing with clients are trained on how to interact with clients with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person.

In situations in which privacy and consent issues are applicable, a support person may be subject to the same confidentiality requirements as the person with a disability whom they are assisting. A support person may be required to sign a waiver with respect to any privacy or confidentiality issues.

(v) Notice of Temporary Disruption:

KCHC shall provide notice of temporary disruptions. The notice shall include information about:

- the reason for the disruption,
- its anticipated duration, and
- any available alternative services.

In the event of a temporary disruption in service the following steps shall be taken:

- The staff member shall notify their immediate manager/coordinator of the temporary disruption, who shall in turn notify a director
- A director or manager will approve the announcement and decide which sites it applies to
- The staff member responsible for updating the website shall post a temporary disruption note
- The director or manager shall ensure a notice is posted in a conspicuous location at the site of the disruption.
- Program staff may notify persons receiving services by telephone.
- This notice shall be provided in accessible formats.

This notice shall be provided in accessible formats.

I. Training for Staff

KCHC provides training to all staff, volunteers, students, agents, contractors, and others who deal with clients and all those who are involved in the development and approval of this Policy.

Training includes the following:

- The purposes of the *AODA* and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- A review of this Policy
- How to interact and communicate with clients with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with clients with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or service animal or a support person
- What to do if a client with a disability is having difficulty accessing services

New hires shall be trained within two weeks of their hire date and employees returning from leave shall be trained within two weeks of their return date.

Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis when changes are made to this Policy.

In locations where organization-provided equipment or devices are available to assist clients with disabilities to access KCHC's services, staff will receive the relevant training/instruction on how to use the equipment or devices. Staff will also be trained when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

A record of the dates on which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided shall be maintained by Human Resources.

AODA Orientation shall be incorporated into the Orientation Program.

KCHC shall offer whatever other training is required by law.

J. Questions about this Policy

The goal of this policy is to help achieve service excellence to clients with disabilities. If you have any questions, concerns or requests, please contact the Human Resources Manager.

KCHC is committed to ensuring that their employees respect and promote the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.