

| Policy Number: | Policy Name: | |
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| HR - 34 | Accessible Customer Service Policy | |
| Oversight Department: | Original Approval Date | Revision Number |
| People & Culture | 03-September-2024 | NA |
| Approved By: | Next Review Date | Revision Date |
| Director, People & Culture | <03-September-2026> | NA |

1. BACKGROUND / PURPOSE

Canadian Mental Health Association Hasting Prince Edward (CMHA HPE) is committed to the objectives of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (“AODA”) and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

CMHA HPE will continue to provide barrier free goods and services to persons with disabilities consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

CMHA HPE has developed this customer service policy to comply with the requirements under the AODA.

2. SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all employees, volunteers and contractors at CMHA HPE.

3. COMMITMENT

CMHA HPE supports accessibility across all the locations it operates in, specifically the principles of AODA and is committed to meeting the requirements of these regulations. CMHA HPE will work to prevent and remove barriers and to provide fair and effective accommodation for people with disabilities. We believe in integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner.

CMHA HPE is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the applicable Human Rights legislation respecting non-discrimination and accommodation.

4. POLICY

One of the five standards developed under the AODA is the Customer Service

Standard. The standard outlines specific requirements for all organizations with one or more employees. CMHA HPE is committed to providing barrier-free services and equal treatment of clients, meeting all applicable legislative requirements including those under the Customer Service Standard. Goods and services will be provided in a manner that is based on the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all stakeholders.

5. PROCEDURES

Customer Service:

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will train employees and volunteers who communicate with clients on how to interact and communicate with people with various disabilities.

Telephone Services

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our clients. We will train employees and volunteers to communicate with clients over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. We will offer to communicate with clients by email, in person or with the assistance of a support person, if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

Assistive Devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients with disabilities while accessing our goods or services. We will allow all clients to use their assistive devices while receiving services from CMHA HPE. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, alternative measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

Service Animals and Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will also ensure that all employees, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

If the guide dog/service animal is not wearing a visible vest or harness, we may require

documentation to be shown from one of these regulated health professionals:

- Audiologist or speech-language pathologist
- Chiropractor
- Nurse
- Occupational therapist
- Optometrist
- Physician or surgeon
- Physiotherapist
- Psychologist
- Psychotherapist or mental health therapist

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a 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.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

CMHA HPE will provide clients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to 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 all public entrances on our premises.

Training

All employees and volunteers, and those who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf and individuals who participate in or who are responsible for development and implementation of policies will be provided with the below training.

The training will include:

- An overview of the applicable legislation (i.e AODA in Ontario)
- The requirements under the applicable Customer Service Standard
- An overview of the applicable Human Rights legislation
- How to interact with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device
- How to interact with people who use the assistance of a service animal
- How to interact with people who use a support person
- How to use any equipment or devices available at the workplace to assist with providing goods or services to persons with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our organization's goods or services

New employees will be trained within a timeframe which is dependent upon the position they

are hired for, and retrained if changes are made to the plan.

Feedback

CMHA HPE will continue to ensure that the processes for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

CMHA HPE welcomes feedback from any individual (including clients and suppliers) in person, by telephone, in writing, or by e-mail.

In person or by mail:
People & Culture Department
250 Sidney Street, Belleville ON K8P 3Z3

By telephone: 613-967-4734
By email: hrgeneral@cmhahpe.ca

6. WHERE TO GET SUPPORT

This policy is publicly available and is in place to achieve service excellence to clients with disabilities. If you have questions, please contact People & Culture at hrgeneral@cmhahpe.ca