

---

# ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

## Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

*Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres (HWCCCC) is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code and AODA respecting non-discrimination. We are committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.*

All goods and services provided by Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

## Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of goods and services at any premises owned and or operated by Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres.
- b) This policy applies to employees, volunteers, and contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres, including when the provision of goods and services occurs off the premises of Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres.
- c) The section of the policy addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at premises owned and operated by Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres.
- d) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres' policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.

## Assistive devices

Assistive devices are technical aids, communication devices or other instruments that are used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading. People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

## Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This may include the following:

- Interpreter
- Large Print
- Verbally
- TTY (Telephone device for the hearing impaired)

We will work with the person with a disability to determine what method of communication works for them.

## Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Optometrists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded

- discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services or facilities

## Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

In certain cases, HWCCCC might require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of:

- the person with a disability
- others on the premises

Before making a decision, HWCCCC will:

- consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
- consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
- determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises

## Notice of temporary disruption

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

The notice will be made publicly available in the following ways:

- Web Site
- Phone Messaging System
- Posting at Location

## Training

HWCCCC will provide accessible customer service training to:

- all employees and volunteers
- anyone involved in developing our policies
- anyone who provides goods, services or facilities to customers on our behalf.

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service within 1 month of being hired.

Training will include:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- HWCCCC policies related to 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 a service animal or a support person
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing HWCCCC goods, services or facilities

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

## Feedback process

HWCCCC welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Customers will be notified on how to provide feedback in the following ways:

- policy posting at each location
- AODA Customer service handout in reception area
- website

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way HWCCCC provides goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

- onsite customer feedback forms
- email provided on the organizations website
- phone

Customers that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted. Customers can expect to hear back within 2 business days.

HWCCCC will make sure our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

## Notice of availability of documents

HWCCCC will provide this, or any other, document in an accessible format or with communication support, upon request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

## Modifications to this or other policies

Any policies of HWCCCC that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.