




POLICY: Accessibility Standards Policy				
Policy #	Section:	Effective:	Reviewed:	Approved By:
7- 72	Human Resources	Jan. 1/12	April, 2018	

POLICY:

Sudbury Developmental Services (SDS) is committed to equal access to goods and services and is obligated to facilitate the implementation of *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (AODA)* and Ontario Regulation 429/07, “Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.”

SDS makes every effort to ensure its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles described in the Regulation, namely:

1. Goods or services are provided in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities are integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporary or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain or benefit from the goods or services.
3. Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services. O.Reg. 429/07, s. 3 (2).

SDS will make every effort to ensure that our policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

PURPOSE:

To establish Accessibility Standards for ensuring that all persons receiving services and supports from SDS experience an optimally accessible environment.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and students of Sudbury Developmental Services.

RESPONSIBILITY:

All employees, volunteers and students.

DEFINITIONS:

“**Accessible**” shall mean services or goods that are capable of being easily understood or appreciated; easy to get at; capable of being reached, or entered; obtained.

“**Alternative format**” shall mean any other ways of publishing information beyond traditional printing (i.e. large print, audio format, etc)

“**Assistive devices**” shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc)

“Customers” shall mean any person who receives goods or services

“Disability” shall be as per the Ontario Human Rights Code definition:

- 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,
- a condition of mental impairment or a 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 benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

“Employees, Volunteers, Students” shall mean every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Association, whether the person does so as an employee, student, volunteer or otherwise

“Persons with Disabilities” shall mean those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code

“Service Animals” shall mean any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability

“Support persons” shall mean any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend, who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

PROCEDURES:

PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

SDS is committed to excellence in serving all persons including persons with disabilities and carries out its functions and responsibilities to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following:

- (a) Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- (b) The provision of SDS’s goods and services to persons with disabilities is integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services;

NOTE: All contractors who are engaged to provide services for SDS are required to sign off that they adhere to the legislated customer service requirements.

COMMUNICATION

To ensure the best possible customer service, SDS encourages open two-way communication with all persons interacting with the agency to ensure the need for accommodation or assistance is met.

Persons who identify themselves as requiring alternative communication formats will be offered alternative communication in a format that meets their needs as promptly as is feasible.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Persons with disabilities who rely on assistive devices will be permitted access to and benefit from their devices when they are using SDS services. If necessary, SDS will provide other measures to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from SDS services.

It is noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Persons with disabilities, including members of the public or third parties, who rely on guide dogs or other service animals, will be permitted to enter SDS premises and keep their animal with them, unless the animal is otherwise legally excluded from the premises. If the animal is legally excluded, SDS will provide other measures to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from SDS services i.e., teleconference, video conference or other assistive measure available to deliver goods or services to ensure equality of outcome.

SUPPORT PERSONS

Persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person will be permitted to enter SDS's premises with their support person, and SDS will ensure that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to their support person while both are at SDS.

Where fees for programs, goods or services are required, advance notice will be provided to the support person.

TEMPORARY DISRUPTIONS

Where there is a disruption at a particular location or to a service used to allow a person with a disability access to SDS goods or services, SDS will provide notice that may take the form of phone messages, emails, letters, posted notices, website or in person. This notice will include the reason for the disruption, the duration of the disruption and a description of alternative facilities or services that may be available.

STAFF TRAINING

Sudbury Developmental Services will provide training for all employees, volunteers, students at the time of hire/placement. Employees, volunteers and students and will review this policy and any revisions annually. The training provided will contain the following:

1. The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
2. How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disability;
3. How to provide goods or services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
4. The process to provide feedback to the organization about the provision of services to persons with disabilities in any department and how the agency responds to feedback and takes action on any complaint;
5. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal or a support person to access goods or services;
6. How to use equipment or devices available on the organization's premises or provided by the organization that may help with the provision of goods or services, and,

SDS will maintain a record of its training efforts in AIMS software as well as individual personnel files.

FEEDBACK PROCESS

The goal of Sudbury Developmental Services is to meet expectations of people who are supported while welcoming family members and other visitors. People who wish to provide feedback on how SDS provides services to people with disabilities can do so in person, by mail, by email or voice message to our Human Resource Department. Surveys and questionnaires are also distributed annually to families and individuals that we serve. Feedback may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements.

Contact information is as follows: Human Resource Department, 245 Mountain Street, Sudbury, Ontario, P3B 2T8, humanresources@cgsds.ca, 705-674-1451.

Complaints will be addressed according to SDS's Feedback and Complaint Policy.

EXCLUSIONS

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, O. Reg 429/07 shall not apply during any period declared as a "State of Emergency" as defined under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

REVIEW AND CHANGES TO POLICIES

No changes will be made to this or any other policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of SDS that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed. This policy will be reviewed at least once a year to ensure compliance with the legislation and reporting requirements.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

Notice of how to obtain a copy of SDS's Accessibility Policy will be posted in all public reception areas. The Policy is posted on the agency's website and alternate formats are available upon request.

NON-COMPLIANCE IMPLICATIONS

Section 37. (3) of the Act, Penalties:

- (3) Every person who is guilty of an offence under this Act is liable on conviction,
 - (a) to a fine of not more than \$50,000 for each day or part of a day on which the offence occurs or continues to occur; or
 - (b) if the person is a corporation, to a fine of not more than \$100,000 for each day or part of a day on which the offence occurs or continues to occur

References:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
The Ontario Human Rights Code
The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms