

**Centre de
ressources**
communautaires
de la Basse-Ville



Lowertown
Community
**Resource
Centre**

ACCESSIBLE CLIENT SERVICE POLICY

Introduction

The Lowertown Community Resource Centre supports the full inclusion of persons with disabilities as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Ontario Human Rights Code, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005.

This policy has been prepared to outline what the LCRC must do to comply with the regulation and what our clients may expect from us. This policy also supports the service vision, principles and mandatory requirements of the LCRC Service Directive, which is intended to guide the efforts to meet or exceed client needs and expectations.

The policy is intended to benefit the full range of persons with disabilities, as defined in the Ontario Human Rights Code. Whether a person's disability is apparent or not, everyone should be treated with courtesy, made to feel welcome, and have their need for accommodation respected whenever they interact with a LCRC's service.

1. Our mission

The LCRC is a non-profit social services organization committed to providing high quality, no cost services that keep pace with rising public expectations.

The LCRC strives at all times to provide goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The LCRC is also committed to ensuring that clients with disabilities receive accessible goods and services with the same quality and timeliness as others do.

2. Training for staff and volunteers

The LCRC will provide training on client service to all volunteers and employees who provide services, and who are involved in the development and approvals of client service policies, practices and procedures. New staff and staff who commence new duties that involve interaction with the public or other third parties will undertake training as part of their orientation, if they haven't already done so.

The LCRC will provide staff with training that includes:

- A review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Client Service;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- LCRC's policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

Staff will be trained, as appropriate, on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to persons with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

3. Use of service animals and support persons

Persons with disabilities may bring their service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public or other third parties. LCRC will ensure that all staff, volunteers and third parties dealing with the public are trained in how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

On rare occasions, a manager may determine that a support person is required, or that a service animal cannot enter an area of the premises consistent with other laws. In these instances, managers will suggest appropriate alternatives and provide assistance.

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter LCRC premises open to the public or other third parties 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.

When support persons are required (e.g., sign language interpreters, realtime captioners, attendants) for consultations or events, LCRC will arrange to pay support persons directly for their time and reasonable travel expenses upon request, in accordance with LCRC travel and hospitality guidelines.

4. Communication

The LCRC will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This means staff will communicate in a means that enables persons with disabilities to communicate effectively for purposes of using, receiving and requesting LCRC's goods, services and facilities.

The LCRC will train staff who communicate with clients on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

5. Feedback process

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

The LCRC will let clients know what methods are available for giving feedback. If a method is not suitable, clients may request another method. Privacy will be respected and all feedback will be reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve services. Feedback will be redirected to the Management Team.

Where possible, complaints will be addressed immediately. However, some complaints may require more effort to address, and must be reviewed for action, possibly at a higher level. Clients can expect acknowledgement of verbal /telephone feedback, or feedback left on a comment card, within two business days, and within fifteen business days of the receipt of a mailed/emailed complaint. If a mailed complaint cannot be responded to within fifteen business days an interim acknowledgement must be sent to the client. The acknowledgement must indicate when the matter will be addressed and when the client will be notified, and the LCRC will follow up with any required action within the timeframe noted in the acknowledgement. Feedback/response will endeavour to be in a format that is accessible to the complainant.

6. Notice of temporary disruptions

The LCRC will provide clients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services used by persons with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption is expected to last, and a description of any alternative facilities or services available (if any).

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notice will also be provided on outgoing telephone and the LCRC's website.

This notice will be provided in accessible formats.

7. Modifications to this or other policies

The LCRC is committed to ensuring that their client service policies, practices and procedures 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.

Any LCRC's operational policy affecting client service that does not respect and promote the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity of persons with disabilities will be modified or revoked.

8. Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to clients with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, if the purpose of this policy is not understood, or to receive a copy of this policy, please contact:

The Lowertown Community Resource Centre

40, Cobourg Street

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Telephone: 613-789-3930