

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Policy (AODA)

Brighton Children's Centre strives at all times to provide service in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our service in the same place and in a similar way as other clients.

We are committed to:

- **Providing excellence in service to all clients, including people with disabilities.**
The service provided to persons with disabilities is integrated with the provision to others unless an alternative measure is necessary to allow a person with a disability to benefit. A good starting point in serving all people is to ask, "How may I help you?" The client will know if they need help, and how you can provide it.
- **Communicating with people with disabilities in a way that accounts for their disability.**
A key aspect of communication is taking into consideration the specific needs of an individual. Employees may need to utilize a variety of different techniques to communicate with a person with a disability in order to effectively provide service.

All public information will be provided in large print format, verbally or electronically upon request. All new signage will contain internationally recognized symbols and indicators.
- **Providing accessible invoices to all of our clients.**
Invoices will be provided in an alternate format upon request, and questions will be answered in person, by telephone, in writing or by email.
- **Welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.**
A "Service Animal" is defined as an animal that a person with a disability uses for support. At no time will a person with a disability be prevented from having access to his or her service animal while on our premises. If it is not apparent that an animal is a 'service animal' it is appropriate to ask for a letter from a doctor or nurse. We will keep a copy of the letter on file to prevent the person from having to show it more than once. Remember, a service animal is not a pet and should not be touched or distracted while they are working.
- **Welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person.**
"Support Persons" assist people with disabilities in a variety of ways, by aiding with communication such as an intervener, sign language interpreter or personal support worker providing physical assistance. The support person could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend, or a family member. He or she does not need to have special training or qualifications. Remember to speak directly to the client, and not to the support person. It will be necessary for a support person to provide a current, clear Criminal Reference Check and an updated copy of immunizations for us to keep on file. A support person will also be expected to follow Brighton Children's Centre's policies with regards to confidentiality and behavior management.

- **Providing all clients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of our service.**

This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternate services, if available. Notice of a disruption will be posted in visible places at the Brighton Children's Centre, and by any other means deemed appropriate.

Brighton Children's Centre will provide training to all employees, students and volunteers who work directly with clients on our behalf, and all those who are involved in the development of policies and procedures. Training will be provided as soon as practicable after a person assumes responsibilities related to the public and will include the following:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Information regarding Brighton Children's Centre's policies and procedures relating to the customer service standards.
- How to interact and communicate effectively with all people with disabilities, including those who use an assistive device, service animal, or support person
- Where to learn more about assistive devices and/or service animals
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our service
- Ongoing training when changes are made to policies or practices related to the AODA.

Comments or feedback on our customer service standards are welcome and appreciated! A Customer Feedback Form is available on our website and also at the Brighton Children's Centre. It can be submitted in person, emailed to admin@brightonkids.ca or faxed to 613-475-5675. Verbal feedback is also appropriate. All feedback should be directed to the Executive Director, and clients can expect to hear back within 10 business days.