

| PROCEDURE | |
|--|--|
| Section: Administration - Accessibility (AODA) Procedure: Accessible Customer Service - Communication | Number: AD-D-004 Page 1 of 7 |
| Approved By: Paul Laperriere | Approval Date: June 201 |
| Next Review Date: June 2021 | |

1.0 Purpose

Hands TheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca (Hands) strives to ensure that communication with persons with disabilities is as effective as that provided to persons without disabilities.

Scope

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|--|
| Procedure applies to: (Check all appropriate boxes for broad application) | | | | |
| <u>Employees</u> | <u>Volunteers</u> | <u>Board</u> | <u>Services (list)</u> | <u>Other (i.e. clients, visitors, contractors)</u> |
| x | x | x | | x |

3.0 Responsibility

- 3.1 Employees** will be trained to interact and communicate with persons with disabilities in compliance with the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.
- 3.2 Supervisors/Managers** are responsible to ensure all employees are trained to interact and communicate with customers with various types of disabilities in compliance with the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service and Hands' policy, procedure and practices.
- 3.3 Senior Leadership** is responsible to ensure policies and procedures are established that comply with Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

4.0 Definitions

5.0 Procedure

- 5.1** An aid, benefit or service need not produce the identical result or level of achievement for disabled and non-disabled persons, but it must afford the person to whom it is provided equal opportunity to achieve equal results, gain equal benefit and reach the same level of achievement.

Employees will be trained to interact and communicate with customers with various types of disabilities including:

- fully accessible telephone service will be available to our customers with



PROCEDURE

Section: Administration - Accessibility (AODA)

Number: AD-D-004

Procedure: Accessible Customer Service - Communication

Page 2 of 7

employees trained to communicate with telephone customers in clear, plain language speaking clearly and slowly

- customers will be offered communication by e-mail, TTY, relay services, if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

- 5.2** Access to communication for persons with disabilities should be as effective as that provided to persons without disabilities. When considering ways to improve general communications, involve people with a disability in consultation, or in meetings, during a transaction and producing publications in accessible formats, including, but not limited to, the development of pamphlets, flyers, letters, memos, emails, websites, brochures, invoices, papers and reports.
- 5.3** All oral and written communication should be inclusive of, respectful of, and positive toward people with a disability. Reference the terminology Addendum for assistance in communicating respectfully with people with or without disabilities.
- 5.4** Put people first. It is preferable to say “person with a disability” instead of “disabled person.”
- 5.5** A variety of different techniques may be required to best interact with a person with a disability in order to effectively provide services to that individual. General guidelines include:
- a) Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration you offer everyone else.
 - b) If you're not sure what to do, ask the individual, “May I help you?”
 - c) Ask before you offer to help; don't just jump in. People often have their own way of doing things. Individuals with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.
 - d) If you don't know the person, or if you are unfamiliar with the disability, it's better to wait until the individual describes his or her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics and your assumptions may be wrong.
 - e) Some disabilities are not visible. Take the time to get to know the individual's needs.
 - f) Speak normally, clearly and directly. Speak directly to a person with a

PROCEDURE

Section: Administration - Accessibility (AODA)

Number: AD-D-004

Procedure: Accessible Customer Service - Communication

Page 3 of 7

disability, not to their interpreter or someone who is with them.

g) Be patient. Give the individual time to explain him or herself.

- 5.6** The Hands TTY (teletypewriter) number should be advertised on all agency publications and websites. Reception employees should be trained in the use of TTY service, with regular revision of the training to ensure skills are maintained.
- 5.7** When organizing meetings or consultations, attempt to use facilities that cater to people with a disability; e.g., ramps, handrails or lifts for people with mobility disabilities, access to washrooms, room lighting, noise levels, inductive loop or radio systems to assist the hearing impaired. Hands will consider whether it is appropriate to hire an interpreter to assist in presentations at meetings. Where such facilities are available, they should be advertised as part of the information about the location of the meeting.
- 5.8** When preparing material intended to be distributed to the public, consider the format of the material and its accessibility to the target audience. In particular, consider whether alternative formats are required in order to facilitate access by a person with a disability. Excessive cost can be avoided by carefully targeting the audience. Options for making accessible formats available may include:
- a) Distributing standard formats, and developing and providing alternative formats only upon request.
 - b) Providing a pamphlet or booklet in accessible format, and supplementary documents upon request.
 - c) Advertising the availability of certain alternative formats. Where only standard formats are distributed, consideration should be given to advertising the availability of alternative formats upon request. Reception and publications employees should be made aware of the availability of alternative formats, and particular formats Hands is willing to provide upon request.
- 5.9** Alternate formats that may be appropriate for development to improve accessibility include:
- a) Internet: The Internet is a highly suitable medium for many people with hearing, vision, mobility and manipulator impairments. To make the publication most compatible with software that assists people with a disability, it should be posted on the Internet in HTML or ASCII format.

PROCEDURE

Section: Administration - Accessibility (AODA)

Number: AD-D-004

Procedure: Accessible Customer Service - Communication

Page 4 of 7

- b) CD or DVD: Providing information in a portable electronic format may be suitable for people with hearing, vision, mobility and/or manipulatory impairments. The publication should be converted to ASCII format to make it more compatible with accessibility computer software.
- c) Audio cassette, digital audio file, podcast: Audio is used by a wide range of people, although it is often targeted to people with vision impairment. These formats are relatively easy and cost-effective to produce and post.
- d) Braille is used by people with severe vision impairment who have learned the Braille alphabet.
- e) Large and illustrated print: Large print is mainly targeted to those with low vision. It refers to any printed matter that uses a font that is 14 points or larger. Illustrated print is designed to provide a quick visual outline of a message. It is often preferred by people with an intellectual disability, people with some visual impairment and can also assist people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- f) Easy English format is useful if specifically providing information to people with intellectual disabilities or limited reading skills. The information is summarized and expressed in short sentences that each conveys a single idea or concept.
- g) Provide information about events and services in a variety of media (for example, publicize telephone and fax numbers, provide print information and radio notices).
- h) Provide sufficient notice of events to ensure there is time to arrange transport or other requirements.

5.10 Provide targeted information for people with disabilities, their families, support person and service providers for no additional charge.

5.11 Ensure all facilities have clear signs that include internationally recognized symbols and indicators.

6.0 Linkages (cross reference to Policies, other procedures, legislation, regulations)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07



PROCEDURE

Section: Administration - Accessibility (AODA)

Number: AD-D-004

Procedure: Accessible Customer Service - Communication

Page 5 of 7

7.0 Policy Change History

| Revision number | Date of Approval | Description of Change |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Revised to reflect... |
| | | |
| | | |

PROCEDURE

Section: Administration - Accessibility (AODA)

Number: AD-D-004

Procedure: Accessible Customer Service - Communication

Page 6 of 7

ADDENDUM

Language and Terminology Reference Chart

Some suggestions for choosing the right words and putting the person first.

| Do use | Don't use |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Handicap, handicapped, invalid or impediment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">"Person(s) with a..." or "people with a..." | <ul style="list-style-type: none">The disabled |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Intellectual disability or developmental disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mental retardation, mentally retarded, retarded, mentally challenged, idiot, imbecile, moron, simple, mongoloid |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">"Person living with..." or "person born with..." | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Suffering, afflicted, victim, stricken |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Blind, partial vision, low vision, vision loss: be specific | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visually impaired, the blind |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, hearing loss: be specific | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Deaf (avoid generalizing; try to find preferred term from "do" list) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Person who does not speak | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Deaf, mute, dumb |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Person in a wheelchair | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Confined, bound, stuck |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Person with a mobility or physical disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Crippled, cripple, lame, physically challenged |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mental health disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Insane, lunatic, maniac, mental, neurotic, psychotic, psycho, deviant, crazy; the negative list is too long |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Accessible parking, bathrooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Handicapped parking, bathrooms |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Person with epilepsy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">An epileptic |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Person born with a disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Birth defect, deformity/deformed, congenital defect |

PROCEDURE

Section: Administration - Accessibility (AODA)

Number: AD-D-004

Procedure: Accessible Customer Service - Communication

Page 7 of 7

-
- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person who has (a particular condition) or a person who has had a stroke | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victim of (a condition such as multiple sclerosis, a stroke, cerebral palsy) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person with a disability, person who has (a particular condition) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suffers from, afflicted by, stricken with, etc. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person with a disability (challenges are environmental conditions) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physically challenged |
-