

P34 - Accessibility Policy for the Customer Service Standard under AODA

Accessibility Policy

The Family Place is committed to developing and implementing policies, practices, and procedures that provide accessible quality services to employees, clients, and their children. Services will be provided to clients with disabilities in a manner that promotes and respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The Family Place is dedicated to ensuring all programs and services are accessible to clients and their children in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429.07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Services.

The Family Place will endeavor to ensure that the Policy and related practices and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

- i. ***Dignity*** - Persons with a disability must be treated as valued clients as deserving of service as any other customer.
- ii. ***Equality of Opportunity*** - Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our services.
- iii. ***Integration*** - Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other customer. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs.
- iv. ***Independence*** – Services must be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, we will always be willing to assist a person with a disability but will not do so without the express permission of the person.

The Family Place provides services to all children and their families including those with disabilities. Every effort will be made to ensure the following:

- The service will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of services to clients with disabilities, and other will be integrated unless an alternative measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable clients with a disability to participate in the services offered by The Family Place.

1. Communication

- The Family Place is committed to communicating with clients with disabilities in different or alternative ways that take into consideration their disability.
- Ensuring written and media information is available using accessible formats. (signs, program information, forms, website etc.)
- Staff will be trained on how to interact and communicate with clients with disabilities in a manner that is respectful of a client's dignity and independence.
- Alternative methods of communication will be provided as requested. Staff will be trained to communicate with clients over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

2. Use of Assistive Devices & Service Animals

Assistive Devices and/or service animals may be used by clients to assist in accessing services at The Family Place.

- All service animals must have proof of inoculations/vaccinations required under the Child Care and Early Years Act.
- Staff and volunteers will be properly trained in how to interact with clients with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal and/or an assistive device.
- Staff and volunteers will be trained on how to use equipment or devices that may help with the provision of child care services. (wheelchairs, mobility aids,

computers with accessible features, medical devices etc.)

- The use of such items must be in compliance with the regulations outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act and (municipal or regional) requirements.

3. Support Persons

Support persons may be used by clients to assist in accessing services at The Family Place.

- The Family Place may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.
- The Family Place will consult with the person with a disability to determine if a support person is required.
- Support Persons must comply with all policies, training and have a Vulnerable Sector Check and proof of vaccinations.
- Staff and volunteers will be properly trained in how to interact with clients with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person.

4. Notice of Temporary Disruptions

The Family Place will notify clients if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of a facility or service persons with a disability to access our services. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the applicable premises and as well as being provided verbally, electronically or in person as applicable. The notice will include the following information:

- That a facility or service is unavailable.
- The anticipated duration of the disruption.
- The reason for the disruption.
- Alternative facilities or services, if available.

5. Feedback Procedure

AODA requires Organizations to implement a feedback method that allows clients to provide feedback on perceived barriers, including how to ask for assistance.

- The Family Place welcomes and accepts feedback in a variety of ways including in person, by telephone, in writing or electronically.
- Feedback forms are available at the front entrance of the centre.
- Our feedback protocol requires The Family Place to respond to all client inquiries within five (5) business days in the preferred format regarding possible accommodations/solutions.

6. Training and Records

The Family Place will provide training on the AODA Customer Service Standard and Human Rights including ongoing training as required under the Act. This policy applies to all employees, students, and volunteers as well as to those persons charged with developing this policy and related procedures and practices.

A. Content of Training

Training will include:

- i.* A review of the purpose of the Act and requirements of the Standard.
- ii.* Understanding the OHRC and how the code interacts with the AODA
- iii.* A review of the policies.
- iv.* How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- v.* How to interact with persons with a disability who use an Assistive

Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or Support Person.

- vi. How to use equipment or devices made available on our premises to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.
- vii. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises and/or services.
- viii. How to work with persons with a disability to find the best solution for them.
- ix. As policies are revised, employees, students, and volunteers will be made aware.
- x. The Executive Director will keep a record of the training which will include the name of the person and the date they were trained.

B. Timing of Training

Training will be provided prior to commencing employment, and whenever there are changes to policies.

C. Documenting Training

- Records of the training provided, including the training protocol, the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom the training is provided shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

The above policies and procedures will apply to all services that are delivered by The Family Place including services delivered in person, by telephone, electronically, visually, orally or by written materials.

All Accessibility Policies of The Family Place are available to our clients. Alternative formats are available upon request.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it reflects current practices of THE

FAMILY PLACE as well as legislative requirements.

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