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KEYWORDS

accessibility, disabilities, disabilities act, AODA

RATIONALE

This policy describes how CMHA-WECEB will ensure it takes all reasonable measures to provide accessible client service to clients with disabilities.

POLICY

CMHA-WECEB is committed to ensuring all clients have equal access to the services we provide. We will do this by:

- establishing policies, procedures and practices that describe how we serve people with disabilities.
- using reasonable effort to ensure our client policies are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration of services and equality of opportunity.
- dealing with the use of assistive devices for people with disabilities in our policies.
- communicating with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disabilities.
- welcoming people accompanied by guide dogs, service animals or support people and providing information about access.
- providing clear, complete, timely and prominent notice of temporary disruption of any of our services used by people with disabilities.
- ensuring that our board and senior management who approve policies receive training on AODA legislation.
- providing timely and ongoing training to our staff, students and volunteers, to ensure their understanding of and ability to implement our policies regarding service to people with disabilities.
- implementing and communicating our processes for receiving and responding to feedback and handling complaints about how we provide services to people with disabilities.
- complying with documentation standard, including availability and format of documents.

Definitions

Assistive Devices:

May be devices that people bring with them, such as walkers, magnifiers, or oxygen tanks. Assistive devices that an organization might provide include: assistive software for people with visual, hearing or mobility impairments, wheelchairs or TTY (telephone teletype), real-time captioning or assistance from a staff person.

Barrier:

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, an information or communications barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

Client, Consumer, Customer:

A person who inquires about or accesses the services of Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch or visits our sites.

Dignity:

Treating a client with a disability as valued and deserving of the same type of service Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch provides to any other client.

Disability:

The definition of “disability” used in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is from the Human Rights Code and means:

- 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

The Guide: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 states that: “The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go.”

Interpretation:

Interpretation means rendering spoken language into another spoken language, or the process of rendering spoken language into visual language, e.g. American Sign Language. Interpretation includes a variety of alternative methods of communication that meet the needs of the person with a disability.

Training:

Every person who deals with a member of the public or participates in developing the organization’s policies, procedures, and practices governing the provision of services to the public, including



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organization, will receive training and orientation to the AODA, policies, procedures, and practices governing the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities. This training will be provided as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties. The training will also be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with any changes to policies, procedures, and practices.

Service Animals:

Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities, such as guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks. An animal is qualified to be a service animal if it is readily apparent the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or the person provides a letter from a health care practitioner as defined by the act (including physician, nurse, psychologists, psychotherapists, audiologists, chiropractors and optometrists) confirming the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Guide Dog:

A guide dog is a dog trained as a guide for a blind person. This is a dog that has successfully completed the training program at any of the facilities listed in the Blind Persons' Rights Act and has been qualified as a guide dog.

Support Person:

A support person is an individual hired or chosen to accompany a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to services. This may be a professional, relative, volunteer or friend.

Feedback:

The opportunity for the public to provide feedback on services provided through CMHA-WECB can be done through the current client feedback using the Complaint Form or the "Your Opinion Matters" form. Notice of the availability of the feedback document is posted at the agency. They will be provided upon request and communicated in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Applicability

This policy and its sub-policies apply to:

- all people who access our services
- all staff, volunteers, students, contractors, consultants and others working on behalf of CMHA-WECB and who provide client services
- staff, board members, volunteers and others who are involved in developing policies and procedures regarding the standard
- people who accompany clients with disabilities who use our services

References

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Human Rights Code of Ontario

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Blind Person's Right Act: Regulation 58 Guide Dogs

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Related Documents:

Use of Assistive Devices Policy
Communicating People with Disabilities Policy
Guide Dogs and Service Animals Policy
Support Persons Policy
Notice of Disruption in Service Procedures
Feedback Procedure
Complaint Process