



Policy and Procedure

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KEYWORDS

accessibility, AODA, disabilities act

RATIONALE

This policy describes how Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch (CMHA-WECB) will communicate with people with disabilities.

1. This policy describes how CMHA-WECB has a commitment to offer programs and services to individuals with a range of disabilities and will be considerate of these individuals when communicating.
2. This policy further describes the communication criteria that must be considered when communications are developed and distributed.

POLICY

Policy Statement

1. CMHA-WECB is committed to effectively communicating with people with disabilities. We do this by:
 - Giving consideration to individual disabilities when communicating
 - Educating staff, students, volunteers and others about providing effective ways of communicating with people with disabilities
 - Using appropriate language when referring to people with disabilities and taking action when unacceptable terms are used
 - Soliciting feedback about our communications from clients, consumers, experts and others
 - Keeping current with communication technology and standards for people with disabilities.



2. CMHA-WECB will develop and enforce communication criteria that provide a range of options to make all communication more accessible to people with disabilities. We will do this by:
 - Adopting current best practices whenever possible
 - Ensuring there is a quality control process for communications
 - Educating staff, students and volunteers about best methods to use when communicating with individuals having disabilities

PROCEDURE

1. When possible, CMHA-WECB will provide aids that are used to help people with a disability communicate (e.g., text readers, amplifiers, screen magnifiers, and interpretation).
2. Staff, students and volunteers will communicate with clients over the telephone and in person in clear and plain language.
3. When possible, CMHA-WECB will offer alternative formats for communication in order to address the needs of people with disabilities (e.g., large print, Braille, etc.).
4. If information about the agency's services is requested in an alternative format, the procedure is that employees are to report the request and relevant information to their manager. The manager will work with the AODA lead to ensure to fulfil the request for an alternative format.

Definitions

Assistive Communications Devices:

Can be software or aids that are used to help people with a disability communicate. Examples of assistive communication devices are: text readers, amplifiers, screen magnifiers, captioning and interpretation.

Communication:

A process of providing, sending, receiving and understanding information. Communication is a two-way exchange. Examples of methods of communications are: spoken, written, graphic, symbolic, electronic and sign language.

Disability:

The definition of "disability" used in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005.

Formats:

Describe medium used such as CD, electronic or paper.

Standard:

Mean the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.



Limitations

This policy does not cover:

- Internal communications
- Communications that are from third-parties which we forward to others
- Communication that are under copyright and cannot be altered by our organization.

Applicability

This policy and its sub-policies apply to:

- all staff, volunteers, students, contractors, consultants and others working on behalf of CMHA-WECEB and who communicate with clients, consumers and the public.
- staff, board members, volunteers and others who are involved in developing policies and procedures regarding the standard

References

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Reference/Source: Human Resources

Distribution: _____

Filing: _____

Monitoring: Human Resources

Related Documents:

- Use of Assistive Devices Policy
- Guide Dogs and Service Animals Policy
- Support Persons Policy
- Notice of Disruption in Service Procedures
- Feedback Procedure