



*Policy and Procedure*

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**RATIONALE**

This policy describes how people with disabilities and their service animals will be treated on Canadian Mental Health Association Windsor-Essex County Branch (CMHA-WECB) premises.

**POLICY**

This policy describes how (CMHA-WECB) will welcome people with disabilities who are accompanied with guide dogs or other service animals.

**PROCEDURE**

CMHA-WECB is committed to allowing full access to our services and premises to people with disabilities and their service animals wherever possible. We will do this by:

1. Allowing full access to our premises, unless that area of the organization is not open to the public or other third parties or animals are excluded by other laws such as public health.
2. Educating staff, volunteers, students and others dealing with the public about the use of service animals. Providing training to staff, volunteers, students and others dealing with the public on how to interact appropriately with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.
3. Assisting people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal when they request help with their animal if it is safe and reasonable to do so.
4. Ensuring health regulations concerning service animals are posted in any area where food is prepared and served.
5. Providing other measures to access our services for people with disabilities if their service animal is excluded by law from certain areas of our premises.



**Definitions**

**Guide Dog**

This is a dog that has successfully completed the training program at any of the facilities listed in the Blind Person’s Rights Act and has been qualified as a guide dog.

**Premises**

All locations and facilities under the control of CMHA-WECB.

**Service Animal**

May also be called “assistance animals”, “assist animals”, “support animals” or “helper animals”.

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/her disability; or
- The person provides a letter from a medical practitioner confirming the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- Service animals should be restrained and properly attended to by the owner. Service animals are restricted from the use of facilities required for humans (chairs, sinks, toilets, drinking fountains, etc...).

**Limitations**

This policy does not cover:

1. CMHA-WECB events held off premises over which CMHA-WECB has no control.
2. Animals that do not come under the definition of “guide dog” or “service animal”. The agency reserves the right to ask individuals for documentation to confirm the animal’s status as either a guide dog or service animal.

**Applicability**

This policy and its sub-policies apply to:

- 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

Reference/Source: Blind Person’s Rights Act: Regulation 58 Guide Dogs, Health Protection and Promotion Act, Regulation 562, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Human Resources

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