



*Policy and Procedure*

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**POLICY**

This policy describes how Canadian Mental Health Association Windsor-Essex County Branch (CMHA-WECB) will allow people with disabilities to use their personal assistive devices.

1. This policy describes how people with disabilities who use personal assistive devices will be treated whenever they are on our premises or using our services.

**PROCEDURE**

1. CMHA-WECB is committed to ensuring clients with disabilities who access our services and anyone with a disability who visits our sites will be able to use their assistive devices within the limits of any applicable privacy, health and safety laws or regulations. We will do this by:
  - using reasonable efforts to ensure clients, consumers and visitors with disabilities and who use assistive devices are treated with dignity, independence, and equality of opportunity
  - educating staff about personal assistive devices
  - allowing clients, consumers and people with disabilities who use our services or visit our site to use their personal assistive devices.

**Definitions**

**Alternative Ways:**

Means ways of helping clients, consumers or visitors with disabilities access our premises or services when they are unable to use their own assistive devices. Alternative ways must consider the principles defined in this policy.

Examples of alternative ways are:

- A staff person providing assistance when a personal assistive device cannot be used
- writing information clearly and simply if electrical equipment causes static in a person's hearing aid
- Asking how best to assist the person
- Allowing the client, consumer or visitor to suggest alternate ways of being assisted and accepting suggestions within the agency's ability.

**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.

**Disability:**

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

**Principles:**

Are from the standard and require service providers to use reasonable efforts to ensure policies, procedures and practices are consistent with:

- Respecting the dignity and independence of people with disabilities
- Providing services to people with disabilities that are integrated with the services provided to people unless an alternative measure is required
- Giving equal opportunity to people with disabilities to obtain, use and benefit from our services.

**Standard:**

Mean the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

**Limitations**

This policy does not cover devices that are used by people without disabilities or devices that are not related to disability. The policy does not supersede privacy, health and safety laws or regulations.

**Applicability**

This policy and its sub-policies apply to:

- People with disabilities who access our services or premises
- All staff, volunteers, students, contractors, consultants and others working on behalf of CMHA-WECEB 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 or visit our sites

Reference/Source: 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, Human Resources,