



REXDALE WOMEN'S CENTRE

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Customer Service Standards Policy is to fulfill the requirements set out in regulation 429/07 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005 (AODA).

POLICY STATEMENT:

Rexdale Women's Centre strives at all times to provide goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. Rexdale Women's Centre is committed to ensuring that customers with disabilities receive accessible goods and services with the same quality and timeliness as others do.

Rexdale Women's Centre will make reasonable efforts to ensure that our policies, programs and services, including procedures and practices established to provide accessible service to persons with disabilities, are consistent with the following principles:

- Dignity;
- Independence;
- Integration (except when alternate measures are necessary to meet the needs of persons with disabilities); and
- Equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from Rexdale Women's Centre's goods and services.

These principles are consistent with the descriptions provided in the Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

PRINCIPLES:

Communications

- We will endeavor to do our best to communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.
- We will train staff and volunteers who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- We will ask how we can help.
- We will offer to communicate with customers through written means if verbal communication is not suitable or available, this may include email and relay services.
- We are committed to serving people who have assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

Use of service animals and support persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal

on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter Rexdale Women's Centre premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premise.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

Rexdale Women's Centre will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and the description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed on our website, at all public entrances and by broadcasting messages by telephone.

Training for Staff

Rexdale Women's Centre will provide training to all employees and direct service volunteers who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer services policies and practices and procedures.

All current employees will receive training by January 31, 2012 using the training model provided by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (<http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcscs/serve-ability/splash.html>). New employees will be expected to complete this training within 4 weeks of hire.

Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to legislation and to these policies, practices and procedures.

Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of this policy is to meet service delivery expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated. Such comments shall be directed to Privacy Officer and may be provided verbally, by email or in writing. Privacy will be respected and all feedback will be reviewed for possible action that can be taken by Rexdale Women's Centre. A timely response will be provided to the customer.

MODIFICATIONS TO THIS OR OTHER POLICIES:

We are committed to ensuring customer service policies, practices and procedures respect and promote the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.

Any policy affecting customer service that does not respect and promote the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity of persons with disabilities will be modified or revoked.

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, please speak with your Supervisor or the Human Resources Officer.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Director's staff team in conjunction with the Senior Management Team.

DEFINITIONS

Dignity:

The principle of respecting the dignity of a person with a disability means treating them as customers and clients who are valued and deserving of high quality and timely service as any other customer. Persons with disabilities are not treated as an afterthought or forced to accept lesser service, quality or convenience. The delivery of goods and services must take into account how persons with disabilities can effectively access and use them.

Independence:

In some instances, independence means freedom from control or influence of others – freedom to make one's own choices. In other situations, it may mean the freedom to do things in one's own way. People who may move or speak more slowly or differently must not be denied an opportunity to participate in a program or service because of this. Staff must allow persons with disabilities to take the time they need, without rushing them or taking over a task for them if someone prefers to do it themselves in their own way.

Integration:

The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated to allow persons with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers. Integration means that policies, programs and services including practices and procedures are designed to be accessible to everyone, including persons with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity:

Equal opportunity means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. In the case of services it means that persons with disabilities have the same opportunity as others to obtain, use and benefit from the way goods or services are provided. They should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain services. They should also not have to accept lesser quality or more inconvenience.

Service Animal:

Service animals are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities. Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who are blind, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety.

Support Person:

A support person is an individual hired or chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services. Personal care needs may include, but are not limited to, physically transferring an individual from one location to another or assisting an individual

with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to; monitoring an individual's health or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure.

Relay Service:

A Relay service enables callers who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities to communicate with the hearing community via the telephone. A specially trained Relay Service operator reads the message typed by user to the hearing person and relays a reply back. The Relay Service number is 1-800-855-0511.

Related Policies: Human Rights Policy, Expectations of Employees.

Adopted: January 25, 2012