

POLICY CATEGORY: EQUITY & ACCESS

Policy: Accessibility (AODA) Policy **Number:** 12 - 10
Approval Date: March 27, 2012 **Approved by:** Board
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Review Date: **Approved by:**

PURPOSE

In alignment with AODA policy of the City of Toronto, the purpose of this policy is to identify what the equal treatment provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code, through the AODA and the Regulation, require as a legal standard in program design and service delivery to individuals with disabilities.

The requirement was established under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)* which came into effect on January 1, 2005 and applies to public and private sector organizations that provide goods and services to the public.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy and Procedures applies to all employees, customers, volunteers, visitors and third party contractors of Scadding Court Community Centre.

Scadding Court Community Centre is required to meet the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and file accessibility reports by January 2011, for the non-profit sector.

The Customer Service Accessibility Standard is the first of five standards to be established under the AODA. Four other accessibility standards will be developed:

1. Information and Communication Standards
2. Built Environment Standards
3. Employment Standards
4. Transportation Standards

SCCC is committed to providing goods and services to individuals with disabilities in a way that respects and establishes the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

This policy (the "Policy") does not interfere with every person's right to pursue legal remedies under relevant legislation in Ontario and Canada, or to seek the assistance of other legislated bodies. Those who belong to the Union may be eligible to seek assistance from the Union as per the terms of the Collective Agreement

Responsibility

Scadding Court Community Centre staff and volunteers are responsible for complying with the procedures outlined in this policy.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term "disability" is defined as follows in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19, as amended from time to time, includes and is not limited to:

- 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, some medical conditions including epilepsy, diabetes mellitus, 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,
- condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- psychiatric survivor/consumer of mental health services, 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

Procedures:**Communication**

SCCC staff will communicate with individuals in a manner that takes in to account their specific disability. All staff will be trained on how to best tailor communication to meet the needs of specific disabilities.

Assistive Devices

Personal assistive devices are permitted in all areas that SCCC delivers services, pending physical barriers. SCCC trains staff, on an ongoing basis, to be aware of all the different types of personal assistive devices and on how to support and be sensitive to each one.

Staff are also trained on assistive devices that the SCCC has on site. These devices will be made known to individuals with disabilities that may benefit from them. Signage indicating on site assistive devices and welcoming personal assistive devices will be visible throughout all service areas.

Service Animals

SCCC welcomes individuals with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal to areas to which the public has access, and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. While visiting or receiving services from SCCC it is the responsibility of the person with a service animal to control the animal at all times.

SCCC trains staff on how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. In the event a staff member or patron is allergic to animals, alternative arrangements will be negotiated. If it is not readily apparent to staff that an animal is a service animal, SCCC staff will respectfully ask for verification that the animal is indeed on duty.

Support Persons

SCCC welcomes any person with a disability who is accompanied by a 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 engaging with SCCC. SCCC staff and volunteers are trained on how to welcome and accommodate individuals with support persons.

SCCC will not charge a participation fee (if one applies) for support persons accompanying a person with a disability.

Feedback

In the SCCC's efforts to meet service delivery expectations, we welcome feedback from our customers. Privacy will be respected and all feedback will be reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve SCCC's customer service to individuals with disabilities.

Notice of Disruptions

SCCC will make reasonable effort to provide customers with notice in the event of a disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

In order to make information accessible the signs and printed notices will be clearly laid out, of sufficient size and easily readable.

Training

Training that meets the requirements of the AODA, 2005 will be delivered to all staff and volunteers. Orientations to new staff and volunteers, will complete an online version of the training.

Effective January 1, 2012 documentation of training of employees and volunteers shall be recorded and maintained.

Contravention of Procedures

Contravention of the policy and procedures will lead to an investigation.

Investigation:

Senior Management staff will:

- a. provide the person against who the complaint is made (the “respondent”) with an overview of the complaint; and
- b. provide a copy of this Policy to the person making the complaint (the “complainant”) and to the respondent.
- c. Each party may appoint an advocate and/or supporter to be present at any interviews dealing with the complaint. Each party may request cultural, language or other interpreters throughout the process.
- d. Failure to resolve the next step would be to follow the complaint process as outlined in Standards of Conduct, Client Complaints Policy No: 8 – 60.