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Approved by **CEO**	Applies to Employees, Volunteers, Contractors People Supported	Date Revised November 30, 2023

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PURPOSE

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the 'AODA') and Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" which came into effect January 1, 2008, and revised July 1, 2016.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Community Living Haldimand that people with disabilities achieve accessibility to the provision of services, provided by Community Living Haldimand, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, inclusion, and equality of opportunity as set out in the regulation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005; and that all employees and volunteers will be trained on accessible customer service and how to interact with people with different disabilities.

Definition of Terms

1. Assistive Devices – as defined in the Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, is a technical aide, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to walkers, canes, wheelchairs, hearing aids or oxygen tanks.

2. Barrier – as defined in the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act is anything that prevents a person with a disability form fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice.

3. Disability – as defined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Human Rights Code is:

    - 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, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, 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,
    - a condition of mental impairment or developmental disability,
    - a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
    - a mental disorder, or
    - an injury or disability for which benefit were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997;

4. Guide Dog – as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07 and section one (1) of the Blind Persons Rights Act is a dog trained as a guide for a person who is blind and having qualifications prescribed by regulations under the Blind Persons Rights Act.

5. Premises – all public locations owned and operated by Community Living Haldimand where people have access, including but not limited to, family members of people supported, volunteers, and employees.

6. Service Animal – as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07 is a service animal for a person with a disability,
   - if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
   - if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

   If it cannot easily be identified that the animal is a service animal, the person will be asked to provide documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

7. Support Person – as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07 in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

   In certain cases Community Living Haldimand may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for health and safety reasons. Admission fee or fare for the support person will be waived, if one exists, to ensure the person with a disability is able to attend.

   Before making a decision, Community Living Haldimand will do the following, as required:-
   - Consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
   - Consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
   - Determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises

PROCEDURE

Providing Services to People with Disabilities

Community Living Haldimand is committed to excellence in providing supports and services to people with disabilities and will carry out all functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

- The services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of services to persons with disabilities and others must be

inclusive unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the services.

- Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the services.

Training for Employees

Community Living Haldimand will provide training to all employees and volunteers who support people with disabilities or come in contact with any other person who may access our premises, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedure. All employees and volunteers will be required to sign off to indicate the training is understood and complete.

Communication with Persons with Disabilities

When communicating with people with disabilities, Community Living Haldimand will do so in a manner that considers their disability.

Assistive Devices

The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from Community Living Haldimand's services will be recognized unless otherwise prohibited due to health and safety or privacy issues. In these situations, Community Living Haldimand may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist him or her in obtaining and using Community Living Haldimand's services where applicable.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is always operating in a safe and controlled manner.

Questions Regarding the Policy/Procedure

The AODA Customer Service Standards Policy and Procedure exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy or procedure, or if the purpose of the policy is not understood, an explanation will be provided upon request to the Supports and Services Manager.

The policy and procedure is available on the Community Living Haldimand website and will be provided in an accessible format, or with communication support, on request.

If Community Living Haldimand is requested to provide a person with a disability a document or information, Community Living Haldimand will take into consideration the communication needs of the person with a disability and endeavour to provide the information to the person in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE FEEDBACK FORM

We encourage and appreciate your Feedback on Community Living Haldimand's ability to meet your accessibility needs, in order to better serve the people we support, their families, employees and visitors. Feedback can be provided in the following ways:-

- by contacting Central Administration office by calling 905-772-3344 Ext. 100 or by email: *centraladmin@clhaldimand.com*
- verbally to an Employee, Supervisor, Manager, Director or CEO
- completion of this form, and delivery to Central Admin Office, Jennie Deagle Complex, 2256 River Road, Cayuga, ON N0A 1E0

A response to feedback given will be provided within five (5) days of receipt and will be provided in the format requested by the person submitting.

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I have difficulty accessing the following goods and services provided by Community Living Haldimand:-

_____

_____

My accessibility needs would be better met by Community Living Haldimand providing the following:-

_____

_____

I would like response to my feedback to be provided as follows:-

- mail (please provide mailing address)
- email (please provide email address)
- phone (please provide phone number)
- other (please indicate)

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____