

Shelter House Thunder Bay Accessibility Plan

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Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Shelter House Thunder Bay is committed to providing persons with disabilities equal opportunities and standards of goods and services in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. These goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

All Shelter House Thunder Bay buildings are wheelchair accessible and equipped to support clients with most disabilities. Any disruption in service will be posted at the Main Entrance and callers will be advised of the disruption when permitted at Shelter House Thunder Bay. Service animals and support persons are permitted at Shelter House Thunder Bay. Any further accommodation can be discussed with staff.

Assistive Devices

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on-site or that we provide that may be used by clients with disabilities while accessing our goods and services.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. For example, information and forms can be presented verbally for those with sight restrictions or cognitive disabilities.

Service Animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. Due to health regulations, service animals are not permitted in the kitchen or dining area; staff will make alternative arrangements (i.e., take away meals) for clients in this situation.

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

We will notify clients of this by posting a notice in the following locations: on the website and the Client Communication Board.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, Shelter House Thunder Bay will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

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Services / Facilities will include wheelchair-accessible doorways and washrooms, verbal relay of information, service animals, support persons, and distribution of assistive devices.

The notice will be made publicly available at the following locations: Main Entrance, Website, and to Callers.

Training

Shelter House Thunder Bay will provide accessible customer service training to employees, volunteers, and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf. Training will also be provided to people involved in the development of policies, plans, practices, and procedures related to the provision of our goods and services.

Individuals in the following positions will be trained; all employees of Shelter House Thunder Bay (Support Worker, Operations Supervisor, Fundraising Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, HR Coordinator, Kitchen Coordinator, Finance Officer).

Staff will be trained on Accessible Customer Service within 3 months of being hired. A record of training will be kept in individual personnel files and on a master training file maintained by the HR Coordinator.

Training will Include:

- Shelter House Thunder Bay's plan related to the customer service standard as outlined
- Review of "AODA: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Training" which includes the following:
 - An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
 - How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
 - How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person
 - How to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods or services to people with disabilities. These include: wheelchairs, walkers, canes
 - What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Shelter House Thunder Bay's goods and services

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service plan.

Feedback Process

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Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way Shelter House Thunder Bay provides goods and services to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

- By writing to:
 - 420 George St. Thunder Bay, ON, P7E 5Y8
 - Marsha.Ledger@shelterhouse.on.ca
- By phone to:
 - HR Coordinator at (807) 474-4353
- In-person to:
 - Any staff member at 420 George St. Thunder Bay, ON

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner: a collection of information, investigation, review of information, modification of policies if required, response to the complaint.

Customers can expect to hear back in 7 days.

Notice of Availability

Shelter House Thunder Bay will notify the public on our documents related to accessible customer service, which are available upon request by posting a notice in the following location: Website.

Modifications to this or Other Policies

Any policy, practice, or procedure of Shelter House Thunder Bay that does not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

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Policy: HR-003

Category: Human Resources

Revised Date: September 19, 2016

Accessible Customer Service

Intent

To ensure the organization meets the requirements of Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

Policy

Shelter House is committed to providing persons with disabilities with equal opportunities and standards of goods and services in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. These goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

Definitions:

Assistive Device: a technical aid, communication device, or another instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker, or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering, and/or reading.

Disability: the term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers 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, 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 a developmental disability
- Mental disorder
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

Guide Dog: is a highly trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons' Rights Act, to provide mobility, safety, and increased independence for people who are blind.

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Service Animal: as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, an animal 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 their 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
- Service Dog – as reflected in Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:
 - It is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability; or
 - The person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog

Support Person: as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him/her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods and services.

A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

Shelter House will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all people receive the same value and quality
- Allowing people with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services as long as this does not present a safety risk
- Using alternative methods, when possible, to ensure that people with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner
- Taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the persons disability

B. The Use of Assistive Devices

Persons Own Assistive Device(s)

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by Shelter House.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services. For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a person with an oxygen tank may

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involve ensuring the person is in a location that would be considered safe for both the person and organization. Or, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the person.

Assistive Devices provided by Shelter House.

C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals, and Service Dogs

A person with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog, service animal, or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise.

excluded by law. “No pet” policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

Food Service Areas

A person with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog or service dog will be allowed access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

Other types of service animals are not permitted into food service areas due to the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60.

Exclusion Guidelines

If a guide dog, service animal, or service dog is excluded by law (see applicable laws below), Shelter House will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

Applicable Laws

Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, Ontario Regulation 31/05: Animals not intended for slaughter or to be euthanized are not allowed in any area or room of a meat plant. It also makes an exception for service dogs to allow them in those areas of a meat plant where food is served, sold, or offered for sale to customers and in those areas that do not contain animals or animal parts and are not used for the receiving, processing, packaging, labelling, shipping, handling, or storing of animals or parts of animals.

The Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60, normally does not allow animals in places where food is manufactured, prepared, processed, handled, served, displayed, stored, sold, or offered for sale. It does allow

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guide dogs and service dogs to go into places where food is served, sold, or offered for sale. However, other types of service animals are not included in this exception.

Dogs Owners' Liability Act, Ontario: if there is a conflict between a provision of this Act or of a regulation under this or any other Act relating to banned breeds (such as pit bulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive in relation to controls or bans on these breeds prevails.

Recognizing a Guide Dog and/or Service Animal

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the person for reasons relating to their disability, Shelter House may request verification from the person.

Verification may include:

- A letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability
- A valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada
- A certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school

Care and Control of the Animal

The person that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

Allergies

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, Shelter House will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

D. The Use of Support Persons

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Shelter House will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the person is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the person and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations, Shelter House will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the person, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

E. Notice of Disruption in Services

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Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Shelter House. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that individuals with disabilities rely on to access or use Shelter House's goods or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

Notifications will Include:

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable
- Reason for the disruption

- Anticipated duration
- A description of alternative services or options

Notice Options

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for individuals with disabilities, Shelter House Thunder Bay will notify the public promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Services / Facilities include: wheelchair-accessible doorways and washrooms, verbal relay of information, service animals, support persons, and distribution of assistive devices.

F. Feedback

People who wish to provide feedback on the way Shelter House Thunder Bay provides goods and services to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

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 - 420 George St. Thunder Bay, ON, P7E 5Y8
 - Marsha.ledger@shelterhouse.on.ca
- By phone to:
 - HR Coordinator at (807) 474-4353
- In-person to:
 - Any staff member at 420 George St. Thunder Bay, ON

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All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner: a collection of the information, investigation, review of information, modification of policies if required, response to the complaint.

G. Training

Individuals can expect to hear back in 7 days.

Shelter House Thunder Bay will provide accessible customer service training to employees, volunteers, and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf. Training will also be provided to people involved in the development of policies, plans, practices, and procedures related to the provision of our goods and services.

Individuals in the following positions will be trained: all employees of Shelter House Thunder Bay (Support Worker, Operations Supervisor, Fundraising Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, Executive Assistance / HR Coordinator, Kitchen Manager, Finance Manager).

Staff will be trained on Accessible Customer Service within 3 months of being hired. A record of training will be kept in individual personnel files and on a master training file maintained by the Executive Assistant / HR Coordinator.

Training will Including:

Shelter House Thunder Bay's plan related to the customer service standard as outlined.

Review of "AODA: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Training" which includes the following:

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Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service plan.

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Record of Training

Shelter House will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees who attended the training.

H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

Shelter House Thunder Bay will notify the public that our documents related to accessible customer service are available upon request by posting a notice in the following location: Website.

Modifications to this or other policies.

Any policy, practice, or procedure of Shelter House Thunder Bay that does not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.