

Policy	Policy Title	Category	Approved	Revised
3.11	Accessible Customer Service Plan	Client Service Procedures	December 15th, 2014	

Policy

Canadian Mental Health Association, Kenora Branch is committed to being responsive to the needs of all individuals. We strive to provide quality goods and services that are accessible to all. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines on providing goods and services to people with disabilities that will facilitate accessibility to goods and services to individuals with disabilities.

This policy establishes accessibility standards for Customer Service in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and in keeping with *Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*.

All goods and services provided by the Canadian Mental Health Association, Kenora Branch shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunities.

Definitions:

Customer:

Includes any member of the public whom we serve in any way. This includes identified clients, anonymous clients and/or members of the public who may access our brochures, library, workshops / programs or other goods or services.

Assistive devices:

Devices used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or accessing the services of persons or organizations. Assistive devices include, but are not limited to wheelchairs, reading machines, recording machines, and hearing devices (AODA, 2005).

Barrier:

As defined by the *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, procedure or practice.

Disability:

As defined by the *Accessibility of Ontario with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, is:

1. Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation, or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth effect 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, 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,

2. A learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
3. A mental disorder, or
4. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Service Animals:

A 'service animal' is defined as either:

1. A "guide dog", as defined in Section 1 of the Blind Persons Rights' Act; or
2. A "service animal" for a person with a disability. For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,
 - a. If it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or;
 - b. If the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reason relating to the disability

Support Person:

A support person is defined as another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

Procedure

In accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

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

CMHA Kenora Branch 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 customers receive the same value and quality;
- Allowing customers 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. Staff will involve the client in assessing risk

- Using alternate methods when possible to ensure that customers 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; and
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

B. Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by CMHA Kenora Branch.

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 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 customer.

C. Guide Dogs, Services Animals and Service Dogs

1. CMHA Kenora Branch acknowledges the vital relationship and dependency which exists between a person with disabilities and their service animal. CMHA Kenora Branch is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on parts of the premises that are open to the public and other third parties. If not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal by the person for the reasons relating to his or her disability, we may ask the person to provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability or other document such as: a certificate or identification card from a service animal training school, an identification card from the Attorney General of Ontario.
2. Public areas of our premises include common areas such as lobby, building office, common eating areas, meeting rooms etc. Service animals are not permitted where food preparation is being undertaken; or as otherwise disallowed by the law; and / or other resident's private space unless at the discretion of the resident.
3. The individual / customer, when accompanied by a service animal will be allowed to enter the premises accompanied by said animal at all times, unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises.
4. The individual / customer is responsible for the care, supervision and control of his/her service animal while on the premises.
5. Individuals will not touch a service animal without permission and will not speak to a service animal while it is working
6. Staff will notify individuals who use a service animal, of areas designated for service animals to relieve themselves as well as to communicate the policy stating that the individual is responsible for supervision and care of said service animal.

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

D. Support Persons

1. If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, CMHA Kenora Branch will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.
2. If situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed. Written consent will be obtained.
3. Fees will not be charged for support persons who accompany customers to CMHA Kenora Branch. Exceptions may need to be made to recover costs incurred by having the support person there (for example when lunch is provided, or entry for an admission to an event). If such fees will apply to support persons CMHA Kenora Branch will ensure that notice is given in advance by including this information wherever the event and its fees are advertised.

E. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of CMHA Kenora Branch. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customer's with disabilities rely on the access to use CMHA Kenora Branch services (e.g. elevator, or a scheduled sign language interpreter calls to cancel), 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:

- Services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration;
- A description of alternative services or options.

Notifications Options:

When disruptions occur CMHA Kenora Branch will provide notice by:

- Posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and on the CMHA Kenora Branch website;
- Contacting customers with appointments who may be affected;
- Verbally notifying customers when they are making an appointment or reservation; or;
- By any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

F. Feedback Process

1. CMHA Kenora Branch shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided with disabilities.
2. A process to receive feedback on the provision of goods and services to customers with disabilities accessing services at CMHA Kenora Branch has been established. This process enables people to provide feedback either in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, online, or other method.
3. A Feedback Form can be filled out online on our website (www.cmhak.on.ca), or a copy of the form can be picked up in our building office. The feedback form is available in alternate formats when requested. **See Feedback Form, Appendix A.**
4. If a person who submits feedback requests a response and provides contact information, CMHA Kenora Branch will follow-up with the individual in the format in which the feedback was received, within 5 working days. All feedback will be kept in the strictest confidence and will be used to improve customer service. Feedback forms can be submitted to our feedback box located by the elevator within the main reception area and will be forward to the Executive Director for review and response. All reviewed forms will be filed in a binder labelled **Feedback File** within the locked file cabinet.

G. Training

Training will be provided to:

- a. all employees, volunteers, agents and / or contractors or other third parties who deal with customers on behalf of CMHA Kenora Branch;
- b. those who are involved in the development and approval of customer / client service policies, practices and procedures.

Training Provisions:

As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07* training will cover the following:

1. A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*;
2. A review of the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*;
3. Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
4. Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:
 - Use assistive devices;
 - Require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal; or;
 - Require the use of a support person (including for the handling of admission fees).

5. Instructions on how to use equipment or devices available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities;
6. Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our services;
7. CMHA Kenora Branch policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to customers with disabilities.

Training Schedule:

CMHA Kenora Branch will provide training as soon as is practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors or other third parties who deal with the customers on behalf of CMHA Kenora Branch during orientation. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and / or practices.

Record of Training:

CMHA Kenora Branch will keep records of the names and dates of all AODA training.

H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

CMHA Kenora Branch will notify customers that the documents related to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place owned and operated by CMHA Kenora Branch and our website and/or any other reasonable method.