

Classification: <b>Association Operations</b>	<b>AODA Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act</b>		
Policy #: <b>A230</b>			Effective Date: <b>January 2012</b>
Revised Date: <b>March 2023</b>		Review Date: <b>March 2023</b>	Next review: <b>March 2024</b>

## Policy

Community Living Guelph Wellington (CLGW) strives to ensure that all locations owned or operated by CLGW provide barrier-free services, supports, environments and employment. CLGW recognizes that the key principles of accessibility are independence, dignity, integration and equality. Accordingly, we are committed to complying with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) and the Human Rights Code.

## Overview

The Accessibility Policy is available at all CLGW locations via our internal and external websites. Accessible formats of this policy will be made available if required and as requested. The policy is reviewed annually and all employees, students and volunteers, including Board Members are to be kept informed as to any changes.

The Accessibility Plan identifies and addresses barriers at agency owned or operated locations. The Plan encourages awareness of any barriers at community locations or services which may be accessed by the individuals we support so that they also may be brought to the attention of those locations and services. Barriers have been broken down into the following areas:

- Architectural/Physical
- Environmental
- Attitudinal
- Financial
- Employment
- Transportation
- Community Integration

Barrier Identification Forms (HR44) are available via our internal website to ensure that individuals we support, employees, volunteers, family and friends, etc., have an opportunity to identify and report any barriers they may encounter while living, working or visiting any CLGW owned or operated location. Accessibility surveys are completed at each site annually. The forms are reviewed on a regular basis, with a view to address or remove the identified barrier as deemed applicable and feasible.

Please note that all contractors who are engaged to provide services for CLGW are required to sign off that they adhere to the legislated requirements of the AODA.

## Definitions

*(As defined in the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) and/or the related Regulations)*

**Assistive Devices:** A technical aide, communication device, or medical aide modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. (E.g., wheelchairs, walkers, canes, hearing aid, oxygen tank)

**Barrier:** 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, architectural, information/communications, attitudinal or technological barrier.

**Service Animal:** An animal that is used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to his or her disability. It may be readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his/her disability (e.g. Guide Dog); however, that is not always the case. In those cases where it is not so evident, the person will be expected to provide a letter from a physician or a nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

**Support Person:** Any person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

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## 1 - Accessible Formats, Communication Supports and Assistive Devices

To ensure the best possible customer service, CLGW encourages open, two-way communication with all people interacting with the agency to ensure the need for accommodation or assistance is met.

People who identify themselves as requiring alternative communication formats will be offered alternative communication in a format that meets their needs as promptly as is feasible.

People with disabilities who rely on assistive devices will be able to access their devices when they are using CLGW services. If necessary, CLGW will provide other measures to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from CLGW services. It is noted that it is the responsibility of the person with the disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

## 2 - Service Animals

People with disabilities may bring their service animal on the parts of the agency's premises that are open to the public or other third parties. There may be restrictions in areas that are otherwise governed by other laws such as the Health Protection and Promotions Act (section 59e). Restrictions may also apply to residences where an individual lives who may have a severe allergy. If the service animal is legally excluded, CLGW will provide alternate measures to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from CLGW services (e.g., teleconference, alternate meeting place).

Please see Policy E395 for more information on Service Animals.

## 3 - Support Person (as defined under AODA legislation)

People with a disability who are accompanied by a support person will be permitted to enter CLGW's premises with their support person. CLGW will ensure that the person with the disability is not prevented from having access to their support person while both are at CLGW.

Where fees for programs, goods or services are required, advance notice will be provided to the support person.

## 4 - Temporary Disruptions

Where there is a disruption at a particular location or to a service used to allow a person with a disability access to CLGW goods or services, CLGW will provide notice to the public of the disruption, including the expected duration of the disruption and a description of alternative facilities or services that may be available. In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

## 5 - Employee Accommodation, Including Return to Work

An employee with a disability who requests an accommodation will provide the request in writing to the manager's attention. The employee must include a physician's note that provides information relating to the nature of the disability (not a diagnosis); specifically, the factors that require consideration for an accommodation and whether the request is for a temporary or permanent accommodation. The accommodation will include ongoing review and/or a specific end date.

An individualized Return to Work Plan will be developed, whenever feasible, for those employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require a temporary or permanent disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.

An employee with a disability who requires assistance in the event of an emergency will complete the Employee Emergency Information Sheet (HR48) and forward to the Human Resources department. Once received, the Human Resources department will work with the employee to develop an individualized emergency response plan.

## 6 - Staff Training

All employees, students and volunteers of CLGW are required to successfully complete accessibility training as part of the orientation process into CLGW. In addition, there is a required annual review of the Accessibility Policy and Plan by all staff, students and volunteers (HR to provide the forms for signature). There will be notifications sent and/or refresher sessions offered whenever the Accessibility Policy and/or Plan is revised.

## 7 - Feedback

The goal of CLGW is to meet expectations of people who are supported while welcoming family members and other visitors. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcomed and appreciated. Feedback may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements.

Feedback regarding the provision of services to people with disabilities can be made in person, by telephone, email or in writing. An Accessibility Feedback Form (HR47) is available at all sites via the agency website. All feedback will be directed to the Chairs of the agency's Accessibility Committee for review and follow-up. CLGW will address the feedback within ten (10) business days of its receipt.

## 8 - Notice of Availability of Documents

This document and other policies and practices related to the provision of goods and services for people with disabilities are advertised through a variety of methods to ensure public awareness of their existence. This policy is available in alternate formats upon request.

CLGW will notify the public that our accessibility related policies and procedures are available on the agency's website and available to all sites via the internal website.