



Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay

General Administration Manual

Accessibility Policy

Accessibility for Customer Service

Purpose

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay is committed to providing exceptional and accessible service for its clients. We will ensure that our policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equality. The provision of services to persons with disabilities will be integrated whenever possible, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods or services. People with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use or benefit from the services provided by and on behalf of the Children's Aid Society. Services will be provided to people with disabilities in a way that respects their dignity and independence.

Application

This policy establishes the accessibility standards for customer service for the Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay (further referred to as the Children's Aid Society), in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07 and applies to all employees, volunteers and contracted service staff.

Definitions

Accessible means customer service is provided in a manner that is capable of being easily understood or appreciated; easy to get at; capable of being reached, or entered; obtainable.

Disability means:

- a) Any degree of physical 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 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,
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

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Accessibility for Customer Service (AODA)

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Page 1

- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) A mental disorder, or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace and Insurance Act, 1997.

(Ontario Human Rights Code 10(1), 1990)

Service Animals

Service animals are allowed to accompany people with disabilities on parts of the premises that are open to the public or other third parties, except where excluded by law (e.g., regulations under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act 1990*, and the *Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001* prohibit animals for entering into areas where food is prepared).

All staff, volunteers and other dealing with the public will be properly trained on how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

If it is not readily apparent that an animal is being used because of a person's disability, they may be required to provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that it is required because of their disability.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their service animal is kept in control at all times. If the health and safety of the other clients may be endangered by the presence of a service animal an alternate way for the person with a disability to access services will be arranged.

Assistive Devices

People with disabilities are allowed to use their personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. If a person with a disability is unable to access our services with the use of their assistive device an alternative method or location will be used to meet their needs.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

Staff will be trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by people with disabilities while accessing our services. We will also ensure that staff know how to use and obtain any assistive devices on our premises available for persons with disabilities.

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Support Person

If a support person accompanies a person with a disability, the organization will ensure that both people are permitted to enter any Children's Aid Society premises together, and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

The Children's Aid Society will provide the public with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people 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. The notice will be placed at main public entrances and service counters on our premises, and on the agency website.

Training

Training will be provided to every person who deals with the public and/or participates in developing policies and procedures regarding goods and services. Training will be ongoing in connection to any changes made to policies and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities. Training will be provided to each person according to his or her needs and duties during orientation. A record of the dates in which training is provided, and the number of individuals to whom it is provided will be kept by the agency.

Training will include the following information:

1. An overview of the purposes of the *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and Regulation 429/07 Customer Service Standard.
2. How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disability.
3. How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device, service animal or a support person.
4. How to use the equipment or assistive devices available at the Children's Aid Society or that we otherwise may provide that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.
5. What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing our goods or services.
6. The Children's Aid Society customer service policies, best practices and procedures in providing goods or services to people with disabilities.

The training content may vary depending on who is receiving the training, the nature of the services provided, and on the individual departmental requirements. An on-line AODA training module is available for all regular full-time and part-time staff; and an agency PowerPoint training module is available for casual staff and volunteers.

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Communication

The agency will communicate with people with disabilities in a way that takes into account their disability. Staff will be trained on how to communicate in a way that considers how individuals express, receive and process information without making assumptions about a particular disability. If a person with a disability cannot use one form or method of communication, another form or method, or combination may be used.

Notice of Availability of Documents

The Children's Aid Society will provide the public notice of the availability of the documents, required by the Accessibility Standards for customer Service, (O.Reg 429/07) upon request. Staff will consult with the requestor to determine the most appropriate format, and will make every effort to provide the information in the preferred format as soon as possible. Attached to this policy is an Alternative Document Format Request Form.

Notice of availability will be provided on the web site and through other printed methods placed in easily visible areas.

Feedback

The ultimate goal of the Children's Aid Society is to meet and surpass client's expectations when working with persons with disabilities. Comments regarding our services are welcome and appreciated. Feedback may be received in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, or by another method determined by both parties. Attached to this policy is a Customer Feedback Form Re: Accessibility of Services.

All feedback will be directed to a Director of Service for review. Complaints will be accepted by mail, fax, email, telephone or electronic format, and will be addressed according to the agency's complaint procedures.

This document is available in alternative formats.



The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay

Alternative Document Format Request Form

(As required by a person with a disability as per the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, Ontario Regulation 429/07)

Requests may be received by telephone, in person, writing, electronic format, email or other methods.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone (Day): _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Name of Document: _____

Format Requested:

PDF (Adobe) Diskette CD TXT (electronic text)

Email Plain Text (basic electronic format)

Large Print (Arial style, 16 font size)

Preferred font style and size: _____

Verbal (to be read in person or over the phone)

Other formats (As these may require a third party to produce, please note that it may take additional time to complete):



The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay

Customer Feedback Form Re: Accessibility of Services

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay is committed to providing the best service possible to the public. We welcome feedback from you on ways to improve our services. Feedback from persons with disabilities may be received by telephone, in person, in writing, electronic format, email or other methods.

Contact Information Regarding Customer Service Accessibility Feedback:

Contact Person	Address	Phone/Fax/Email
Kate Fraser Manager of Human Resources	1110 Jade Court Thunder Bay ON P7B 6M7	Phone: (807) 343-6100 (Switchboard) Toll-Free: 1-800-465-3905 Direct Line: (807) 343-6116 Fax: (807) 343-0141 Email: accessfeedback@thunderbaycas.ca

Date and location of service: _____

Did we meet your needs?

YES SOMEWHAT NO

If **NO** please explain, and if you wish, offer suggestions for improved service:

Were you able to access services?

YES

SOMEWHAT

NO

If **NO** please explain, and if you wish, offer suggestions for improved service:

Was service provided in a way that respected your dignity and independence?

YES

SOMEWHAT

NO

If **NO** please explain, and if you wish, offer suggestions for improved service:

Contact Information (optional)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone (day): _____ Email: _____

I wish to be contacted by the agency: **YES** **NO**

Preferred method of contact: _____

To be completed by Children's Aid Society Employee

Date Received: _____ Received By: _____

Program Area & Location: _____

Name of Director Informed: _____ Date Forwarded: _____

Feedback Format (e.g., phone, mail): _____

Did the feedback require a change in action or behaviour? **YES** **NO**

If **yes**, outline actions that need to be taken:

Assigned to: _____

Date to Be Completed: _____

Date of Completion: _____