

Accessibility

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 2010

SECTION: CLIENT SERVICES - Accessibility

REVISION DATE: November 2011

PAGES: 4 pages

SCOPE: All employees and volunteers

RATIONALE: To establish accessibility standards for ensuring that people using services from Participation House Project (Durham Region) experience an optimal accessible environment.

POLICY STATEMENT: Participation House Project (Durham Region) is committed to equal access to goods and services and is obligated to facilitate the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians Act 2005 (AODA) and Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service), as well as other regulations mandated by AODA and/or related Acts regarding Accessibilities.

Participation House Project (Durham Region) recognizes that people with disabilities achieve accessibility to the provision of goods and services by the organization, consistent with the following principles:

1. The goods and services are provided in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.
2. The provision of goods and services to people with disabilities are integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporary or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain or benefit from the goods or services.
3. People with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from goods and services.

APPROVED:

Julia Holbert
(BOARD CHAIR)

DATE:

Dec. 21/11

PROCEDURE:

Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

Participation House Project (Durham Region) is committed to excellence in serving all persons including persons with disabilities and carries out its functions and responsibilities to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
- The provision of Participation House Project Durham Region goods and services to persons with disabilities is integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefits from our goods and services;

NOTE: all contractors who are engaged to provide services for Participation House Project Durham Region are required to sign that they adhere to the legislated customer service requirements

Communication

- To ensure the best possible customer service, Participation House Project Durham Region encourages open two-way communication with all persons interacting with the organization to ensure the need for accommodation or assistance is met
- Participation House Project Durham Region trains employees in how to interact and communicate with others guided by the principle of dignity, independence and equality;
- Persons who identify themselves as requiring alternative communication formats are offered alternate communication in a format that meets their needs as promptly as is feasible
 - Documents are provided in alternate formats that meet the needs of the person in a timely manner
 - If telephone communication is not suitable for the persons needs, alternative forms of communication are offered.

Use of Service Animals, Assistive Devices and Support Persons

Service Animals

Service animals, such as, but not limited to guide dogs, hearing dogs, seizure response dogs, and certified service animals are permitted entry to all Participation House Project Durham Region owned facilities unless other circumstances arise requiring the denial of access. Where such a case arises an alternate meeting format is arranged, ie teleconference or other assistive measures available to deliver goods or services to ensure equality of outcome.

Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities are permitted to obtain, use or benefit from goods or service through the use of their assistive devices. It is noted 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. When available, the organization provides assistive technology so that people with disabilities are able to access programs and service while on the premises conducting agency business.

Billing

Participation House Project Durham Region provides invoices to all customers and makes every effort to provide alternate formats of invoices in a timely manner upon request.

Staff Training

All employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or third parties, as well as those involved in developing customer service policies, practices and procedures, receive Accessible Customer Service Training.

The organization keeps records of the training. The training is delivered in a variety of formats and is provided on an ongoing basis for employees, volunteers and students in order to stay current with changes in policies, procedures, receive Accessible Customer Service Training.

The training includes:

1. The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard;
2. How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disability;
3. How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
4. The process to provide feedback to the organization about the provision of services to persons with disabilities in any department and how the organization responds to feedback and takes action on any complaint;
5. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal or a support person to access goods and services;
6. How to use equipment or devices available on the organizations premises or provided by the organization that may help with the provision of goods and services, and;
7. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the organizations programs, goods or services.

Disruption of Services


If there is a disruption in a particular location or service used to allow a person with a disability to access goods or services, the organization gives notice of the disruption to the public by posting the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption, and alternative facilities or services that may be available. This posting is placed in a conspicuous place on the premises of the organization, or by other reasonable methods according to the circumstances. If the disruption is anticipated, the organization provides a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption. If the disruption is unexpected, notice is provided as soon as possible.

Feedback Process

Participation House Project (Durham Region) provides a mechanism that allows the public to provide feedback on the manner in which the organization provides program, goods and services to people with disabilities. The feedback process permits the person to provide feedback in person, by telephone, in writing or by electronic mail or otherwise. The process details the organization's process for receiving and responding to feedback including timelines and contact information and this process is made available on Participation House Project Durham Region website.

Quality Assurance

Participation House Project (Durham Region) will develop an Accessibility Plan and monitor the implementation of the plan by way of an Ad-hoc working group of the Quality Assurance Committee. Service users and self advocates will be included and involved the identification and assessment of barriers and assist the organization in addressing these barriers.

APPROVED:  (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)	DATE: <u>Dec 21/11</u>
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References:

- Pets and Service Animals (Operations)
- Compliant / Concerns (Operations)
- Individual Rights (Operations)
- Lifestyle Planning (Operations)
- Human Rights (Human Resources)
- Non-Discrimination Policy (Human Resources)