



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY – CUSTOMER SERVICE

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<p>Policy Statement:</p> <p>In fulfilling our mission, the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all people, including those with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way, as other participants.</p> <p>The Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington is committed to excellence in serving all participants including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following ways:</p> <p>1. <u>Providing Goods and Services</u></p> <p>1.1 Communication We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that takes into account their disability. We will train staff and volunteers who communicate with participants on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.</p> <p>1.2 Telephone services We are committed to providing accessible telephone service to our participants. We will train staff and volunteers to communicate with participants over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. We will offer to communicate with participants by other means of communication that might apply (e.g. written communication, email, etc.) if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs, or is not available.</p> <p>1.3 Assistive Devices We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our</p>		

staff and volunteers are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

1.4 Billing

We are committed to providing accessible invoices, when appropriate, to any of our participants. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print, email.

2. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal in the areas of our premises that are open to the public, as well as on third party premises that we have arranged for our programs or events. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities that are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter our premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises or on third party premises that we have arranged for Volunteer Centre programs or events.

Fees will not be charged for support persons for admission to Volunteer Centre programs and events. Participants will be informed of this by a notice posted on our premises and on our website and electronic communications related to fee-based activities.

3. Notice of Temporary Disruption

The Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington will provide participants 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. This notice will be placed at all public entrances and on the main page of our website.

4. Training for Staff and Volunteers

The Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public, or other third parties on our behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures. Individuals in the following positions will be trained:

- All paid staff, permanent or contract
- All volunteers including those that volunteer within the premises and those that volunteer outside the premises; to include Snow Angels volunteers, Board of Directors, Committee members, and placement students

Staff training will be provided at the time of the commencement of their duties by the appropriate supervisor.

Volunteer training will be included in the volunteer's orientation and training to their Volunteer Centre responsibilities by the person responsible for the management of volunteers, or his/her designate.

Staff and volunteers will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes 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
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the Volunteer Centre's goods and services
- The Volunteer Centres's policies, practices and procedures related to the customer service standard

5. Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington is to meet and surpass participant expectations while serving participants with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated. Feedback regarding the way the Volunteer Centre provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by telephone, face-to-face, email or in writing. All feedback will be directed to the Executive Director. Participants can expect to hear a response within 10 business days. Complaints will be addressed according to our organization's established complaint management procedures.

6. Modifications to this or Other Policies

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of all people, including those with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of the Volunteer Centre that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of all people, including those with disabilities, will be modified or removed.

7. Questions about this Policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to participants with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to, the Executive Director.