

Accessible Service Standards Policy

Effective November 2020
Management Plan (addendum)

Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

Home Base Housing develops and manages a range of safe, affordable housing, emergency shelters and support services to meet the needs of youth, adults and families at risk of homelessness in the Kingston area. We strive to provide service in a manner which promotes dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of services at premises owned and operated by Home Base Housing.
- b) This policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Home Base Housing, in accordance with the legislation.
- c) The section of this policy that addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at premises owned and operated by Home Base Housing.
- d) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the Home Base Housing's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of services to members of the public or third parties.

Definitions

Assistive Device – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that persons bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Disability – the term disability as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, refers to:



- any degree of physical disability, 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;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Guide Dog – is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Animal – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Service Dog – as reflected in *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562* a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability;
- or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

General Principles

In accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Person 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 Notice of Service Disruptions
- E. Person Feedback
- F. Training
- G. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

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

Home Base Housing 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 persons receive the same value and quality;
- allowing persons 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;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that persons 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 person's disability.

B. Assistive Devices

Client's (Person's) own assistive device(s):

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by Home Base Housing.

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, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a person with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the person is in a location that would be considered safe for both the person and business. Or, 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 person.

C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A person with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, Home Base Housing may request verification from the person.

Verification may include:



- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or,
- a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

Care and Control of the Animal:

The person that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

Allergies:

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

D. Support Persons

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Home Base Housing will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the person is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the person and support person from sitting beside each other. In this situation Home Base Housing will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the person, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

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 Home Base Housing. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that person's with disabilities rely on to access or use Home Base Housing's services, 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 Home Base Housing 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/or on the Home Base Housing website;
- contacting clients (or persons) with appointments;
- verbally notifying clients (or persons) when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

F. Feedback Process

Home Base Housing shall provide persons with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to persons with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all persons and notice of the process will be made available by requesting from an employee, a supervisor or calling the Home Base Housing main office. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (hand written, delivered, website or email), will be available upon request.

Submitting Feedback:

Persons can submit feedback to:

- Administration – Policy & Procedures
- (613) 542-6672 phone number
- (613) 544-3629 facsimile
- 540 Montreal Street, Kingston, ON K7K 3J2 (mailing)
- info@kingstonhomebase.ca (email address)
- www.kingstonhomebase.ca (web address)

Persons who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite person feedback form or verbally can do so to any Home Base Housing employee.

Persons that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted. The complaint procedure will follow the same procedures as outlined in the Client/Tenant Complaint Procedures (HBH Management Plan 2009).

G. Training

Training will be provided to:

- a) all employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Home Base Housing; and,
- b) those who are involved in the development and approval of person service policies, practices and procedures.

Training Provisions:

As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- A review of the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Person Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- 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
- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities.
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our services.
- Home Base Housing's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible person service to persons with disabilities.

Training Schedule:

All Home Base Housing employees, volunteers and third parties providing services with the public on our behalf shall be required to undergo training on the requirements of the AODA accessibility standards and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Training will be developed and implemented by January 1, 2014. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer or third party. Training shall take place as soon as it is practicable and upon completion, Home Base Housing shall keep a record of the training provided including the dates on which accessibility training took place. New employees will undergo training during orientation. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

Record of Training:

Home Base Housing will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees who attended the training.

Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

Except as otherwise provided by the AODA, Home Base Housing shall, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

This does not apply to services, unconvertible information or communications and information that Home Base Housing does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship. If it is determined that information or communications are unconvertible, Home Base Housing shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with:

- An explanation as to why the information or communication are unconvertible;

Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

- Administration – Policy & Procedures
- (613) 542-6672 phone number
- (613) 542-6317 facsimilie
- 540 Montreal Street, Kingston, ON K7K 3J2 (mailing)
- www.kingstonhomebase.ca (website)

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

Referenced Documents:

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562
- Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy, City of Kingston, 2013

Acknowledgement & Agreement

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read and understand the **Accessibility Service Standards Policy** of Home Base Housing. Further, I agree to adhere to this Policy and to these guiding principles. I understand that if I violate this Policy, as a result of non-compliance with the AODA, I may face disciplinary action.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____