

# Accessible Consumer Service Policy



Date Created: October 8, 2014

Last Revision Date: June 17, 2016

Annual Review: Yes

Approval: Executive Director

Applies to: All Programs

Replaces: N/A

## Introduction and Purpose:

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, under *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*; it applies to the provision of services.

All services provided by Kenora Association for Community Living (KACL) must follow KACL's Service Delivery Principles and advocate for dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

## Application and Scope:

1. This policy applies to the provision of services, by all departments and programs, at premises owned and operated by KACL.
2. This policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties who act on behalf of KACL, which includes the provision of goods and services occurring off KACL premises, such as: delivery services, vendors, drivers, catering and third party marketing agencies.
3. The section of this policy that addresses the use of guide dogs and service animals only applies to the provision of services that take place on premises owned and operated by KACL.

In accordance with *Reg. 429/07*, this policy addresses:

- A. The Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities;
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

## Policy:

### A. The Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities

KACL will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies and procedures are consistent with KACL's Service Delivery Principles and will advocate for dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity, by:

- ensuring that all consumers receive the same value and quality support;
- allowing consumers 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 consumers have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- accounting for individual needs when providing goods and services; and
- communicating in a manner that accounts for the consumer's support needs.

### B. The Use of Assistive Devices

#### Consumers' own assistive device(s):

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices, as required, when accessing services provided by KACL.

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 services.

For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. An accommodation for a consumer with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the consumer is in a location that would be considered safe for both the consumer and business.

#### Assistive devices provided by KACL:

KACL supports all consumers as part of ongoing Person Centered planning services: exploring, and accessing assistive devices specific to individual needs and interests. KACL also supplies certain assistive devices as part of its Health & Safety Program in order to provide necessary safety supports to both the individual and the staff/ support persons to assist consumers in accessing services:

- Accessible entrances
- Ramps
- Raised Seating Platforms
- Grab Bars
- Adjustable toilet safety rails

- Independent feeding devices ( plate guards, specialized spoons, cups, table mats )
- Ceiling Lift Systems & Individualized Slings
- Commodes
- Walkers
- Walking Canes
- Wheelchairs
- Communication devices
- Technology devices (iPads, Computers, etc.)
- Literacy based programming
- Specialized activity tools ( paintbrushes, visual aids, augmentative communication, partial participation

Consumers are responsible for the purchase of personal assistive devices. Access to possible funding options for consumers who are interested may need financial assistance through a variety of funding programs, such as: Assistive Devices Program, Trillium, March of Dimes etc.

### C. The Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals

A consumer who is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal will have access to premises that are open to the public, unless otherwise excluded by law. “No pet” policies do not apply to guide dogs or service animals.

#### Recognizing a Guide Dog and Service Animal:

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

Verification may include:

- Documentation from a regulated health professional, 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.

#### Food Service Areas:

A consumer who is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal may access food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

#### Exclusionary Guidelines:

If a guide dog or service animal is excluded by law, KACL will offer alternative methods to enable the consumer access to services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

#### Care and Control of the Animal:

A consumer who is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

#### Allergies:

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

#### D. The Use of Support Persons

If a consumer is accompanied by a support person, KACL will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the consumer is not prevented from having access to the support person. If payment is required by a support person for admission to the premises, KACL will ensure that notice is given in advance by posting notice of admission fees for support persons where KACL fees are posted.

If it has been determined that there is no other way to protect the health or safety of a consumer or others on the premises, KACL will waive the admission fee or fare for the support person, if one exists.

#### E. Notice of Services Disruptions

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of KACL. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that consumers rely on to access or use KACL services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances, such as 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, KACL 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 KACL website;
- contacting consumers who have appointments;
- verbally notifying consumers when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.
- Notifications to all programs/ locations, associate living support persons and family members

#### F. Feedback Process

KACL shall provide consumers with the opportunity to provide feedback on provided services. Information about the feedback process is readily available to all consumers and notice of the process is available by (website). Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone), written (hand written, delivered, website, or email), or other accessible formats are available and can be arranged for upon request.

Submitting Feedback:

Customers can submit feedback to:

Al Tonkin  
 Supervisor, Privacy Officer  
 Human Resources  
[atonkin@kacl.ca](mailto:atonkin@kacl.ca)  
 (807) 467-5225

or

<http://kacl.ca/index.php/ojb/feedback-and-complaints>

Consumers who wish to provide feedback may complete an onsite feedback form or verbally give feedback to the Human Resources Department, at KACL Central Office. Also, consumers may provide verbal feedback to any KACL staff.

Consumers who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

#### G. Training

Training will be provided to all employees, volunteers, contractors, or other third parties who deal with the public or who act on behalf of KACL.

##### Training Schedule:

KACL will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, board members, volunteers, or other third parties who act on behalf of KACL. Revised training will be provided as necessary.

##### Record of Training:

KACL will keep a record of training, including training dates and the number of employee attendees.

#### H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

KACL shall notify consumers that documents related to this regulation are available upon request and are in a format that account for a person's disability. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place owned and operated by KACL and any other reasonable method.

##### Administration

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

Al Tonkin  
Supervisor, Privacy Officer  
Human Resources  
[atonkin@kacl.ca](mailto:atonkin@kacl.ca)  
(807) 467-5225

<http://kacl.ca/index.php/ojb/contacts/e-mail-us>

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

## Terms and Definitions

- Assistive Device:** 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 consumers 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.
- Guide Dog:** a highly-trained working dog that has been trained to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.
- Service Animal:** an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:
- it is readily apparent to the average person that the animal is used for reasons relating to a person's disability; or
  - the person provides documentation, such as a letter from a regulated health professional, confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

## References:

*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;*  
*Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07;*  
*Blind Persons' Rights Act;*  
*Dog Owners' Liability Act;*  
*Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001, Ontario Regulation 31/05;*  
*Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562;*  
*Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O, 1990.*