

POLICY

Community Support Connections strives to provide our services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. We recognize our obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). We are committed to giving persons with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and to benefit from those services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Community Support Connections has developed and maintains a multi-year accessibility plan as required under the Integrated Standards. The purpose of the plan is to ensure compliance with the Integrated Standards. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five (5) years.

Communication

Community Support Connections will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disabilities.

Volunteers and employees will be trained to communicate with clients in person and over the telephone using clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. Community Support Connections will offer to communicate with clients by email, TTY (teletypewriter), or relay services if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

Community Support Connections will, upon request, arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons to the extent required under the AODA. Community Support Connections will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Website and web content will be developed to comply with the requirements of the Integrated Standards.

Assistive Devices

Community Support Connections is committed to serving and providing equal opportunities for persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use, or benefit from our services or engage in meaningful employment. We will ensure that volunteers and employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by persons with disabilities while accessing our services.

Billing

Community Support Connections is committed to providing accessible invoices to our clients. For this reason, invoices can be provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print, email.

Community Support Connections will answer any questions clients may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone, or via email.

Emergency and Other Information

Community Support Connections is committed to providing clients with publicly available emergency information, plans and public safety information in an accessible way upon request. This information will also be made available to the public. Other essential company information (such as volunteer educational and training resources and materials) shall similarly be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

Community Support Connections is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by service animals on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. Service animals are not permitted in food preparation areas. If animals cannot be easily identified as a service animal, Community Support Connections may ask the individual to provide documentation from a regulated health care professional confirming that the person requires the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Community Support Connections is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by support persons. Persons with disabilities who are accompanied by support persons will be allowed to enter Community Support Connections premises or program sites with their support persons. At no time will persons with disabilities who are accompanied by support persons be prevented

from having access to their support persons while on our premises or at our program sites.

In certain cases, Community Support Connections might require persons with disabilities to be accompanied by a support person for health and safety reasons. In such situations, Community Support Connections will waive the admission fee or fare for the support person, if one exists. Before making a decision in this regard, Community Support Connections will:

- consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs;
- consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence; and
- determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

Community Support Connections will provide clients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by Persons with Disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities services, if available.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances on our premises, at our program sites, and on the Community Support Connections website.

Employment Processes

Employment processes and procedures will be developed in the following areas, to meet the obligations under the Integrated Standards:

- recruitment and selection for persons with disabilities;
- interviews;
- notices;
- information about available supports;
- accessible formats and communication supports for disabled employees where requested;
- accommodation and return to work plans;
- performance management;
- career development and advancement;
- redeployment; and

- retention.

Individual Accommodation Plans

Processes for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees will include, but not be limited to:

- involvement in the development of a written plan;
- consideration of the disability on an individual basis;
- seeking out, as may be required, medical or other expert's opinion on accommodation needs;
- consideration of how other representatives or agents may be involved in the process;
- a commitment to protect personal information within the confines of the process;
- establishment of a regular review process as needed, and
- communication of the plan in an accessible format, where requested.

Return to Work Process

The development of a return to work process for employees who have been absent due to their disability and require accommodation to return to work will include, but not be limited to:

- developing a written plan that outlines the steps required to help facilitate the return to work; and
- ensuring that any return to work plan takes into consideration an individual accommodation, where one exists.

Training

Community Support Connections will provide training to all volunteers and employees on accessible customer service and how to interact with people with different abilities. This training will be provided by Community Support Connections after volunteers and/or employees commence their duties.

Training will include, but not be limited to:

- the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the customer service standard and integrated standard; and
- the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

On an ongoing basis, volunteers and employees will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way services are provided to persons with disabilities. Volunteers and employees will also be advised of and trained when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Feedback process

Community Support Connections strives to meet and surpass client expectations while serving clients with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback, questions or concerns regarding this policy, or the way Community Support Connections provides services to persons with disabilities, can be made in writing, by email, by telephone or other accessible format, when requested due to a disability. All feedback will be directed to HR at the following address:

Human Resources
Community Support Services
61 Woolwich Street North, Box 29
Breslau, Ontario N0B 1M0
Telephone: 519-772-8787
Email: hr@cscmow.org

Clients can expect a response within 5 business days.

Accessible formats and communication supports are available on request to ensure the accessibility of the feedback process.

Documentation

This policy is posted publicly and can be provided, upon request, in an accessible format with communication support. A copy of this policy is available on Community Support Connections' website or upon request by contacting Human Resources.

Community Support Connections will maintain accurate training records for our volunteers and employees and make these records available for inspection as may be required.

RESPONSIBILITY

Community Support Connections must communicate to and train volunteers and employees on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) Customer Service Standard.

It is the responsibility of volunteers and employees to ensure that they participate in the training and understand the AODA and corresponding Community Support Connections policies.

HR is responsible for the review and updates to this policy and to complete the annual compliance reporting with the Ministry of Consumer and Social Services.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 1500 - Fair and Equal Treatment
- 1600 - Accessibility and Accommodation
- 3500 - Client Complaint Resolution

RELATED FORMS

- Accommodation Plan
- Accommodation Request Form

Policy History

Date	Reviewed	Amended	Approved by
March 29, 2021		Leadership	Executive Director

May 15, 2018		Quality Cte	Executive Director
October 11, 2016		Quality Cte	Executive Director
November 3, 2015	Quality Cte		
August 21, 2014			Board