



Perley Rideau

The Perley and Rideau
Veterans' Health Centre

www.perleyrideau.ca 1750 Russell Road, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 5Z6 Tel: (613) 526-7171 Fax: (613) 526-7172

POLICY

CATEGORY: Other (General Management)

ISSUE DATE: June 24, 2014

AUTHORIZED BY:

REVISION DATE: June 24, 2017

Mary Boutette (Chief Operating Officer)

SUBJECT: Accessible Customer Service

PURPOSE

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the “AODA”) is a provincial act with the purpose of developing, implementing and mandating accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities, with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises. Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Customer Service Standards (the “regulation”), the first regulation developed under the AODA, came into force in 2008. The regulation establishes accessibility standards specific to customer service for organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

This policy outlines the considerations that must be followed by the Perley and Rideau Veterans’ Health Centre (Perley Rideau) to promote the provision of accessible customer service to people with disabilities, as defined in the AODA and the regulation.

POLICY

The Perley Rideau strives at all times to provide services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. This applies to all residents, tenants, clients, families, and visitors.

The Perley Rideau will strive to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following core principles as outlined in the AODA.

Dignity: Goods and services are provided in a manner that is respectful to persons with a disability and does not diminish the person’s importance.

Independence: Accommodating a person’s disability means respecting their right to do for themselves and to choose the way they wish to receive goods and services.

Integration: Persons with disabilities can access all goods and services. This may require alternative formats and flexible approaches. It means inclusiveness and full participation. This is a fundamental human right.

Equal Opportunity: Service is provided to persons with disabilities in a way that their opportunity to access goods and services is equal to that given to others.

APPLICABILITY/SCOPE

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This policy applies to all full-time, part-time and casual staff, individuals working under contract, students and volunteers.

Non-compliance with this policy and related practices may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

DEFINITIONS

An “assistive device” is any device used by people with disabilities to help with daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks and electronic communication devices.

A “disability” means,

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

A “service animal” is any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability

A “support person” is any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services

RELATED PROCEDURES AND/OR FORMS

- Practices for Providing Accessible Customer Service

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REFERENCES

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Customer Service Standard for the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Perley Rideau policy:
 - o Private Support Providers (Sitters)

PRACTICES FOR PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Reasonable efforts relating to accessible customer service for all people with disabilities will include, at a minimum, the following:

Communication with Persons with Disabilities

When communicating with a person with a disability, staff will do so in a manner that takes into account the person’s disability. The Perley Rideau will provide training on customer service to all current and future staff, students and volunteers. This training will, in particular, include how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

Service Animals

The Perley Rideau is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. For the purposes of this policy, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

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

People with disabilities accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal will be permitted to enter the premises with the animal unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises. If a service animal is excluded by law (e.g., Ontario Dog Owners’ Liability Act which places restrictions on pit bull terriers) from the premises, staff will ensure that other reasonable measures will be taken to provide the service to the person with a disability.

In the event that another person’s health and safety could be seriously impacted by the presence of a service animal on Perley Rideau’s premises (e.g., people with allergies to animals), Perley Rideau will use reasonable measures to ensure that the person is not at risk.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the Perley Rideau may request a letter from a doctor or nurse confirming that the service animal is required for reasons relating to the person’s disability.

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Support Persons

The Perley Rideau welcomes residents, families, clients, tenants and visitors who are accompanied by a support person, when the support person has been hired or chosen by the person with a disability to accompany them in order to assist in accessing goods or services and/or for the purposes of providing support with mobility, personal assistance and/or communication. Persons with a disability who require a support person may access the premises with their support person.

Support persons are permitted to accompany residents, families, clients, tenants and visitors. However, there may be rare circumstances where, for reasons of health and safety of another person, allowing a person with a disability to enter a premises accompanied by their support person needs to be considered.

If a support person is accompanying a person with a disability during a meal or activity, the support person shall be charged a fee to cover the cost (the same rate charged to family members who join residents for a meal or activity, unless otherwise organized with Perley Rideau management).

Before discussing confidential information in front of the support person, staff will seek the consent of the person with the disability for the support person to remain. When a support person remains with the person with the disability, the support person may be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities, the Perley Rideau will take reasonable steps to report such disruption in a timely fashion through appropriate information channels. Such channels may include (but are not limited to) temporary signage posted at the location of the disruption, posting on the website, communication via email, etc. The communication must include the time, date and location of the disruption, information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services (if any).

Assistive Devices

Personal assistive devices are permitted and unrestricted in all areas of the Home to which residents, families, staff, volunteers, visitors and the public have access, except when subject to operator safety and/or Perley Rideau security. The provision, use and safety of personal assistive devices are the responsibility of the person with a disability.

Select assistive devices are available at the home for use by people with disabilities. If a person with a disability requires a specific assistive device that is unavailable at the Home, staff will try to accommodate the person's needs using alternate approaches.

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The home will train current and future staff, students and volunteers in the use of various assistive devices and related policies/procedures.

Training

Perley Rideau will provide training to all staff, students and volunteers as soon as is practicable after assignment of duties, as well as on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to Perley Rideau’s accessibility policies and procedures. Training records will be kept for individuals, including the dates when the training was taken.

Feedback

Feedback about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities is welcomed, as it may identify areas that require change and assist in continuous quality improvement. Such feedback may be made by telephone, in person, in writing, via email, or other means. The Perley Rideau will make every effort to provide a response in the same format in which the feedback was received.

Feedback received will be followed up in accordance with the “Complaints, Concerns, Compliments and Recommendations – Residents” policy.

Availability of Documentation

All documents required by the AODA and regulation, including this accessible customer service policy, notices of temporary disruptions, training records, and written feedback process are available upon request. When providing these documents to a person with a disability, the home will endeavour to provide the document, or information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person’s disability into account. Notice of the availability of the documents required by the AODA and regulation will be posted on the Perley Rideau’s website.