



POLICY & PROCEDURE

CATEGORY:
ADMINISTRATIVE-OPERATIONAL

ISSUE DATE: June 24, 2014

AUTHORIZED BY:
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

REVISION DATE: May 6, 2022

SUBJECT: Accessibility

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.

This policy outlines the practices that will be followed by Perley Health to meet its obligations under the AODA.

POLICY

Perley Health is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the AODA.

Perley Health 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.

Perley Health will strive to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following core principles as outlined in the AODA: dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

APPLICABILITY/SCOPE

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.



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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.

PRACTICES FOR COMPLYING WITH AODA

Reasonable efforts to meet the needs 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 considers the person’s disability. Perley Health will provide training on customer service to all staff,

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students and volunteers. This training will, in particular, include how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

Service Animals

Perley Health 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 documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to their 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 explain why the animal is excluded and 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 Health’s premises (e.g., people with allergies to animals), Perley Health 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, Perley Health may request documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the service animal is required for reasons relating to the person’s disability.

Support Persons

Perley Health 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.



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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 premise 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 Health 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, Perley Health 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 will 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 Health 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 Health will provide training to all staff, students and volunteers in accessible customer service, applicable accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to people with disabilities. This training will be provided as soon as is practicable after assignment of duties, as well as on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to Perley Health'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 verbally (in person or by telephone), in writing (email, letter or completing a Feedback Form located in a folder on the family communication boards), or other more accessible means as requested.

Feedback received will be followed up in accordance with the "Concerns & Complaints" policy.

Availability of Documentation

All documents required by the AODA and regulation, including this policy, notices of temporary disruptions, and training records 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 is posted on Perley Health's website.

Self-service Kiosks

Perley Health will incorporate accessibility features/consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Information and Communications

Perley Health has a process for receiving and responding to feedback and the process is accessible to persons with disabilities (as needed).

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Perley Health will make reasonable efforts to provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports in a timely manner, considering the person’s accessibility needs due to disability and at no cost. Perley Health will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If it is determined that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization shall provide the requestor with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Employment

Perley Health will make reasonable efforts to provide accommodations during recruitment and hiring. Individual requests for accommodation are evaluated, and reasonable steps are taken to provide accommodation.

Policies and processes are in place for accommodating employees with disabilities, and employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. We provide updated information to employees whenever there is a substantive change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that consider an employee’s accessibility needs due to a disability.

Perley Health will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that considers the accessibility needs due to disability. Perley Health will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee’s job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

Where needed, Perley Health will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee’s consent, this information will be shared with a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency. The information will be shared as soon as practicable once the Home has become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee’s disability. The individualized workplace emergency response information will be reviewed:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;



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- b) when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

All Perley Health performance management, career development and redeployment processes consider the accessibility needs of all employees.

REFERENCES

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- O. Reg. 191/11: INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS
- Perley Health policy:
 - o Private Support Providers (Sitters)

APPENDICES

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2014 – 2021)