

Ottawa West Community Support Accessibility Policy

Ottawa West Community Support (OWCS) ensures equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

Training

OWCS provides training on the requirements of the AODA regulation as it relates to a person's duties – and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training is provided to:

- All existing and new employees and volunteers
- People who participate in developing organizational policies
- People who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the organization

OWCS provides training when the organization's accessibility policies change. OWCS keeps a record of the training provided, including the dates the training took place and the number of individuals trained.

Accessible Customer Service Policy:

OWCS is in full compliance with the Customer Service Standard.

Assistive devices

OWCS staff and volunteers are trained in and familiar with assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods and services. OWCS ensures that programs and services are accessible to clients with disabilities and accommodations for clients with assistive device are made wherever possible.

Communication

OWCS ensures that all communication with a person with a disability takes into account his or her disability. Communication with OWCS's clients with disabilities takes different forms that are determined by the individual's particular disability. OWCS provides information regarding programs and service in accessible format upon request.

Service animals

OWCS welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public, and in all programs and services where appropriate.

Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person is permitted to have that person accompany them on OWCS premises.

- Fees are not charged for support persons to have access to OWCS's facilities. Fees may be charged if a support person wishes to partake in a group meal or outing with applicable costs.

OWCS notifies clients of any applicable fees when they apply for service. Notices regarding the OWCS policy for support persons are posted on the premises.

Service Disruptions

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, OWCS notifies clients promptly. Notices are posted in public areas and program areas and include:

- information about the reason for the disruption
- Anticipated length of the disruption, and
- A description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

OWCS ensures that notices of service disruption are provided with due notice in accessible format where required.

Training for staff

OWCS provides training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf. All individuals dealing directly with the public are trained in Accessible Customer Service. Training is provided to staff and volunteers within three months of their employ with OWCS.

Feedback process

Upon admission to OWCS, all clients and caregivers are informed of the complaint/grievance procedures. Information regarding our feedback process is available on the OWCS website, and paper comment cards are available in all public areas. The OWCS grievance policy is made available in the appropriate accessible format upon request.

Client feedback regarding Accessibility may be submitted in the form of the annual survey, through paper comment cards, through on-line feedback (email or electronic form), by telephone or in-person. Clients may request a specific accommodation to provide feedback, and OWCS will endeavor to accommodate the need.

Information and communications

OWCS ensures that communication with people with disabilities takes into account their disability. When asked, OWCS provides information about the organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports. OWCS ensures that staff are familiar with accessible communication methods and understand how to respond to requests for accessible communication formats.

OWCS is committed to meeting internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Employment

OWCS notifies employees, potential hires and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring.

OWCS notifies staff and volunteers that supports are available for those with disabilities. Accommodations for staff and volunteers with disabilities are assessed through the Accommodation Process and Individual Accommodation Plans are created with individuals requiring accommodation.

All employees are informed of the Employee Emergency Worksheet and asked to complete it in the case of temporary or permanent disability. Where required, OWCS completes a customized Employee Emergency Response Plan with the employee to assist the employee with a disability during an emergency.

Performance management, career development and redeployment processes take into account the accessibility needs of all employees.

Design of Public Spaces

OWCS adheres to accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces.

OWCS has standard procedures to prevent service disruptions to the accessible parts of our public spaces.

Changes to existing policies

OWCS modifies or removes any policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.