

BELLWOODS CENTRES FOR COMMUNITY LIVING INC.		
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ISSUED BY: Human Resources	EFFECTIVE:	February 2011
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors	REVISED:	
	REVIEWED:	August 2022

POLICY

It is the policy of Bellwoods to provide consistently high customer service standards for all clients, regardless of race, creed, age, gender, or disability.

All customer service provided by Bellwoods shall follow the ideals of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. We will meet or exceed all applicable legislation regarding the provision of customer service.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to confirm Bellwoods commitment to accessibility for persons with disabilities and outline the roles and responsibilities of staff and the organization in accordance with the Customer Service Regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

DEFINITIONS

Persons with Disabilities – Any person that has a disability as defined within Section 2 under AODA including persons with a physical disability or visual, hearing or mental impairments.

Service Animals – Animals specially trained to assist a person with a disability.

Support Persons – Any person that accompanies and assists a person with a disability.

GUIDELINES

Service Animals

Service animals will be allowed access to our premises, except in areas where otherwise prohibited by law (e.g. Food Preparation Areas).

Where service animals are not clearly identified, a staff member may ask the owner to provide appropriate documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health

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professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Assistive Devices

All owned or controlled premises are accessible, and allow the use of assistive devices, including but not limited to:

- Wheelchairs
- Walkers
- White Canes
- Note taking devices
- Portable magnifiers
- Recording machines
- Assistive listening devices
- Personal oxygen tanks
- Devices for grasping

Support Persons

Bellwoods shall waive any applicable access fees to the premises and/or company run events for a non-staff support person that accompanies a person with a disability for the purposes of providing required support beyond that provided by assigned Bellwoods staff.

Unless there is a genuine safety concern, support persons shall be allowed to accompany the customer at all times. If confidential information needs to be shared, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any conversation.

Feedback Process

Bellwoods shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to them. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as, verbally, over the phone, through email will be available upon request.

All customers will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

Notice of Disruptions in Service

Bellwoods will provide as much advance notice as is possible when facilities or services that persons with disabilities usually use to access our services are temporarily unavailable.

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Such service disruptions will be posted in writing at all entrances, and at the point of disruption, as applicable. Notices of disruption will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

We will take the following steps to communicate any disruptions to Bellwoods' facilities or services:

- Issue is discovered and a work order is placed.
- Tradesperson is dispatched to assess the issue.
- The project Director is notified and an estimate of the time it will take to fix the issue is made.
- Notice of service disruption is posted at the site of the disruption.
- Updates to the notice of disruption will be made as needed and posted accordingly.
- Once the issue is resolved and/or repair completed, the department posting the notice will remove signs

Training

Staff will be required to attend and/or complete all Bellwoods provided Customer Service Accessibility Training. The training provided will include best practices for interactions with customers with a disability. This training is provided to each person as soon as practicable and is provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to the policies, practices, and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities (AODA, 2005). Records of this training are retained by Human Resources as mandated by AODA legislative requirements.

Responsibilities

Management

1. Provide customers and interested parties with a copy of this policy upon request.
2. Upon request, make this policy available in a disability appropriate format.
3. Ensure that all staff members are appropriately trained regarding the customer service accessibility act.
4. Ensure that notice is provided for any disruption of service.
5. Collect and follow up on all customer feedback.

Employees

All staff will be required to:

1. Attend and complete Customer Service Accessibility Training.
2. Provide consistently high levels of customer service to all customers, and ensure that they are served in a manner that allows access to all products and services offered.

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3. Employ the skills and knowledge presented in the customer service accessibility training program to ensure that customers are served appropriately.
4. Inform management of any issues regarding accessibility, or disruptions in service.
5. Adhere to the Customer Service Accessibility Policy at all times.
6. Provide assistance to customers where necessary, and ensure that all walkways are kept clear at all times.
7. Obtain consent and confidential agreements from the customer and relevant support person in the event that confidential information must be shared with a support person as required by Privacy legislation.

APPLICATION

This policy covers all employees of Bellwoods unless otherwise noted within the policy and provided the related rules and regulations are not inconsistent with the provisions of the employee's existing collective agreement.