

## GENERAL MANUAL POLICY

APPROVED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director

CATEGORY: Human Resources

TOPIC: Accessible Customer Service Policy

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### POLICY

#### Purpose

Community Living Thunder Bay's goal is that ALL people live in a state of dignity, share in all elements of living in the community and have the opportunity to participate effectively. We envision a supportive and accepting community that values all its citizens equally

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

All goods and services provided by Community Living Thunder Bay shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

#### Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of goods and services at premises owned and operated by Community Living Thunder Bay.
- b) This policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Community Living Thunder Bay.
- c) The section of this policy that addresses the use of service animals only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at the Administration Centre (1501 Dease Street), Monty Parks Centre, and the W.J. Griffis Childcare Centre.
- d) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the Community Living Thunder Bay policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.

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### Definitions

**Assistive Device** – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices may include devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

**Service Animal** – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

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

**Support Person** – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, A “Support Person” is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability as they access the services of the agency. A support person is distinct from a Community Living Thunder Bay employee who supports an individual within the agency.

### General Principles

In accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities;
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Service Animals
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

#### A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

Community Living Thunder Bay will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. . Any policy of Community Living Thunder Bay that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

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### **B. Assistive Devices**

#### **Customer's own assistive device(s):**

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by Community Living Thunder Bay.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access to goods and services. For example, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

### **C. Service Animals**

A customer with a disability that is accompanied by a service animal will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

#### **Exclusion Guidelines:**

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law, Community Living Thunder Bay will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

#### **Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:**

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, Community Living Thunder Bay may request verification from the customer. Verification may include:

- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or,
- a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

#### **Care and Control of the Animal:**

The customer that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

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### Allergies:

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, Community Living Thunder Bay will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

### D. Support Persons

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Community Living Thunder Bay will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

### E. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Community Living Thunder Bay. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customer's with disabilities rely on to access or use Community Living Thunder Bay's goods or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

### Notifications will Include:

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

### Notifications Options:

When disruptions occur Community Living Thunder Bay will provide notice by:

- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the Community Living Thunder Bay website;
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

### F. Feedback Process

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Community Living Thunder Bay shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to customers with disabilities.

Customers who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite customer feedback form or verbally can do so at Monty Parks Centre, 1501 Dease Street (Administration building) and the W.J. Griffis Childcare Centre.

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

### **G. Training**

Training will be provided to:

- a) designated employees, volunteers, or others who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Community Living Thunder Bay and those who are involved in the development and approval of policies, practices and procedures. New employees will be trained during the general orientation process.

### **Record of Training:**

Community Living Thunder Bay will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the names of employees who attended the training.

### **Notice of Availability and Format of Documents**

Community Living Thunder Bay shall notify customers that the documents related to the *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service* are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place owned and operated by Community Living Thunder Bay, and on the website ([www.cltb.ca](http://www.cltb.ca)).

