

1. PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT

The goal of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “Act”) is to create a more accessible Ontario, by identifying, and to the extent possible, preventing, and eliminating barriers experienced by persons with a disability.

A standard for customer service (“the Standard”) has been established under the Act to ensure goods and services are, where at all possible, equally accessible to every member of the public.

We at Dovercourt Recreation Association are committed to providing a barrier-free environment for our customers. The objective of this policy (the “Policy”) is to ensure we meet the requirements of the Standard and promote its underlying core principles, described below.

2. APPLICATION

The Policy applies to all persons who, on behalf of Dovercourt Recreation Association, deal with members of the public or other third parties.

This includes our employees, volunteers, agents and contractors.

3. DEFINITIONS

- i. ***Accessibility Report*** – The report required to be filed pursuant to section 14 of the Act.
- ii. ***Assistive Device*** - Any device used to assist a person in performing a particular task or tasks or to aid that person in activities of daily living.
- iii. ***Disability*** – Has the same definition as is provided under the Act and *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19.
- iv. ***Service Animal*** - 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.
- v. ***Support Person*** – A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services .
- vi. ***“We”, “Our” and “Staff”*** means Dovercourt Recreation Association and its employees, volunteers, agents and contractors.

4. CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

We endeavor to ensure that the Policy and related practices and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

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- i. ***Dignity*** - Persons with a disability must be treated as valued customers as deserving of service as any other customer.
- ii. ***Equality of Opportunity*** - Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our goods and services.
- iii. ***Integration*** - Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our goods and services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other customer. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, goods and services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs.
- iv. ***Independence*** – Goods and services must be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, we will always be willing to assist a person with a disability but will not

do so without the express permission of the person.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

Dovercourt Recreation Association has created an Accessibility Committee responsible for:

- i. Developing and implementing policies, practices and procedures to ensure the accessible provision of goods and services to persons with a disability.
- ii. Developing and implementing an accessibility training program as required under the Act.
- iii. Developing a feedback procedure as required under the Act.
- iv. Filing Accessibility Reports as required under section 14 of the Act.

6. PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

I. Communication

A. Accessible Mediums of Communication

Dovercourt Recreation Association strives to communicate with members of the public in a manner that is accessible. Mediums of accessible communication we currently employ include:

- *a website that provides information in clear plain language*
- *hearing loops at Customer Service Desks ????*
- *website, policies and marketing literature available in auditory format*

B. Communicating with Persons with a Disability

Dovercourt Recreation Association strives to communicate with persons with a disability in a manner that takes into account the disability.

Approaches for communication are set out in our accessibility training program.

II. Assistive Devices

Persons with a disability are permitted, where possible, to use their own Assistive Device when on our premises for the purposes of obtaining, using or benefiting from our goods and services.

If there is a physical, technological or other type of barrier that prevents the use of an Assistive Device on our premises we will first endeavour to remove that barrier. If we are not able to remove the barrier we will ask the person how he/she can be accommodated and what alternative methods of service would be more accessible to him/her. We will make best efforts to provide an alternative means of assistance to the person with a disability.

Staff will receive training on various Assistive Devices that may be used by persons with a

disability while accessing our goods and services.

III. Accessibility at Our Premises

We offer the following facilities and services at each Dovercourt Recreation Association location to which the Policy applies to enable persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services:

- a. assistive devices, services or methods offered such as a scooter with a basket offered in some grocery stores*
- b. alternate formats of documents i.e. commonly asked customer questions, such as return and exchange policy, available in a handout and in large print,*
- c. assistance of a staff person to complete a form,*
- d. (iv) available TTYs, screen readers for a website (software that reads text aloud),*
- e. stool if counters are too high for a person of short stature,*

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- f. a chair for waiting in line if a person's disability prevents him or her from standing for lengthy period,*
- g. improved lighting in certain areas for individuals with vision disabilities etc.]*

Staff will receive training on how to use facilities or services made available on our premises to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

IV. Service Animals

Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by Dovercourt Recreation Association accompanied by a Service Animal, and keep the Service Animal with them, if the public has access to such premises and the Service Animal is not otherwise excluded by law.

If a service animal must be excluded, we explain to our customer why this is the case and explore alternative ways to meet the customer's needs.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a Service Animal, Dovercourt Recreation Association may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his/her disability.

Staff will receive training on how to interact with persons with a disability accompanied by a Service Animal.

V. Support Persons

A person with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by Dovercourt Recreation Association with a Support Person and have access to the Support Person while on the premises.

Dovercourt Recreation Association may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

Staff will receive training on how to interact with persons with a disability who are accompanied by a Support Person.

VI. Notice of Temporary Disruptions

Dovercourt Recreation Association will notify customers if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of a facility or service persons with a disability use to access our goods and services. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the applicable premises and on the home page of the Dovercourt Recreation Association website.

The notice will include the following information:

- i. That a facility or service is unavailable.
- ii. The anticipated duration of the disruption.
- iii. The reason for the disruption.
- iv. Alternative facilities or services, if available.

7. TRAINING AND RECORDS

Dovercourt Recreation Association will provide training, and ongoing training as required under

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the Act, to all persons to whom this Policy applies as well as to those persons charged with developing this Policy and related procedures and practices.

A. *Content of Training*

Training will include:

- i.* A review of the purpose of the Act and requirements of the Standard.
- ii.* A review of the Policy.
- iii.* How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- iv.* How to interact with persons with a disability who use an Assistive Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or Support Person.
- v.* How to use equipment or devices made available on our premises to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

- vi. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises and/or services.

B. Timing of Training

Training will be provided to all persons to whom this Policy applies as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties.

C. Documenting Training

Records of the training provided, including the training protocol, the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom the training is provided shall be maintained in accordance the requirements of the Act.

8. FEEDBACK PROCEDURE

A. Receiving Feedback

Dovercourt Recreation Association welcomes and appreciates feedback regarding this Policy and its implementation. Feedback can be provided in the following ways:

- i. In person at either Customer Service Desk
- ii. By telephone at 613 798 8950
- iii. In writing to Dovercourt Recreation Centre, 411 Dovercourt Ave. Ottawa, Ontario, K2A 0S9, or complete a customer comment card and post it at one the boxes at the Customer Services Desks.
- iv. Electronically to info@dovercourt.org.
- v. Via our website through our 'Contact Us – Feedback Form' or through our Facebook page

B. Responding to Feedback

Dovercourt Recreation Association has a feedback protocol to enable it to receive and respond to comments, including complaints. Dovercourt Recreation Association feedback protocol is available upon request. Reply within 5 working days.

9. DOCUMENTATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE

This Policy, and related practices and protocols, shall be made available to any member of the public upon request.

Notification of same shall be posted on Dovercourt Recreation Centre website and at a conspicuous place at each premise to which this Policy applies.

10. FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS

Dovercourt Recreation Association will provide documents, or the information contained in documents, required to be provided under the Standard, to a person with a disability in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

Appendix 1. General Tips On Providing Service to Individual with Disabilities

- If you're not sure what to do, ask, "May I help you?" Individuals with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.
- Speak directly to the person with a disability, not to his or her support person or companion.
- Avoid stereotypes and make no assumptions about what type of disability or disabilities the person has. Some disabilities are not visible and customers are not required to give you information about any disabilities they may have.
- Take the time to get to know the individual's needs and focus on meeting those needs just as you would with any other person.
- Be patient. People with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond. A good start is to listen carefully.
- Make an effort to learn about appropriate language and terminology to use when referring to people with disabilities.
- If you cannot understand what the individual is saying, politely ask them to repeat themselves.
- Don't touch or speak to service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Don't touch assistive devices, including wheelchairs, without permission.
- Consider offering interactive devices (such as self-serve checkouts, direct payment devices) that can be used by people with various types of disabilities or offering alternate services.
- Consider including people with disabilities in the testing or evaluation of your communication services.

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Appendix 2. Tips for Interacting with an Individual with a Service Animal

1. The service animal is a working animal, not a pet.

- Avoid touching or addressing service animals. They are working and are required to pay attention at all times.
- Avoid making assumptions about the animal. Not all service animals wear special collars or harnesses. If you are not sure if the animal is a pet or service animal, ask the person with a disability.
- The patient is responsible for the care and supervision of their service animal. Staff are not expected to provide care or food for the animal. However, staff can provide water for the service animal if the patient requests this.

2. Service animals and their roles:

**Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service**

Service Animal	Key Tasks	Users
Autism assistance or service dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keeps a child from running into danger and provides assistance when sensory stimulus is heightened. Dog is attached to the child's waist by a belt and a leash held by an adult. 	People with autism or other developmental/intellectual disabilities.
Guide dog, dog guide, or seeing eye dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follows directions of owner and alerts owner to changes in elevation (e.g. curbs, stairs) and obstacles. 	People with blindness
Hearing ear, hearing, sound alert or hearing alert dog, cat, or animal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alerts owner to sounds often by a nudge or pawing and leads him/her to the source of the sound. ▪ May use a special signal to alert owner to fire alarm. 	People who are deaf, oral deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.
Psychiatric service dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retrieves and prompts the person to take medicine, retrieves or activates medical alert, leads person out of crowds, etc. 	People with mental health disabilities.
Service or mobility dog or animal, special skills dog or animal. (Small ponies or miniature horses are used, but are not as common.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May pull wheelchairs, carry objects, pull items, turn handles, or push buttons such a door openers. Larger dogs may provide balance support. 	People with physical disabilities.
Seizure, seizure alert, seizure assist, or seizure response dog or animal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steers owner from danger during a seizure, activates medical alert ▪ Can alert owner to an oncoming seizure 	People who have epilepsy or other seizure disorders.

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Appendix 3. Tips for Interacting with an Individual Who Has a Support Person

The person with a disability may not introduce their support person. If you are not sure which person is the patient/client, take your lead from the person using or requesting your service and/or simply ask.

Once you have determined who the patient/client is, speak directly to them, not to their support person.

Person with a Disability	Support Person's Functions
Person who is deaf/blind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To guide, to provide transportation and adaptive communication such as tactile or adapted American Sign Language, large print notes, print on palm or two-handed manual signing.
Person who is deaf, deafened, oral deaf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide sign language or oral interpretation services – to translate conversation, not to participate in it.
Person with a learning disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help with complex communication or note-taking.
Person with an intellectual/developmental disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help with travel, daily activities, prompting medication, complex tasks, or to keep them from dangerous situations.
Person with a mental health disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help with communication tasks such as completing complex forms. To help in environments such as crowded, noisy settings or high-stress situations such as interviews.
Person with a physical disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide services related to traveling, personal care such as toileting or eating, monitoring medical conditions.
Person with a seizure disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist in the event of a seizure, e.g. to protect the individual from falls or biting their tongue.
Person with a speech impairment who uses an augmentative or alternative communication system (symbol board, electronic communication system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To relay or interpret a person's communications.
Person with vision loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To read or to guide.

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