

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF HAMILTON

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

SUBJECT: Accessibility Policy and Plan **EFFECTIVE:** July 2016

SUPERSEDES: January 2014 **APPROVED BY:** Senior Management

INTRODUCTION:

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton has developed this 2014 – 2021 accessibility plan which addresses accessibility policies and standards as outlined in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations – IASR.

POLICY:

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton will put in place these policies and procedures to improve opportunities and interactions with the Society for people with disabilities. This Policy complements all Society policies related to the AODA and IASR.

This Policy applies to all Hamilton CAS staff, volunteers, students on placement, board members, foster parents and third parties operating on behalf of Hamilton CAS in the provision of goods, services or facilities to the public or employees.

The Accessibility Policy and Plan are posted on our website. The policy, plan and the Society's other accessibility policies and procedures will be made available in accessible formats upon request. The plan will be reviewed at least every five (5) years. The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton will annually update the status of the Plan to ensure compliance with the IASR

DEFINITIONS:

Accessible Formats

May include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Barrier

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Communication Supports

May include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language interpreter and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Disability

According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, a “Disability” is defined as:

- 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 coordination, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical resilience 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.

The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go.

Personal Assistive Devices

Personal Assistive Devices are personal supports used by persons with disabilities that enable them to carry out the activities of daily living and allow access to society services. Personally owned equipment such as power mobility devices (power wheelchairs or scooters) are regarded as Personal Assistive Devices.

Persons with Disabilities

Those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code

Dignity

Service is provided in a way that allows persons with disabilities to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people.

Independence

When a person with a disability is allowed to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

Integration

Service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as other customers, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods or service.

Equal Opportunity

Service is provided to a person with a disability in such a way that they have an opportunity to access your goods or services equal to that given to others.

MISSION

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, in partnership with families and our community, is committed to the safety, protection and well-being of children and the strengthening of families, while valuing diversity and promoting equity.

COMMITMENT

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton is committed to ensuring that all persons with disabilities have equal access to programs, services, and activities offered by the Society and are treated in a way that is consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The ultimate goal of the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton is to meet and surpass service-user expectations, while serving people with disabilities. In doing so, 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 requirements under the

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton will establish a multi-year Accessibility Plan, document the steps it will undertake to meet these requirements and ensure ongoing Policy Development.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ABOUT THIS POLICY

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to service users with disabilities. Any questions about this or other accessibility policies should be referred to the Director of Human Resources. Comments may be provided through completion of the Customer Feedback Form or by contacting the Human Resources Department.

REFERENCE:

1. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
2. Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy
3. Assistive Devices Inventory;
4. Customer Feedback form;
5. AODA Employment Standards Policy

Reviewed and Revised: July 2016 (r)