

Accessibility Customer Service		Policy Manual Section: Section 1—Administration & Organization
Created: 12/12	Last Updated: 3/26	Last Reviewed: 03/26
Act/Regs: see below		Page: 1 of 3

PURPOSE

Bay Haven is committed to providing care and services in a manner that respects the dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity of all individuals.

Bay Haven will strive to prevent, identify, and remove barriers that may limit the ability of persons with disabilities to access our programs, care, and services.

POLICY

This policy outlines Bay Haven’s commitment to accessibility and equal treatment in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (ADOA), and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11).

The objective of this policy is to ensure that care and services are delivered to persons with disabilities in a manner that meets or exceeds the minimum legal standards set out in applicable legislation.

This policy addresses:

- The provision of care and services
- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities
- The use of service animals by persons with disabilities
- The use of support persons by persons with disabilities
- Notice of temporary disruption in services or facilities
- Training for staff regarding the provision of accessible care and services
- Notice of availability and format of accessibility-related documents

PROCEDURES

Senior management will:

- Identify, prevent, and remove barriers that may affect persons with disabilities.
- Ensure employees, volunteers, and contractors receive training on accessibility principles and strategies for interacting and communicating with persons with disabilities.
- Ensure contractors working on behalf of Bay Haven are appropriately trained prior to providing services.
- Communicate with persons with disabilities in a manner that takes into account their individual needs and disabilities.
- Provide or permit the use of assistive devices where reasonable and necessary.

- Permit the use of personal assistive devices or technologies in areas of the home accessible to residents, families, visitors, vendors, and staff, except where restricted due to safety or operational requirements.
- Welcome persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal in areas of the home that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by law or due to health and safety concerns.
- Permit support persons to accompany individuals with disabilities in areas open to the public. Where admission fees apply for events organized by Bay Haven, individuals with disabilities will pay the same admission fee as other attendees; no fee will be charged to their support person.
- Provide notice of temporary service disruptions affecting persons with disabilities, including the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration, and available alternative services where applicable.
- Encourage and accept feedback regarding accessibility and the provision of services to persons with disabilities. Feedback may be submitted in person, by telephone, in writing, or by email.
- Review and investigate feedback that indicates potential non-compliance with accessibility requirements and determine appropriate corrective actions. Every effort will be made to respond promptly and effectively.
- Make documents outlining Bay Haven's accessibility policies and procedures available upon request and provide them in accessible formats as required.

ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPLES FOR STAFF

All employees are expected to apply the following principles when interacting with persons with disabilities:

- Ask individuals how best to assist or communicate with them.
- Respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- Speak directly to the individual rather than to a support person or intermediary.

Communication Guidelines

Persons with hearing loss

- Attract the person's attention before speaking.
- Ensure adequate lighting so the individual can see your face.
- Reduce background noise or move to a quieter area.
- Ask if another method of communication (e.g., written notes) would be helpful.

Persons with vision loss

- Identify yourself when approaching the individual.
- Offer assistance and ask before providing help.
- Offer to read printed material aloud or provide enlarged print if available.

Persons with learning disabilities

- Provide information clearly and patiently.
- Ensure communication is presented in a way that accommodates the individual's needs.

Persons with speech or language impairments

- Ask questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no” when appropriate.
- Allow the person time to communicate without interruption.

Persons with mental health disabilities

- Remain calm, respectful, and supportive.
- Ask how you can best assist them.

Persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities

- Use plain language.
- Provide one piece of information at a time if necessary.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES, SERVICE ANIMALS, AND SUPPORT PERSONS

- Staff will not move or handle a person's assistive device without permission.
- Service animals should not be touched, fed, or distracted while working. If unsure whether an animal is a service animal, staff may politely ask the individual.
- When a person is accompanied by a support person (e.g., personal support worker, volunteer, family member, or friend), staff should follow the direction of the individual receiving the service.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

Documents related to Bay Haven's accessibility policies and procedures will be made available upon request and provided in accessible formats where required.

Policy Citation

Acts/Regs:

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O.2005,c.11*
- *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, O. Reg. 191/11*
- *Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19*
- *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, S.O.2021, c.39,Sched.1*