

KINGSTON, FRONTENAC AND LENNOX & ADDINGTON PUBLIC HEALTH

BY-LAW, POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

POLICY: COMMUNICATION

APPROVED BY:

NUMBER: **V-21**

DATE: 28 October 2009

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PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Purpose

To establish the accessibility standards for customer service for KFL&A Public Health, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, through the development of agency policies, procedures, and practices.

Policy

KFL&A Public Health is committed to providing programs and services that are accessible to all and shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that:

- Programs and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of programs and services to persons with disabilities and others shall be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from programs and services.
- Persons with a disability shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from programs and services.

This policy applies to all employees, students, volunteers, Board members, and individuals providing contracted services.

ORIGINAL DATE:

28 October 2009

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Definitions

Accessible: capable of being easily understood or appreciated; easy to get at; capable of being reached, or entered; and obtainable. (Source: Gage Canadian Dictionary, 1998)

Disability means:

- a) any degree of physical 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 co-ordination, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance 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* (Source: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005)

Procedure

1.0 Service Animals

- 1.1 If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, KFL&A Public Health shall ensure that the person is permitted to enter any facility with the animal and to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.
- 1.2 Where a service animal is excluded by law, KFL&A Public Health shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use and benefit from the agency's programs and services.

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- 1.3 If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, KFL&A Public Health 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 or her disability. If proper documentation is not produced, then the person may be asked to remove the animal from the premises.
 - 1.4 Service animals must be under the care and control of their owners at all times. This provision includes controlling the behavior of the animal, cleaning up after the animal, and being responsible for any damage caused to KFL&A Public Health property by the animal.
- 2.0 Support Persons
- 2.1 If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, KFL&A Public Health shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter any facility, and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person.
 - 2.2 KFL&A Public Health may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when in a KFL&A Public Health facility, if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others in the facility.
 - 2.3 In situations in which privacy and consent issues are applicable, a support person may be subject to the same confidentiality requirements as the person with a disability whom they are assisting. A support person may be required to sign a waiver with respect to any privacy or confidentiality issues.
 - 2.4 Support persons shall not be charged program fees.
- 3.0 Assistive Devices
- 3.1 A person with a disability may provide his or her own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using, and benefiting from KFL&A Public Health's programs and services.
 - 3.2 KFL&A Public Health will have reasonable assistive devices, such as TTY access, on site for use by people with disabilities.

4.0 Notice of Temporary Disruptions

4.1 KFL&A Public Health shall provide notice of temporary disruptions. The notice shall include information about:

- the reason for the disruption,
- its anticipated duration, and
- a description of any available, alternative services.

4.2 In the event of a temporary disruption in service the following steps shall be taken:

- The staff member shall notify his or her immediate supervisor of the temporary disruption.
- The staff member shall complete and submit the online Communications Request form to notify the Communications Officer.
- The Communications Officer shall issue a media release to the media and KFL&A Public Health staff.
- The Communications Officer shall ensure a notice is posted in a conspicuous location at the site of the disruption and on the KFL&A Public Health website.
- Program staff may notify persons receiving services by telephone or mail if feasible.

5.0 Accessibility Training

5.1 Every person who deals with members of the public including employees, volunteers, students, agents, contractors, and others who provide programs and services on behalf of KFL&A Public Health shall receive training regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, as required by law.

5.2 Training shall be provided to each person according to his or her duties and as soon as is practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties. Training shall be provided from time to time for changes to policies, procedures, and practices governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

5.3 The training shall include the following information:

- the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act,
- how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities,
- how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device, or require the assistance of a service animal or support person,
- how to use equipment made available by KFL&A Public Health to help people with disabilities to access goods and services, and

- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing KFL&A Public Health programs and services.
- 5.4 A record of the dates on which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided shall be kept by Human Resources.
- 5.5 Orientation regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities shall be provided to all new employees, volunteers, students, agents, contractors, and others who provide programs and services on behalf of KFL&A Public Health as soon as practicable after hire, placement, or contract initiation. The level of orientation provided shall be role dependent. AODA Orientation shall be incorporated into the Corporate Orientation Program and an annual training session shall be offered. Orientation shall also be available in alternate formats (e.g., video, PowerPoint) on the Staff Website to facilitate timely and consistent delivery of content.
- 6.0 Feedback process
- 6.1 People with disabilities may provide feedback about the programs and services they receive from KFL&A Public Health through the feedback process outlined in policy V-22, *Feedback from the Public*.
- 6.2 Feedback can be received in a variety of ways including: in person, by mail, e-mail, telephone, fax, or through the feedback form on the KFL&A Public Health website.
- 6.3 The feedback process is promoted on the KFL&A Public Health website and through other printed outreach methods. A copy of the feedback policy is available by request.
- 7.0 Notice of availability of documents
- 7.1 KFL&A Public Health shall provide notice that, upon request, the agency shall provide a copy of this policy and supporting procedures and practices required under Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person.
- 7.2 Notice of availability will be provided on the website and through other printed methods.

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8.0 Format of documents

8.1 If KFL&A Public Health is required by the Customer Service Standard Regulation to give a copy of a document to a person with a disability, it will take into account the person's ability to gain access to the information and will provide the document or information contained in the document in a format that meets those needs as agreed upon with the person.

8.2 Such requests shall be forwarded to the Manager, CQI and Central Resources.

ORIGINAL DATE:
10 November 2009

REVISIONS