ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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ACCESSIBILITY

POLICY

Brantwood Community Services is committed to complying to all aspects of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and strives to provide accessible services in a welcoming manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, including visitors and members of the public.

PROCEDURE

Brantwood will make every reasonable effort to ensure that policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

Accessibility Plan

Brantwood Community Services will develop and maintain a multi-year Accessibility Plan and review and update it annually. The Accessibility Plan will be posted on Brantwood's website, at the main entrance and available in an accessible format or with communication supports, upon request.

Use of Assistive Devices

Brantwood Community Services recognizes that some people use assistive devices (such as wheelchairs, mobility aids, hearing aids, etc) to access services. Brantwood Community Services will support people in the use of their assistive devices to obtain or receive services.

Communication

Brantwood will meet the information and communication needs of people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability. Brantwood will, in keeping with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity, provide upon request information in an accessible format or communication supports.

To assist people with disabilities access Brantwood's services, employees and volunteers should utilize the following guidelines:

a. Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration you offer everyone else.

b. If you're not sure what to do, ask the individual, "May I help you?"

c. Ask before you offer to help; don't just jump in. People often have their own way of doing things. Individuals with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.

d. If you don't know someone, or if you are unfamiliar with the disability, it's better to wait until the individual describes his or her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics and your assumptions may be wrong.

e. Some disabilities are not visible. Take the time to get to know the individual's needs.

f. Speak normally, clearly and directly. Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their interpreter or someone who is with them.

g. Be patient; give the individual time to explain

h. Utilize the materials provided in training and the policy manual to assist you with individual/specific situations, techniques, best practices and alternative communication methods to assist with the provision of goods and services based on the needs of the person supported. (**SC10 All About Me, BSC01 Basic and Specialized Support Policy Statement, Service Rights Policies**)

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Brantwood Community Services shall provide or arrange for accessible format and communication supports for people with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account each person's accessibility needs.

Brantwood will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support that best supports their needs. (**C100 Staffing Support and Advocacy, C20 Interaction Communication with People Supported**)

Accessible Website and Web Content

Brantwood Community Services' internet websites and web content conform to World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guides (WCAG) 2.0.

Procurement

Brantwood will incorporate accessibility features and/or criteria, where applicable, in its procurement policies and procedures. (**G200 Procurement (Purchasing)**)

Employment

Brantwood Community Service's Policy and Procedures are intended to build an inclusive and accessible work environment free from discrimination and harassment. Accommodations are available throughout the recruitment, selection and employment relationship upon request. (**P315 OHRC Harassment and Discrimination Complaint and Investigations**, **P05 Accommodation**, **OHS345B Employee Workplace Emergency Response Plan Form** and **OHS345 Return to Work)**

Orientation & Training

Brantwood will provide training to all employees and volunteers on the requirements of the Accessibility Standards. (**P225 Mandatory Training**)

Service Animals

Brantwood Community Services recognizes that some people may require the use of service animals to access services. People who are accompanied by a service animal will be permitted to enter Brantwood Community Services' premises and to keep the animal with them, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. If the animal is legally excluded from the premises, Brantwood Community Services will

provide alternative measures to enable the person to obtain or receive services. (**RE80 Pets and Service Animals at Program Locations**)

Support Persons

Brantwood Community Services recognizes that some people rely on support persons for assistance while accessing services and that these support people may accompany them on Brantwood Community Services premises. As well, people will have access to their support person while on the premises. In instances where Brantwood charges fees, the Agency clearly states the fee, if any, for any support persons.

Disruptions to Service
(see policy G-05 Service Disruptions or Modifications)

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to Brantwood Community Services' facilities or services (e.g., temporary closure of a door, ramp, etc.) communication will be provided to people impacted and, where necessary, to the general public. Communication may be provided by e-mail, telephone, social media, or other established communication methods, as appropriate to the situation, and will identify:

- The affected service/location
- Explain why the disruption occurred, where appropriate
- Whether the program is closed, delayed, relocated, or operating with modifications
- Expected duration/if known
- Alternate arrangements
- Contact information for questions
- Reopening information, when available

Confidentiality of Information

Personal information regarding a person's disability cannot be released without the consent of the person and must be managed in a manner that is consistent with the Freedom of Information Guidelines, Personal Information Protection Guidelines and Brantwood's Policies and Procedures. (**P70 Confidentiality)**

Feedback/Comments/Complaints

Feedback or complaints regarding Brantwood Community Services' Accessibility Standards for Customer Service can be made directly in a method that the person communicates (verbally, sign language, assistive technology, etc) or in writing to any staff member providing service. (**G38 Complaints**, **G38 External Complaint/Feedback**

Procedure, **G38 Internal Complaint/Feedback Procedure and SC140 Barriers to Quality Service**)

Copies of This Policy

Brantwood Community Services is committed to creating an accessible environment and advancing efforts to build an equitable and inclusive community that values and benefits from diversity in culture, experience and abilities for people served, community and all employees. If you would like to provide feedback surrounding accessibility or require information in an accessible format or communication supports, please contact Brantwood Community Services in the following ways:

In Person or by mail:
25 Bell Lane, The Abilities Centre
Brantford, Ontario N3T 1E1
By Phone: 519-753-2658