

AODA - Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Client Service Policy

***Note: This policy is current to the last applicable changes to accessibility legislation.**

Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Client Service Standards included in the Integrated Accessibility Standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. It applies to the provision of programs and services to the public or other third parties, not to the programs themselves.

All programs and services provided by Vista Centre Brain Injury Services shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Definitions

Assistive Device – Is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that clients bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Disability – The term disability as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, refers to:

- 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 co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, 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;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- A learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- A mental disorder; or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Guide Dog – Is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Animal – an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

1. the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
2. the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:



- A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario; or
- A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario.

Service Dog – As reflected in *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562* a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- It is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability; or
- The person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person – a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to programs and services.

A. The Provision of Programs and Services to Persons with Disabilities

Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all clients receive the same value and quality;
- Allowing clients with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing programs and services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- Using alternative methods when possible to ensure that clients with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- Taking into account individual needs when providing programs and services; and
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the client's disability.

B. The Use of Assistive Devices

Client's Own Assistive Device(s)

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing programs or services provided by Vista Centre Brain Injury Services.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of programs and services. For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a client with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the client is in a location that would be considered safe for both the client and business. Or, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the client.



C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A client with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

Food Service Areas

A client with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog or service dog will be allowed access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

Other types of service animals are not permitted into food service areas due to the *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60*.

Exclusion Guidelines

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law (see applicable laws below) Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access programs and services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

Applicable Laws

Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, Ontario Regulation 31/05: Animals not intended for slaughter or to be euthanized are not allowed in any area or room of a meat plant. It also makes an exception for service dogs to allow them in those areas of a meat plant where food is served, sold or offered for sale to clients and in those areas that do not contain animals or animal parts and are not used for the receiving, processing, packaging, labelling, shipping, handling or storing of animals or parts of animals.

The *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60*, normally does not allow animals in places where food is manufactured, prepared, processed, handled, served, displayed, stored, sold or offered for sale. It does allow guide dogs and service dogs to go into places where food is served, sold or offered for sale. However, other types of service animals are not included in this exception.

Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario: If there is a conflict between a provision of this Act or of a regulation under this or any other Act relating to banned breeds (such as pitbulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by a municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive in relation to controls or bans on these breeds prevails.

Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the client for reasons relating to his or her disability, Vista Centre Brain Injury Services may request verification from the client.

Care and Control of the Animal:

The client who is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time. Guidelines for the care and control include: possessing a stable even temperament, remain quietly by their handler's side, lay quietly under table or chair of their owner, ignore distractions and remain quiet at all times. This includes, but is not limited to whining, grumbling, wooing, barking, growling, whimpering or other noise. As



well, any behavior meant to intimidate or harm a person or animal in an aggressive action will not be tolerated. This includes, but not limited to biting, snapping, and showing of teeth, lunging or charging, or biting.

Allergies

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

D. The Use of Support Persons

If a client with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the client is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the client and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the client, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

Admission Fees

Where Vista Centre Brain Injury Services requires a support person to accompany a person with a disability, and where the person with a disability has agreed to the accompaniment, Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will not charge the support persons any fees or fares.

E. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Vista Centre Brain Injury Services. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that clients with disabilities rely on to access or use Vista Centre Brain Injury Services' programs or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

Notifications will include:

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Programs or services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration; and
- A description of alternative services or options.

Notification Options

Update to include your options and methods

When disruptions occur Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will provide notice by:



- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the Vista Centre Brain Injury Services website;
- contacting clients with appointments;
- verbally notifying clients when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

F. Client Feedback

Vista Centre Brain Injury Services shall provide clients with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to clients with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all clients and notice of the process will be made available by (insert ways in which the process will be publicized). Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (hand written, delivered, website or email), will be available upon request. *Update to list your options*

Submitting Feedback

Clients can submit feedback via:

Phone: 613-234-4747

Email: info@vistacentre.ca

Clients who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite client feedback form or verbally can do so to any Vista Centre Brain Injury Services employee. *Update if feedback should only be supplied to specific individuals such as client service, guides, hospitality, etc.*

Clients who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

G. Training

Training will be provided to:

- Every person who is an employee of, or a volunteer with, the provider.
- Every person who participates in developing the provider's policies.
- Every other person who provides programs, services or facilities on behalf of the provider.

Training Provisions

Regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- A review of the requirements of the Client Service Standards.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:
 - use assistive devices;
 - require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal; or
 - require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees).
- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities.



- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.
- Vista Centre Brain Injury Services' policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible client service to clients with disabilities.

Training Schedule

Vista Centre Brain Injury Services will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors (insert when such as, during orientation). Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures, policies, and/or practices.

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes, or changes to company procedures.