



Accessible Customer Service Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement:

PHC will use reasonable efforts to ensure that it provides goods and services according to the following principles:

1. Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all residents, applicants, staff and members of the general public.
2. The provision of goods and services to people with disabilities will be integrated with conventional service 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 PHC goods and services; and
3. All clients will be given an equal opportunity to obtain, use, and benefit from PHC goods and services.

Definitions:

Agent – A person or business providing goods or services on behalf of PHC through a contract or agreement.

Assistive Device – This is a device that is used by a person with a disability to help with daily living. Examples include: wheel chairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, portable chalk boards, and electronic communication devices.

Customer Service Representative (CSR) – An employee, director, agent, volunteer or otherwise who, on behalf of PHC, provides or oversees the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

Disability – "Disability" as defined in the Human Rights Code, means:

- (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 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;
- (b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;



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- (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; (“handicap”).

| **Goods or Services** – Goods or services provided by PHC or an agent on behalf of PHC.

| **PHC** – Peterborough Housing Corporation

Service Animal – An animal that is readily apparent to be used by a person for reasons relating to his or her disability, or if the person provides documentation from a health care practitioner confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability.

Support Person – A person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist the person with a disability with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Third Party – Is a representative of a business or organization who is receiving PHC goods or services or acting in an official capacity. Examples include: rent supplement landlords, service manager staff, or legal representative.

Procedures:

The procedures implement, in part, Peterborough Housing Corporation’s Accessible Customer Service Policy and provide guidelines on how PHC will comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

1) Support Persons:

- CSRs will speak directly to the customer not the support person. If unsure which is the customer, the CSR will ask.
- If a person with a disability requests a support person to be present, they will be permitted to enter areas where PHC goods & services are offered.



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- When confidential information needs to be discussed the CSR will ask the person with a disability if the support person can remain present. If not, the CSR will find another location for the support person to wait.
- PHC may require a support person to accompany a person with a disability to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or others.
- PHC will provide advance notice of admission fees for support persons, if applicable.

2) Service Animals:

- PHC will allow a service animal to enter an area where PHC goods or services are offered unless the animal's presence is prohibited by law.
- PHC may request documentation from a health care practitioner if it is not readily apparent that a person uses an animal for reasons related to their disability.
- A CSR will not engage a service animal while it is working.
- Alternate service options will be offered where service animals are restricted by law or in the case of an allergic reaction from a member of the public or staff.

3) Assistive Devices and Services:

- PHC will permit a person with a disability to use their personal assistive devices or offer use of any assistive devices available at a PHC facility.

4) Communicating and Interacting:

- PHC will use reasonable efforts to ensure that customer service is consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.
- The CSRs will communicate in person and by telephone in a way that takes a person's disability into account.
- CSRs will ask "How may I help you?" in order to best respond to the needs of the person with a disability.



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5) Temporary Service Disruptions:

- PHC will provide notice for every planned or unplanned disruption that could affect people with disabilities.
- Notice will be provided by the management of the facility as soon as possible for unplanned disruptions and within a reasonable time in advance for planned disruptions.
- Notices will include the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration and a description of any alternative facilities or services that are available.

6) Availability of Accessible Customer Service Documents:

- PHC will ensure that a document describing the policy and procedures developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 is available in accessible formats.
- Notice to the public and other third parties regarding the availability of the accessible customer service document will be posted on PHC's website when the website is functional.

7) Feedback for Accessible Customer Service:

- PHC welcomes feedback from the public about the delivery of goods or services to people with disabilities.
- PHC will assess whether a response to feedback is necessary and if so, ensure a response is provided.
- Notice of the process and the feedback form will be available to the public on PHC'S website when it is functional and will be provided in other formats as appropriate.

8) Accessible Customer Service Training:

- PHC will provide training to every CSR and every person who participates in developing the policies & procedures that govern the provision of goods or services to the public or other third parties.



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- The training will consist of the following:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the policy & procedures developed under this legislation.
 - An orientation on disabilities and instructions on communicating and interacting with people with disabilities, including those who use assistive devices, service animals or support persons.
 - What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing PHC goods or services.
- Ongoing training will be provided in connection with any changes in PHC policies, practices, and procedures governing the provision of PHC goods or services.
- PHC will keep records of accessible customer service training.

Copies of the full procedures are available upon request. All enquiries regarding Accessible Customer Service should be directed to:

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