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| BANYAN NON-PROFIT MANAGEMENT SERVICES ET AL | | NUMBER 05-01-120 |
| SECTION: Administration | TOPIC: ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE (AODA and ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS) | |
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POLICY

Banyan Community Services is committed to ensuring that all persons with disabilities have equal access to programs, services and activities. In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) Banyan will provide all goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Services will be provided in a manner that takes into account the person's disability/ies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all persons within Banyan Community Services are aware of their rights and responsibilities to foster an accessible and inclusive environment with and for persons who have disabilities. This Customer Service Standard is the first standard of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) where it requires our organization to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

OPERATIONAL

Banyan shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles;

1. This policy applies to all Banyan personnel, board members, volunteers, clients, contractors and visitors who have a relationship with Banyan Community Services.
2. The provision of 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 services.
3. Persons with disabilities shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain services.

A) PROCEDURES:

1. All Banyan representatives when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.
2. Banyan utilizes various accessible communication mediums.
3. Banyan will provide documents, or the information contained in documents, as required under the [Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#) to a person with a disability in a format that takes into account the person's disability.
4. Assistive Devices
 - BSC is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. BCS will ensure that staff realize that persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices to access goods and services.

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5. Service Animals

- BSC is committed to welcoming people with disabilities and their service animals on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties and will permit the person to keep the service animal with them. BSC will also ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies have been trained on how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.
- Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained to the person(s) with disabilities, and other reasonable arrangements to provide services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- When a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting, or other harmful behavior) an employee may ask the person(s) with disability to remove the animal from the area or discontinue / refuse access to services. In this event, other reasonable arrangements to provide services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.

6. Support Persons

- BSC is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter BSC's premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on BCS premises.
- In the event that a fee is charged by the BCS in relation to a support person's presence on BCS premises, advanced notice of the fee will be provided.

7. Service Disruption - Notice

- It is possible that from time to time there shall be disruptions in service (i.e. an entrance way that is under repair, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that is temporarily unavailable). In the event that a disruption in service is planned, and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice.
- People with disabilities may often go to a lot of trouble to access services, such as booking transit or arranging a ride. By providing notice, you can save that person an unnecessary trip.
- Notice shall be provided through local media, on the website, or if possible over the telephone, and posted at the site.

8. Unexpected Disruption in Service - Notice

- In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, notice may be provided in a variety of ways, and shall be done as quickly as possible.
- In the event of a service disruption, alternative methods of service may be considered and those impacted by service interruption shall be informed of any alternative methods.

9. Training Requirements

- Every person who deals with the public on behalf of Banyan Community Services, including 3rd parties i.e. employees, volunteers, students, contractors, management and board members must complete training in relation to this Policy.
- Training will be provided on an annual basis.
- New personnel shall receive training during orientation.
- Ongoing training on changes to policies, procedures, and new equipment shall be provided.
- The method and amount of training shall be geared to the employee's role in terms of accessibility.

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- Training records, including the dates when the training was provided, shall be kept by Human Resources.

10. Customer/Client Feedback

- Feedback from our clients provides Banyan Community Services with opportunities to learn and improve. Banyan Community Services recognizes the right of our clients to make a complaint, compliment, or make suggestions on ways to improve our services.
- To assist Banyan Community Services in ensuring that the delivery of service to those with disabilities is provided in an effective and timely manner, the client is invited to provide their feedback as follows:
 - a. Accessibility feedback form will be available at all locations upon request.

- b. Feedback can be provided in writing, in person, e-mail, or telephone, address to:

Banyan Community Services
 681 Main Street, East
 Hamilton, ON L8M 1K3
 Phone: 905-545-0133
 Fax: 905-549-9011

[AODA feedback form.pdf](#)
www.banyancommunityservices.org

- c. A Manager shall respond either in writing, in person, by e-mail or by telephone, acknowledging receipt of feedback. Accessibility Service complaints will be addressed according to complaint categories already established in our organization’s complaint procedure 3-1-70.

11. Availability of Accessible Customer Service Documents

- BSC shall prepare any additional documents describing its policies, practices and procedures as may be required by Ontario Regulation 429/07 and, upon request, shall give a copy of such documents to any person. Further, BCS shall notify persons to whom it provides goods and services that the documents required under Ontario Regulation 429/07 are available upon request.
- BSC shall give the person the documents, or the information contained in the documents described above, in a format that takes into account the person’s disability.

12. Modifications to this or other policies

- BSC is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. BCS will consider the modification or removal of any policies that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities on an ongoing basis.

B) DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy:

1. **Assistive Devices:** Any auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids).

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2. **Disabilities:** The same as definition of disability found in the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#).
3. **Persons with Disabilities:** Individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#).
4. **Service Animals:** are not pets but animals trained to provide assistance to a person with disability. They are individually trained to assist people with disabilities in the activities of normal daily living, to enhance quality of life, and mitigate their disabilities. A service animal is afforded access to all places the public is invited when accompanying their human partner, except where excluded by law [Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#).
5. **Support Persons:** Any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend that accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to services.

C) REFERENCE

1. [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)
2. [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
3. [Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#)
4. [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 - O Regulation 429-07](#)

D) REVIEW DATE: This policy is to be reviewed every three years. The next review date is July 2018

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| Endorsed by | Date |
| AODA Committee | July, 2015 |
| Approved by | Date |
| Senior Management | July, 2015 |