

ACCESSIBILITY AND EQUITY POLICY FOR THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD UNDER AODA

The following policy has been established by Rippleton Roadsters Child Care and Satellite Program to govern the provision of services with Regulation 191/11, "Integrated Accessibility Standards" ("Regulation") under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

These standards are developed to break down barriers and increase accessibility for persons with disabilities in the areas of information and communications and employment.

RRCCP is governed by this policy as well as the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* in meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.

RRCCP is committed to developing policies, practices, and procedures that provide accessible quality services to its clients and their children. Services will be provided to clients with disabilities in a manner that promotes and respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

RRCCP will endeavor to ensure that the Policy and related practices and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

Dignity - Persons with a disability must be treated as valued clients as deserving of service as any other customer.

Equality of Opportunity - Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our services.

Integration - Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other customer. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs.

Independence – Services must be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, we will always be willing to assist a person with a disability but will not do so without the express permission of the person.

RRCCP provides services to all children and their families including those with disabilities. Every effort will be made to ensure the following:

- The service will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of services to clients with disabilities will be integrated unless an alternative measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable clients with a disability to participate in the services offered by RRCCP.

Communication

RRCCP is committed to communicating with clients with disabilities in different or alternative ways that take into consideration their disability:

- Staff will be trained on how to interact and communicate with clients with disabilities in a manner that is respectful of a client's dignity and independence.
- Alternative methods of communication will be provided as requested.
- Staff will be trained to communicate with clients over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.
- Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

- Upon request, RRCCP will provide, or will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability.
- RRCCP will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.
- RRCCP will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Use of Assistive Devices

Assistive Devices, guide animals and/or support persons may be used by clients to assist in accessing services at RRCCP.

RRCCPs programs may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

All service animals must have proof of inoculations/vaccinations required under the Day Nurseries Act Staff and volunteers will be properly trained in how to interact with clients with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal a support person or an assistive device. The use of such items must be in compliance with the regulations outlined in the Day Nurseries Act and the Toronto Operating Criteria or other regional requirements.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

RRCCP will notify clients if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of a facility or service persons with a disability use to access our services. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the applicable premises and as well as being provided verbally, electronically or in person as applicable. The notice will include the following information:

- That a facility or service is unavailable.
- The anticipated duration of the disruption.
- The reason for the disruption.
- Alternative facilities or services, if available.

Feedback Procedure

AODA requires Organizations to implement a feedback method that allows clients to provide feedback on perceived barriers, including how to ask for assistance. RRCCP accepts feedback in a variety of ways including in person, by telephone, in writing or electronically. Our feedback protocol requires RRCCP to respond to all client inquiries within 10 business days.

Training and Records

RRCCP will provide training and ongoing training as required under the Act, to all persons to whom this Policy applies as well as to those persons charged with developing this Policy and related procedures and practices.

Training will include:

- A review of the purpose of the Act and requirements of the Standard.
- A review of the Policy.
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with persons with a disability who use an Assistive Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or Support Person.
- How to use equipment or devices made available on our premises to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises and/or services.

Timing of Training

Training will be provided to all persons to whom this Policy applies as soon as practical after he or she is assigned the applicable duties.