

FIFE ROAD CO-OPERATIVE HOMES INC

**AODA  
CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY**

Approved by the Board of Directors January 24, 2019  
Confirmed by Members January 31, 2019

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

FIFE ROAD CO-OPERATIVE HOMES INC. (the “**co-op**”) is committed to providing quality services that are accessible to all, and to communicating with all persons with disabilities in a way that takes into account their disabilities.

In so doing, the co-op strives at all times to provide services in a way that respects the principles of:

- *independence* – allowing people with disabilities to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others
- *dignity* – providing services in a way that allows people with disabilities to maintain self-respect and the respect of others
- *integration* – allowing people with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar ways as others
- *equality of opportunity* – offering people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from the co-op’s services and co-op life.

## 2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to describe how the co-op provides services to people with disabilities and to ensure these services are provided in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, S.O. 2005, c.11 and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Ontario Regulation 165/16* (collectively the “**AODA**”).

### 3. DEFINITIONS

#### **Accessible Formats**

Formats that are an alternative to standard print and are accessible to people with disabilities. Accessible formats may include large print, recorded audio, electronic formats (HTML and Microsoft Word) and Braille.

#### **Communication Supports**

Supports that individuals with disabilities may need to access information. Some examples include plain language, sign language interpreter, reading the information out loud to a person with vision loss, adding captioning to videos or using written notes to communicate with someone who is hard of hearing. Other supports include intervenor services such as a note taker or communication assistant, the use of letter, word or picture boards, devices that speak out, and repeating, clarifying or restating information.

#### **Assistive device**

A tool, technology or other mechanism that helps a person with a disability do everyday tasks such as moving, communicating or lifting. Assistive devices may include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, lifts, reading machines, recording machines, amplifiers, TTY services, oxygen tanks, communication boards, and/or white canes.

#### **Disability**

As defined by the AODA and Ontario *Human Rights Code*:

- (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;
- (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; and/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*.

## **Employee**

In the legislation an employee is defined as:

- full-time, part-time, seasonal and contract workers
- paid wages or a salary
- have control over the work assigned
- have a right to control the details of the work

Volunteers and independent contractors are not considered employees.

## **Service Animal**

An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

- (a) if it is a guide dog as defined in the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. B.7;
- (b) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or

- (c) if the person provides a letter from a physician, nurse, optometrist, mental health therapist, audiologist, occupational therapist, chiropractor or psychotherapist confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

### **Support Person**

A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

## **POLICIES**

### **4.1 Assistive Devices**

- (a) The co-op is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to access the co-op's services.
- (b) A person with a disability may use his or her own assistive device to access the co-op's services, unless this device poses a risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or to others.
- (c) If a person with a disability cannot use his or her assistive device because of health and/or safety risks, the co-op will take reasonable measures to assist this person to access the co-op's services.
- (d) The co-op will ensure that its staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by persons with disabilities while accessing the co-op's goods or services.
- (e) The co-op will also ensure that staff knows how to use assistive devices available on its premises for use by members and/or the public.

## **4.2 Service Animals**

- (a) The co-op acknowledges the vital relationship between a person with a disability and his or her service animal. Service animals are allowed to accompany people with disabilities on all parts of the co-op's premises that are open to the public or other third parties, except where food is prepared, utility rooms, or as otherwise excluded by law.
- (b) The co-op will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by service animals.
- (c) The person accompanied by the service animal will keep the animal with him or her at all times, and will be responsible for the service animal's care, supervision and control while on the co-op's premises.
- (d) Where another person's health and safety could be adversely affected by the presence of a service animal, the co-op will fully analyze all options for safely allowing the service animal onto the premises. In so doing, the co-op will consult with the person with the disability, and with the adversely affected person, to find a solution that meets the needs of both individuals.

## **4.3 Support Persons**

- (a) The co-op welcomes 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 the co-op'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 the co-op's premises.

- (b) If the co-op needs to discuss confidential information with a person accompanied by a support person, the person with a disability will be asked if he or she wishes the support person to be present and, if so, to sign a consent form authorizing the co-op to disclose confidential information in the presence of the support person. In addition, the support person will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement to keep the confidential information disclosed by the co-op in strict confidence.
- (c) Where the presence of a support person is required, the co-op will waive any applicable admission fee or fare for a co-op event.
- (d) The co-op may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the co-op's premises. This would occur only if, upon consultation with the person with the disability, there is no other reasonable way to fulfill the co-op's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability and of others on the premises based on available evidence.

#### **4.4 Communication and Information**

- (a) The co-op will make documents and information (e.g., policies, information about feedback procedures, applications and notices) accessible by arranging for formats that take into account a person's disability or through communication supports.

If a person with a disability requests accessible information or requires communication supports, the co-op will consult with the person to determine on how best to meet their needs This may include, but is not limited to, telephoning members to convey information normally provided in written notices, providing large-print documents, electronic means, providing

access to a computer or one-on-one meetings with members to review important information.

- (b) The co-op will let members, employees and the public know that written information and other forms of communication are available in accessible formats, upon request, by posting notice on a website, promotional material, or on a bulletin board.
- (c) Types of information that can be requested in an accessible format include:
  - emergency plans and procedures
  - maps, warning signs and evacuation routes
  - information about alarms or other emergency alerts
  - customer service feedback processes
  - workplace information for employees
  - other public or member information
- (d) The co-op will train staff who communicate with members, applicants, and/or the public on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- (e) The co-op will use plain language in its written materials.
- (f) Accessible formatted information will be provided in a timely manner without charge.
- (g) Upon request, the co-op will work with members with disabilities to ensure their full participation at board, members' and committee meetings.

#### **4.5 Notice of Service Disruptions**

- (a) The co-op will notify the public of a disruption in facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities to access the co-op's premises or services. The notice will include the reason

for the disruption, its duration, and the alternative services available (if any).

- (b) The type of notice will depend on the circumstances. The notice may be given by posting a written notice in common areas (e.g. beside an elevator that is out of order, or an entrance way that is closed for repairs), by email, by posting a notice on the co-op's website (if any), or by a telephone call to members expected to be particularly affected by the disruption.
- (c) The co-op will give advance notice of scheduled disruptions. If the disruption is unexpected, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

#### **4.6 Feedback**

- (a) The co-op is committed to maintaining and improving access to its goods and services by people with disabilities, including members, applicants, and the public. Comments regarding the manner in which the co-op provides goods or service to persons with disabilities are welcome and appreciated.
- (b) Feedback regarding the way the co-op provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, by diskette, online, or by any other method.
- (c) The feedback process will be posted in the co-op's office, in the member handbook and on the co-op's website (if any).
- (d) If the person requests a response to the feedback, the [Co-op Manager] will contact him or her within three [3] business days to discuss next steps.
- (e) Feedback will be used to improve the way the co-op provides goods and services to people with disabilities. The co-op will seek the consent of the person giving the feedback before

bringing a suggestion or complaint to the board, a committee, or any other person.

#### **4.7 Training**

- (a) Every employee, volunteer, and any other person or third party who provides goods, services and facilities on behalf of the co-op, whether paid or unpaid, will receive training on *Integrated Accessibility Standards* requirements.
- (b) Everyone involved in the development of the co-op's accessible customer service policies, practices and procedures will receive training on Integrated Accessibility Standards requirements.
- (c) All third-party contractors who deal with members of the public on the co-op's behalf shall, upon request, demonstrate that their employees, agents, and/or subcontractors have received training on *Integrated Accessibility Standards* requirements.
- (d) Accessible customer service training will meet the current AODA requirements. Training will include the following:
  - i. the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of *Integrated Accessibility Standards* ;
  - ii. how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
  - iii. how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
  - iv. how to use the assistive devices available on the co-op's premises or otherwise that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities;

- v. what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the co-op's goods and services; and
  - vi. the co-op's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.
- (e) Training may be provided through workshops, on-line training, written guides or any other method agreed upon by the board. The level of training will be dependant on the duties and responsibilities of the person.
- (f) The co-op will ensure that new employees receive training within [one] month of the commencement of their employment, and that board or committee members receive training within [three] months of the commencement of their appointment. The co-op will also provide training on changes to the AODA and/or the co-op's policies or practices.
- (g) The co-op will maintain records of each training recipient group (staff, directors, committees, general membership, third party contractors), the training provided, and the date the

#### **4.8 Accessible Workplaces**

- (a) The co-op will notify employees and the public that it will accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in the hiring process by posting the information on a website or on a job posting.
- (b) The co-op will provide workplace information in an accessible format if an employee requests it. Workplace information includes:
- any information employees need to perform their jobs (e.g. job descriptions and manuals)

- general information that is available to all employees at work (e.g. company newsletters, bulletins about company policies and health and safety information)
  - procedures when an employee with a disability may need accommodation in an emergency
- (c) The co-op will consider the needs of an employee with disabilities when conducting a performance review or during career development by providing accommodations to successfully develop skills or take on new responsibilities.
- (d) The co-op will tell its employees about policies to support people with disabilities, including changes to policies. The co-op could inform employees through newsletters, emails, memos, staff meetings or one-on-one conversations.