

Human Resources Manual

Section: TBD

Subject: Accommodations: Accessible Customer Service Policy (AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)

Approved: E.D.

Implementation Date: August 23 2018

Revision Dates: TBD

Last Review Date: 08/2018

POLICY

Furniture Bank is committed to excellence in serving all clients, including people living with disabilities. Guided by the principles of dignity, integration, independence and equality of opportunity, we will attempt to identify potential barriers, and find ways to work around those barriers in order to ensure that wherever possible our services are accessible for all clients.

Our office at 25 Connell Court Unit 1 is largely wheelchair accessible. The facility is one level with wide entrances between spaces internally making it easy to flow through the building. There are no steps leading to the front door, only a curbside which may present a mobility issue (Client Services is located directly in front as is able to offer assistance). We do not yet have a wheelchair accessible restroom onsite. The rear of the building, primarily used for shipping and receiving from our truck fleet and donor drop-offs, has a short flight of stairs. Operations staff are present to assist donors if they are unable to enter the rear of the building.

PROCEDURE

Making services accessible to clients living with disabilities is supported by way of:

- Use of assistive devices
- Use of service animals
- Use of support persons
- Employee training
- Communication strategies
- Feedback process
- Ongoing policy modifications.

Assistive Devices:

Furniture Bank will ensure that employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients living with disabilities while accessing our services. Employees will endeavour to offer helpful measures and information in order to make our services more accessible for those using assistive devices.

Use of Service Animals:

We welcome both people living with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed in or on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. If necessary, documentation from a regulated health professional may be supplied to confirm that a service animal is required for reasons relating to a disability.

Use of Support Persons:

A person living with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcome to have that person accompany them on our premises and into meetings or sessions involving the client, at the client's discretion. A support person does not have to be a paid support worker but may include a family member, friend or volunteer.

Training Furniture Bank will provide training to all employees and volunteers who deal with the public on the agency's behalf. This training will be provided as part of the company's orientation process.

Employees and volunteers will be given training in the following areas:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- The agency's policy and procedures for providing accessible services to clients in accordance with the customer service standard
- How to interact with people living with various types of disabilities
- What to do if a person living with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises or services.

Communication Strategies:

Furniture Bank will use a variety of communication strategies in order to try and accommodate the various ways that people living with disabilities communicate. Communication includes verbal, written and electronic communication. Reasonable efforts shall be made to ensure that communication is presented in a manner that is accessible by providing accessible formats or communication supports on request. The communication strategy extends to posting notices if and when an accessibility feature or service is unavailable or temporarily out of service. The notice will advise clients of the reason for the disruption, how long the service will be unavailable, and a description of alternate services or facilities, if available. The notice will be posted at all sites affected by the disruption.

Feedback Process:

In an attempt to enhance policies and procedures in the area of accessible customer service, the agency welcomes and encourages ongoing feedback. Clients who wish to provide feedback on the way Furniture Bank provides services to people living with disabilities can do so by telephone, in writing or by email. If requested, we will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and/or communication supports. All feedback should be directed to the Director, People and Culture or designate. Under normal circumstances, clients can expect to hear back within three (3) business days. Complaints will be addressed in accordance with the agency's Client Complaints policy.

Feedback should be directed to the Director, People and Culture in any of the following ways:

- By Telephone: 416-934-1229
- Via Email: info@furniturebank.org
- In writing: Furniture Bank, 25 Connell Court Unit 1, Etobicoke ON M8Z 1E8

Ongoing Policy Modifications:

In keeping with our commitment to provide accessible services, the will company will review its policies on an ongoing basis to ensure that they respect and promote the dignity and independence of people living with disabilities.