



Children's Circle of St. Barnabas Policy and Procedure Manual

Policy Name	Accessibility Policy and Procedure
-------------	------------------------------------

Approved By: Board of Directors	Last Approval Date: July 25, 2025	Last Review Date: July 16, 2025	Last Revision Date: July 16, 2025
------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Statement of Organizational Commitment

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario's accessibility laws.

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services or facilities to all customers including people with disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Training

We are committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.



Children's Circle of St. Barnabas Policy and Procedure Manual

In addition, we will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- b) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes:

- purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- how to use the equipment or devices used by people with disabilities that may help with providing services or our facilities for people with disabilities.
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organization's services or facilities.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies.

We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our services or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our services or facilities.



Children's Circle of St. Barnabas Policy and Procedure Manual

We ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices used by our clients with disabilities while accessing our services or facilities. Training will be provided by the family or other professional to all staff interacting with the client with a disability.

Communication

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability, and we will work with the person with disabilities or their family to determine what method of communication works for them.

Service Animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to all our clients.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Optometrists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario



Children's Circle of St. Barnabas Policy and Procedure Manual

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our services or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded
- discuss with the customer another way of providing services or facilities

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

In certain cases, Children's Circle of St. Barnabas might require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of:

- the person with a disability
- others on the premises

Before making a decision, Children's Circle of St. Barnabas will:

- consult with the person with a disability and or their family to understand their needs
- consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
- determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for clients with disabilities, Children's Circle of St. Barnabas will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

This notice will be made publicly available by posting a notice on the front door, depending on the feasibility of doing so.

Feedback Process

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.



Children's Circle of St. Barnabas Policy and Procedure Manual

Feedback may be provided in the following ways:

- In person
- Electronically
- In writing
- By telephone

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

- Feedback, including complaints, will be directed to the Executive Director or designate

Customers can expect to hear back in 5 business days.

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

Notice of Availability of Documents

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice in the following location(s)/way(s):

- Posting outside the child care office

Children's Circle of St. Barnabas will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

Employment

We notify employees, job applicants and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring.



Children's Circle of St. Barnabas Policy and Procedure Manual

We notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

We notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

We notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. We provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the accessibility needs due to disability. We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee's consent, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

We have a written process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.



Children's Circle of St. Barnabas Policy and Procedure Manual

Changes to Existing Policies

Any policies of this organization that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

This document is publicly available. Accessible formats are available upon request.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and signed off by all employees and students prior to commencing employment/unpaid placement at Children's Circle of St. Barnabas and annually thereafter, and at any time where a change is made.