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ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICIES, PRACTICES & PROCEDURES

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POLICY

OUR COMMITMENT

Cook's School Day Care Inc, hereafter referred to by Cook's, strives at all times to provide our service in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunities as other clients to access and benefit from our service. The people with disabilities addressed in this document, will include Cook's clients, clients' guardians, and staff (employees, contract workers, and volunteers working on-site at the centre-based facility).

PRACTICES & PROCEDURES

TRAINING

Cook's will provide training to all staff and those involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures. The training will be provided upon commencement of duties; reviewed annually thereafter; and reviewed when policy changes are made. The training will involve each individual receiving a copy of the Ministry of Community and Social Services document entitled *Training Resource for Small Businesses and Organizations*, which includes:

- A review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device, service animal or a support person.
- How to use the equipment or assistive devices available on your premises or that you otherwise provide that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing your goods or services.
- Your customer service policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.

Each individual must:

- Adhere to the time-frame given to review and question the document.
- Sign-off that he/she has completed the initial review of the information; the follow-up review annually thereafter; and any ongoing review required when changes are made to the policies, practices and procedures. A master record of training will be maintained by the administration.

Each individual will be encouraged to:

- Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website link, www.AccessON.ca, to obtain further details pertaining to *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*.
Hard copies can be obtained for those who do not have internet access. Assistance will be given to persons with disabilities to obtain the information in a suitable format, if requested.
- Complete the quizzes available from www.AccessON.ca to further reinforce his/her knowledge pertaining to the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*. Refer to Appendix. Assistance will be given to persons with disabilities to obtain the information in a suitable format, if requested

The training outlined above may be supplemented with specific practical training, as required, to assist with service and response to persons with disabilities present in or accessing the establishment.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Master Training Record, Awareness Quiz, Test Your Knowledge

FEEDBACK PROCESS

The ultimate goal of Cook's is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated. Ongoing feedback provides a valuable opportunity to learn and improve. Cook's recognizes the rights of our customers to offer suggestions, make complaints, or compliment us on the way we provide our services. Recognizing that people use different methods of communication, Cook's invites customers to provide their feedback formally and/or informally in two formats:

1. Written (e-mail, mail, and/or using the feedback form - available at all times at the entrances to the establishments and on the organization's website).
2. Verbal (telephone, in person).

All feedback will be directed to the administration. Feedback will be grouped, reviewed and stored by category (complaint, suggestion, or compliment). A record will be maintained outlining the details, follow-up and actions to be taken. If the *Customer Feedback Form* indicates the customer wishes to be contacted, the administration will respond within ten (10) business days either in writing or verbally to acknowledge the receipt of feedback and to outline the action(s) to be taken, if applicable. A more comprehensive and detailed satisfaction survey, pertaining to the full organization, is made available for families during the first quarter of each calendar year (typically March). In order to make our feedback process as accessible as possible, an alternate format can be arranged, upon request.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Customer Feedback Form, Customer Feedback Record

COMMUNICATION

Communication is a process of providing, sending, receiving and understanding information. Information is often shared in written, spoken or picture form. The key to making communication accessible is flexibility. A method of communication could be in person, over the phone or online. We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. The best way to determine a person's communication preferences is to find out from the person directly. In order to make communication more effective, an alternate format can be arranged, upon request. We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT: Alternative Format Request Form

ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Cook's is committed to providing exceptional customer service to all customers, including those who use assistive devices in order to obtain, use or benefit from our services. It is the policy of Cook's to allow people to use their own personal assistive devices, unless otherwise prohibited by law, to access our services. Personal assistive devices are often used by people with disabilities to help them with daily living. They are usually devices that people bring with them. Personal assistive devices are any auxiliary aids such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and/or medical aids. They may include (but are not limited to):

- Manual and motorized wheelchairs.
- Canes, crutches and walkers.
- White canes.
- Hearing aids.
- Magnifiers.
- Oxygen tanks.
- Electronic communication devices.

In order to ensure that persons with disabilities are allowed to use their own personal assistive devices, staff members will be trained to be familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by our customers while accessing our service. The families of children requiring assistive devices enrolled in the program will assist with training staff members to be able to help with the assistive devices. Staff members will always ask before assuming help is needed. The following assistive devices are available on our premises:

- Alternative format documents, upon request.
- Magnifying glasses.
- Staff assistance.

SERVICE ANIMALS

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties.

We 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 a service animal. Alternate arrangements may be required to serve people accompanied by service animals if there are persons present in the program (children/staff) with allergies to animals and whose health could be at risk.

The person who requires the guide dog and/or service animal may be asked to provide a letter from a Regulated Health Care Professional, or documentation from the Ministry of the Attorney General's office confirming that the person requires a service animal.

SUPPORT PERSONS

We are 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 the 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 our premises.

THE FACILITY & SERVICES

The Victoria Park Child Centre location provides service to families on two floors.

- The facility has platform lift access to the second floor.
- An accessible washroom is located on the ground level.
- The kitchen and programs for kindergarten and school-age children are located on the 2nd floor.
- The office, programs for toddler and preschool children are offered on the 1st floor.

TEMPORARY DISRUPTION OF SERVICES

Cook's will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facility or services. If a planned disruption is scheduled (examples: repair/maintenance; temporarily closing due to low enrollment at Christmas), each family enrolled and staff member will be given advance notice (written/verbal). When an unexpected disruption to the service occurs (example: fire), current service users and staff persons will be notified at the earliest convenience. In all disruption to service occurrences, a notice may be placed at or near all public entrances to the facility, on the telephone voice messaging service, and published on the organization's website. Families are notified of alternate evacuation shelter locations in the organization's parent handbook. A hardcopy of the parent handbook is received upon enrollment and every January thereafter. The parent handbook is also available on the organization's website.

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

The notice will include the information required by the standard, that is:

- The reason for the disruption.
- Anticipated duration.
- A description of what alternative facilities or services are available, if any.

Responding to a Disruption of Service

Cook's provides below an outline of the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption and, upon request, shall give a copy of the document to any person.

Response Steps

When a disruption occurs preventing service delivery for an extended length of time (more than one day), every attempt will be made to quickly secure a back-up location and/or a home-based setting, if space permits. If a secondary location cannot be secured in a timely fashion and/or if space does not permit and families must make alternate arrangements, no fee is charged during the disruption period. If a child with a physical disability is being displaced from our Victoria Park Child Care Centre location or a home-based setting because of a disruption, every attempt will be made to accommodate his/her placement in an accessible location. If the backup arrangement is not suitable and the family chooses to make alternate arrangements during the disruption period, no fee will be charged during the disruption period. The temporary evacuation shelters are accessible for all persons with disabilities.

Evacuation Shelters

<u>Primary Shelter</u>
St. Peter's Church, Cobourg (situated on the corner of King Street East and College Street).
<u>Approved Secondary Shelter</u>
Salvation Army Community Church, 59 Ballentine Street, Cobourg.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT: Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

Cook's employed 20 or more workers at one time (when operating from two centre-based locations 1989-2015) and therefore was required to comply with documentation requirements relating to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (O. Reg 429.07) by January 1, 2012. Cook's no longer employs 20 or more workers at one time but will continue to complete and submit the documentation until notified otherwise. Cook's provides notice that any document required under the Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (O. Reg 429.07) is available upon request. Notice is be posted at the entrance and is

also be published on the organization's website. The notice includes information on what documents are available and how customers can obtain a copy. A copy of the required documents will be provided within ten (10) business days to anyone who asks for it in a format that takes into account the person's communication needs.

A request for these documents can be directed to the administration.

The required documents include:

- Training.
- Customer Feedback.
- Communication.
- Assistive Devices.
- Service Animals.
- Support Persons.
- Notice of Temporary Disruption of Services.
- Documentation.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Notice of Availability of Documents

MODIFICATIONS TO THIS OR OTHER POLICIES

We are 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. Any policy of Cook's that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to the administration of Cook's School Day Care Inc.

This document is reviewed annually by the Administration and Board of Directors of Cook's School Day Care Inc.