

3.6

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITY ACT (AODA) POLICY

CATEGORY: Operational

EFFECTIVE: Friday December 12th, 2014

REVISED:

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

- 3.6.1 This document describes the Accessibility Policy implemented by the Palin Foundation (The Foundation) which covers all function, positions, activities and operations of the Foundation.
- 3.6.2 This policy applies, but is not limited to, the Board of Directors, General Manager, Managers, Staff Leads, and staff.

PURPOSE

- 3.6.3 This policy and its procedures address the accessibility requirements of Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

MISSION STATEMENT

- 3.6.4 The Ryerson Student Centre aims to promote the growth and development of the Ryerson Community. Without losing focus on the needs and demands of students, who sit as the Student Centre's most important group of patrons, the Student Centre looks to build the Ryerson Community by providing students, faculty, staff and alumni with a focal point for extracurricular and social events and activities. The Student Centre works closely with both the RSU and CESAR to produce outstanding events, ones which both build and further the work of the Unions and consistently reflect the demands and desires of students.

The Student Centre works to provide outstanding customer service, a clean and safe environment, both affordable and delicious food and drink, and the very best in entertainment and programming. The Ryerson Student Centre aims to be the standard bearer amongst similar establishments in the area and amongst similar campus-based facilities across the country.

POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.6.5 The Palin Foundation's commitment in fulfilling our mission is to strive at all times to provide our goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

3.6.6 Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that:

- a) Persons with disabilities are provided equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the Palin Foundation's goods and services;
- b) Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- c) The goods and services provided to persons with disabilities are integrated with the provision to others, unless an alternative measure is necessary to allow a person with a disability to benefit; the alternative measure may be temporary or permanent;
- d) Communications with a person with a disability are conducted in a manner that takes the person's disability into account;
- e) Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices, service animals and support persons as is necessary to access the Palin Foundation's goods and services unless superseded by other legislation.

RESPONSIBILITY

3.6.7 It is the responsibility of the General Manager, Department Managers and/or Lead Hands to ensure that all employees follow the guidelines set out in this policy.

3.6.8 It is the responsibility of the General Manager and Department Managers to ensure all employees are trained under Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and this policy, practices and procedure.

DEFINITIONS

3.6.9 "Assistive Devices" are auxiliary aids such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (e.g., canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids).

3.6.10 "Disability", as per the Ontario Human Rights Code, means:

- 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 coordination, 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; 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.
- 3.6.11 “Employees” means every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Palin Foundation, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
- 3.6.12 “Persons with Disabilities” are individuals who have a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code (and above).
- 3.6.13 “Service Animals” are animals individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.
- 3.6.14 “Support Persons” are any persons, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend, who accompany a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods or services.

PROCEDURES

- 3.6.15 The Palin Foundation is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:
- 3.6.16 Communication
- a) We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.
 - b) We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

3.6.17 Telephone services

- a) We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.
- b) We will offer to communicate with customers by email if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

3.6.18 Assistive devices

- a) We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

3.6.19 Billing / Contracts

- a) We are committed to providing accessible invoices and contracts to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices and contracts will be provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print, and email.
- b) We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

3.6.20 Use of service animals and support persons

- a) 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.
- b) We will also 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.
- c) 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 Palin Foundation'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 our premises.
- d) Fees will not be charged for support persons for admission to the Palin Foundation's

premises. Customers will be informed of this by a notice that will be posted in the Palin Foundation's premises and on its website.

3.6.21 Notice of temporary disruption

- a) The Palin Foundation will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.
- b) The notice will be placed on the website, social media, public entrances and service counters on our premises.

3.6.22 Training for staff

- a) The Palin Foundation will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. Individuals in the following positions will be trained:
 - i. General Manager
 - ii. Departmental Managers
 - iii. Lead Hands
 - iv. Members of OPSEU 596, Unit 2
 - v. Oakham House Societies
- b) This training will be provided within 3 months after staff commence their duties.
- c) Training will include the following:
 - The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 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 or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
 - How to use the assistive devices available on provider's premises or otherwise that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities
 - What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the Palin Foundation's goods and services

- d) Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

3.6.23 Feedback process

- a) The ultimate goal of the Palin Foundation 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.
- b) Feedback regarding the way the Palin Foundation provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by a form located at <http://www.ryersonstudentcentre.ca/about/accessibility> or by email to gm@ryersonstudentcentre.ca. All feedback will be directed to the General Manager. Customers can expect an acknowledgement back within 5 business days.
- c) Complaints will be addressed according to complaint categories already established in our company's complaint management procedures.
- d) Upon receipt, the General Manager will investigate the matter with the appropriate personnel and provide a written response within thirty (30) days.

3.6.24 Modifications to this or other policies

- a) 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.
- b) Any policy of the Palin Foundation that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.
- c) This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis

3.6.25 Questions about this policy:

- a) 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 General Manager of the Palin Foundation.
- b) A copy of this policy is available upon request by contacting General Manager by email at gm@ryersonstudentcentre.ca. In addition, a copy of this policy is available on the

company's website at under <http://www.ryersonstudentcentre.ca/about/accessibility>.

- c) The Policy document will be provided in a format that takes into account the person's disability.