



520 Plains Road, Toronto, Ontario M4C 2Z1 (T)416-421-2273 (E)info@plainsroadchildcare.com

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## **I. ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY (AODA) & CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS**

### **PREAMBLE:**

In delivering a service that is licensed by the Ministry of Education, Early Learning Division, Plains Rd Child Care (herein referred to as "PRCC" or "the Centre") is committed and responsible to deliver services which promote health, safety, and welfare of the clients being served. The Centre is responsible to be accountable to the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Services as well as the Ministry of Labour, and specifically to demonstrate that service delivery is consistent with relevant legislation, regulations and policies for both Ministries.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*. The regulation requires accessibility standards for customer service if the organization provides goods or services to the public or other third parties.

All legislated changes impacting this policy will be reflected in PRCC policy through updates, on an on-going basis. The policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors annually in accordance with applicable legislation. No changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, students and members of the Board of Directors, of PRCC who interact with the public and other third parties. This policy will be reviewed with each employee, volunteer, student, and or Board member prior to working/volunteering at the Centre, and at least annually thereafter.

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to develop, implement, and enforce accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods and services provided at PRCC.

### **OUR COMMITMENT:**

PRCC strives to provide our goods and services in a respectful and accessible manner to all customers and clients, including persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities will benefit from the same services, in the same place, in a similar way, as other customers or clients. It is the commitment of PRCC to provide equitable treatment, with respect to providing our goods and services without discrimination in accordance with the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

When providing our goods and services to a person with a disability, we are committed to the following four core principles:

- **Dignity** – Our service should be provided in a method that allows a person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of others.
- **Independence** – We strive to provide an environment that allows a person with a disability to access our services without help from others.
- **Integration** – A person with a disability should be able to benefit from the same services as others. Only use an alternative method when it is necessary to allow a person with a disability to access our goods and services. If we are unable to remove a barrier, we need to offer other methods to provide services to people with disabilities, always remembering these principles.
- **Equal Opportunity** – We will use methods to provide goods and services to persons with disabilities such that they have the same opportunity as others to access our goods and services

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **Centre Supervisor, HR Chair and Employees**

The Centre Supervisor and HR Chair are responsible for and must do the following:

- Be knowledgeable of all related legislation
- Provide training to all employees who interact with the public or other third parties
- Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how goods or services are provided to people with disabilities and outline how you will respond and act
- Ensure policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with core principles of the standard

**Employees** are responsible for and must do the following:

- Comply with this policy
- Attend training

## **DEFINITIONS:**

### **Disability (as per the 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
- (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; ("handicap")

**Customers:** Includes members of the Corporation, parents, children, families, and friends and other people who receive goods or services from PRCC.

**Persons with Disabilities:** Individuals who have a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

**Barrier:** Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

**Accessible:** Accessibility is the degree to which a product, device, service, environment, or facility is usable by as many people as possible, including persons with disabilities.

**Goods and Services:** The goods and services provided by PRCC.

**Assistive Devices:** A device used to assist a person with a disability in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the customer service standard. (i.e. canes, hearing aids, wheelchairs, etc.)

**Service Animals:** A service animal is an animal for a person with a disability:

- If it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- If the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability

**Guide Dog:** A dog trained as a guide for a blind person and has the qualifications prescribed by the regulations of the Blind Persons' Rights Act.

**Support Person:** A support person is an individual hired or chosen by a person with a disability to accompany him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services.

**Premises:** Includes the buildings, land or grounds where goods or services are provided.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **Communication:**

- (a) We will communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability and offer communication methods that are suitable to their communication needs (i.e. e-mail, website, catalogue, telephone, or in-person, etc.)
- (a) PRCC employees are required to take into consideration the person's disability when making meeting arrangements and accommodate accordingly.
- (b) Every effort will be made to ensure marketing materials, invoices, and other printed materials (brochures, etc) will be made available in alternative formats upon request (i.e. large print, Braille, etc.), which may include offering an in-person or telephone meeting to read and read materials, if requested, etc.
- (c) Upon request, information provided on our company website will be offered in video or recorded format, phone support or in person member visits will be provided to read website material.

### **Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals:**

We are committed to welcoming persons with disabilities accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the company premises that are open to the public and other third parties, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by another law. These areas include the front reception and foyer area as well as office areas. If a service animal is excluded by law, we will use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.

PRCC staff is permitted to ask for proof that the animal is a service animal. The person with a disability is required to provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

All employees will be trained on the different types of service animals, as well as how to properly interact with those using service animals.

### **Support Persons:**

We are committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. A person with a disability will be allowed to enter company premises with his or her support person that are open to the public or third parties. This includes the front reception area and foyer as well as offices areas. 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.

### **Assistive Devices:**

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 employees are trained on and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers and members with disabilities while accessing our goods and services.

Persons with disabilities shall be permitted to obtain, use, or benefit from our goods and services through the use of their assistive devices.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her own assistive device is always operated in a safe manner .

All employees will be trained as required to use assistive devices and PRCC will maintain accurate records of training delivered to our employees. These records will be made available upon inspection as may be required

### **Notice of Temporary Disruption of Service:**

We will provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use goods or services are temporarily disrupted. The notice will be placed in a conspicuous place in areas open to the public or third parties. The notice will include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

**Modifications to this policy and other policies:**

PRCC will reassess how we provide goods and services to persons with disabilities as often as is necessary to ensure our goods and services are fully accessible. No changes will be made to this policy or other policies before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.

**Feedback Process:**

Feedback regarding the way PRCC provides goods or services to people with disabilities can be made through the Feedback Form. The Feedback Form can be submitted to PRCC by e-mail, mail, or verbally. Our ultimate goal is to meet and surpass member expectations while serving members with disabilities.

**Billing:**

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all our members. Invoices will be provided in alternate formats upon request. PRCC will answer any questions members may have about their content of their invoice in person, by telephone or by e-mail.

**Training:**

All employees will be trained on this policy and PRCC will maintain accurate records of training delivered to our employees. These records will be made available upon inspection as may be required.

**REFERENCES:**

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), Ministry of Community and Social Services

## **II. MULTI YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

This accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that PRCC will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. PRCC is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

This policy applies to all employees, members, vendors, other 3<sup>rd</sup> parties or any members of the public.

**ACCESSIBLE EMERGENCY INFORMATION:**

PRCC is committed to providing members, vendors, 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, contractors or any members of the public with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

**TRAINING:**

PRCC will provide training to employees on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees.

PRCC will take the following opportunities to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessible laws by **January 1, 2015**:

- New Hire Orientation Program
- Staff Meetings
- Team Meetings
- Individual Orientation as needed

**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

PRCC is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.

## **EMPLOYMENT:**

PRCC is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We will take the following opportunities to notify the public and staff that, when requested, PRCC will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired:

- New Hire Orientation Program
- Application Process

PRCC will take the following steps to develop and put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability:

- Return to work meeting
- Ongoing guidance and support
- Training

PRCC will take the following opportunities to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities needs are considered if PRCC is using performance management, career development and and/or redeployment processes:

- New Hire Orientation
- Ongoing communication and support

PRCC will take the following opportunities to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

- Management and Board meetings
- Ongoing communication and training

## **DESIGN OF PUBLIC PLACES:**

PRCC will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Public spaces include:

- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in provincial parks and local communities
- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, and rest areas
- Accessible off-street parking
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas

PRCC will put the following procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to its accessible parts of its public spaces.

- In the event of a service disruption, we will notify the public of the service disruption and alternatives available.

## **POLICY REVIEW:**

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed annually.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact **Karen Arnold, Director** at:

- Phone: 416-421-2273 - OR - Email: plainsroadchildcare@rogers.com

## **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:**

- I. Customer Feedback Form
- II. Training Records Form

## **REFERENCES:**

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Ministry of Community and Social Services



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**II. AODA CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS SURVEY**

Thank you for visiting Plains Rd Child Care Centre and/or the Centre's website. We value all our parents, clients, suppliers and visitors and strive to meet everyone's needs. Your feedback is important to us to improve our services and our customer experience.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the nature of your visit: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you feel we met your customer service needs today?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Comments:

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2. Did you find our customer service was provided to you in an accessible manner?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Comments:

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3. Did you find our services to be helpful and respectful of your needs?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Comments:

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4. Did you experience any challenges in accessing our goods and services?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Please specify:

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5. Please share any additional information including recommendations on how we could improve our service:

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**Contact Information: (optional)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Please note a response will be provided within 21 days in the method the feedback was received i.e. email, telephone*

**Thank you for completing our Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act Survey**

