

 vita community services villa mens sana	19.00 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) -Accessibility Policy
	19.01 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
Approval:	Implementation Date: December 2011

POLICY:

Vita Community Living Services and Mens Sana Families for Mental Health (VITA) is committed to providing services and practices that emphasize customer service, independence, dignity, integration and equal participation for all persons with disabilities.

VITA’s Accessibility Policy will be in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), Regulations 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

PURPOSE:

Accessibility is an issue of concern for those with both physical and intellectual (visible and non visible disabilities). Barrier free environments are not just about wider doors and ramped entrances. It is also about attitude. This policy aims at providing a welcoming experience for people with disability by providing services in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), and Regulations 429/07 and Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. VITA will ensure all persons with disabilities will be given every opportunity to participate in services offered by VITA and is committed to excellence in serving all persons with disabilities.

This policy applies to all employees, agency personnel, volunteers, student placements, contractors, consultants and board members.

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions have been taken from the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Ontario Regulation 429/07.

DEFINITIONS:

Accessibility

“Accessibility” means the degree to which persons with disabilities can access a device, service or environment without barriers. Accessibility is also a process — it is the proactive identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities.

Customer

A “customer” is a person who use or purchase VITA’s products or services. As well, agency partner representatives who support VITA’s work may be considered VITA’s customers.

Disability

“Disability” is defined as:

- 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.
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- A mental disorder.
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

PROCEDURES:

VITA will ensure all persons with disabilities will be given every opportunity to participate in services offered by VITA. VITA is committed to the excellence in serving all persons with disabilities and will carry out VITA’s functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

Accessible Customer Service

- Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others will be included unless a different alternate is required, whether it is temporary in allowing a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- Persons with disabilities will be given an equal opportunity to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from goods and services.

Assistive Devices

- Assistive devices is anything that is developed, made, designed or adapted that helps an individual with a disability do everyday tasks.
- VITA welcomes the use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities to use and benefit from. All services will be recognized and supported.

- Examples of personal assistive devices include, but are not limited to adjustable phone sets, computer equipment, wheelchairs, scooters, speech generating devices, digital audio players, augmentative alternative communication, elevators and automated doors.
- Staff will be provided with assistive devices or special equipment where possible and appropriate. Staff will continuously monitor the state of the devices and will inform their supervisor of any required repairs needed for the devices.
- Each VITA location will maintain an inventory of assistive devices available within their program area/department. This inventory will be reviewed annually at the beginning of each fiscal year.

When interacting with a person with a disability who may use one or more assistive devices, VITA employees will:

- Ensure that the person is able to enter VITA's premises with the device and to use the device to access goods or services.
- Ensure that the person with the disability is aware of the assistive devices available at VITA.
- Offer an assistive device in a manner that respects the person's dignity and independence.
- Offer assistance with an assistive device to the person with a disability in a respectable manner.
- Remove potential barriers for the use of assistive devices where possible.
- Ensure to get directions on the use of the assistive device from the person prior to assisting with the device.

Communication

- VITA will provide communication regarding their services, accessibility and policies in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. The use of jargon free plain language will be promoted within the agency.
- VITA will ensure that agency publications, information and any disruptions to services is provided in a variety of formats, to include but not limited to electronic, voice message, print signage, agency website or publications.
- VITA will provide fully accessible telephone services to the person with a disability, and if required alternative forms of communications will be offered (email, TTY or email services).
- VITA will train all VITA employees' on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Support Persons

- VITA is committed to welcoming people with disabilities along with their support person to any VITA property or program.
- The Customer Service Standard defines a "support person" as anyone who accompanies a person with a disability to assist them with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods or services. At no time

would a person with a disability not be permitted to enter public space within VITA's property.

- There will be no additional fees incurred as a result of accompaniment by a support person.
- Confidential information will only be discussed in front of the support worker if consent has been provided by the person with a disability

Service Animals

- VITA is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service dog on parts of the premises that are open to the public and other third parties.
- Service animals are prohibited from VITA where there is preparation and storage of food. As well, when the presence of a dog would be a serious risk to another person.
- In the event of either situation, VITA will find alternative means to accommodate the person with the disability.

Notice of Service Disruption

- In the event that there will be temporary disruption (closures, repairs, etc.), VITA will post information including the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration and alternatives to access services, and contact information.
- When a disruption of service was planned, a "Notice of Disruption of Service" will be posted 2 weeks prior to a service disruption whenever possible. Unexpected disruptions in service shall be posted as soon as possible.
- Notice of these disruptions will include, but not limited to VITA's head office telephone voicemail, VITA's website, email and or posted signage.

Training

- All VITA employees, new and existing, will be provided with training on this policy.
- The training will be incorporated into program training for existing employees and new employees will be trained during the New Hire Orientation process.
- Training will include, but not limited to Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act, 2005(AODA) and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07.
- All VITA employees must adhere to this policy, and failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.
- All VITA contractors, consultants, agency personnel, students and or volunteers must adhere to this policy, and failure to do so may result in termination of services.

Customer Feedback Process

- In the event that there is a customer service problem, VITA will ensure that this complaint is addressed and resolved quickly as per VITA's Compliant Policy and Procedures.
- Persons with disabilities are encouraged to make complaints or inquiries in a manner that takes into account their disability. This would be done verbally in person, through a support person, by telephone, in writing by completing the Customer Feedback Form, or other available written methods, i.e. via email.
- All VITA employees, agency personnel, students, volunteers, consultants and contractors are obligated to inform VITA of any customer service complaints. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of their contract with VITA.

Customer Feedback Forms

- Customer Feedback Forms will be kept at VITA's front desk head office facility.
- Upon arrival to VITA's head office facility, the receptionist will provide each visitor a feedback form to complete.
- Feedback forms will be reviewed by management on a monthly basis during the Director's meeting.
- Feedback will be shared quarterly on VITA's portal.

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by management.

APPENDIX:

- Notice of Scheduled Service Disruption Form.
- Notice of Unexpected Service Disruption Form.
- Customer Feedback Form.

NOTICE OF SCHEDULED SERVICE DISRUPTION

There will be a scheduled service disruption at:

The disruption will be from _____ until _____

The disruption includes:

- _____
- _____
- _____

The following facilities and/or alternative services would be able to assist you with the above.

On behalf of VITA, we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

For more information please contact:

NOTICE OF UNEXPECTED SERVICE DISRUPTION

There is currently an unexpected service disruption at:

The estimated disruption will be from _____ until _____.

The disruption includes:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Special instructions: (if applicable)

The following facilities and/or alternative services would be able to assist you with the above.

On behalf of VITA, we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

For more information please contact:

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

How did we do today? Help us measure and improve our services.

1. Which department/program areas did you visit? (please check one)

Administration

Day Services Please specify location: _____

Residential Services Please specify location: _____

2. What was the purpose of your visit?

3. Time and date of your visit? Date: _____ Time: _____

Rate your level of satisfaction with the staff member and the service you received:

Rating:

1. Very Dissatisfied 2. Dissatisfied 3. Neutral 4. Satisfied 5. Very Satisfied

4. Staff were	1	2	3	4	5
a) helpful					
b) courteous					
c) knowledgeable					
d) well informed with current information					

5. Service was	1	2	3	4	5
a) timely					
b) provided in a fair and consistent manner					

6. Overall, did the service you receive: Meet your expectations?
 Exceed your expectations?
 Not meet your expectations?

7. Can you suggest methods of improving our services to you?

8. Did any member of our staff provide exceptional service? If yes, please provide names and details.

If you would like a response to your comments, please complete the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel (daytime): _____ Tel (evening): _____

E-mail address: _____

Please submit the completed survey for to the following:

Deliver by mail for fax to:

Vita Community Living Services &
Mens Sana Families for Mental Health
4301 Weston Road
Toronto Ontario
M9L 2Y3

Fax: 416-749-1456

Received by: _____ Date: _____