



## The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD MANUAL

### What is AODA?

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act was passed by the Ontario Government in 2005 and falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Community and Social Service. AODA is an important law to ensure that we make Ontario accessible to all people by 2025.

The purpose of AODA is to ensure that all businesses and organizations (including child care) in Ontario develop and implement policies and procedures in accordance with the five accessibility standards outlined in the legislation.

#### ***Purpose (Quoted from AODA)***

*"1. Recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of this Act is to benefit all Ontarians by,*

- (a) developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and*
- (b) providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards. 2005, c. 11, s. 1."*

### What are the AODA standards?

There are five standards:

1. Customer Service standard
2. Transportation standard
3. Information and Communications standard
4. Built Environment standard
5. Employment standard

### What is the Customer Service Standard?

The Customer Service Standard is actually the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07. It is the first accessibility standard under the authority of AODA and this law came into force on January 1, 2008.



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### When Do We Have to Comply?

Private business and non-profit organizations with more than one employee must comply with the first standard Customer Service by January 1, 2012.

Organizations can be penalized if they are found guilty of an offence under this Act. A fine of up to \$100,000 per day maybe levied against your organization plus each Coordinator may be fined \$50,000 if convicted. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act enforces the customer service standards through inspection, compliance orders and administrative penalties.

### What Do Child Care & Related Organizations Need to Do?

You must provide accessible customer service. In order to meet the legislative requirements, you will need to:

- Develop organization wide policies and procedures
- Provide training for all full time and part time staff as well as volunteers
- Develop alternative solutions and formats to provide services
- Develop a system for feedback from clients/families
- Develop a notification system for any disruption in service
- Develop a policy and procedure for clients/families requiring support staff and/or service animals

### Reporting Requirements

Organizations with less than 20 employees are required to create an accessibility plan and train their staff.

### What Is Defined as A Disability?

*AODA Section 2.* In this Act, (*quoted from* Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11) "disability" 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 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, 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, 1997*;



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### **Some Things to Consider**

Physical barriers: lack of ramps, elevators, entry systems, washrooms that are not wheelchair accessible  
Developmental barriers: access to interpreters, phones with modification for hearing impaired clients, openness to assistive devices and services such as service animals, aids, etc. Each case will be looked upon on an individual basis and we will assess if it is viable for our Centre.

### **Policy Statement**

Develop an Accessible Customer Service policy based on providing services to clients/families with disabilities. Review your current policies. Any policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities should be modified or removed.

### **Sample Forms**

Organizations must implement a feedback procedure that allows clients to provide feedback on perceived barriers, including how to ask for assistance.



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**CLIENT FEEDBACK**

The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre welcomes feedback on how we provide services to clients with disabilities. Our goal is to ensure we meet the needs and expectations of our clients and their families with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcomed and appreciated.

Feedback can be provided in writing by filling out the form by email or in person. Clients can expect to hear back from us within 10 business days.

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**FEEDBACK FORM**

**Date:**

**Client Name:**

**Contact Information:**

**Comment/Suggestion:**

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**CLIENT RESPONSE FORM**

Thank you for contacting us regarding your concerns. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you require any additional information regarding this issue.

**Date:**

**Name of Client:**

**Concern Raised:**

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**Action Required:**

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**Response and Follow-Up:**

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**Date:**

**Coordinator Name:**

**Coordinator Signature:**

**Chair's Name:**

**Chair's Signature:**

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## The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD MANUAL THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

### Training Your Staff

The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre (LWCC) will provide staff training, including an awareness of the legislation, the program's policies, feedback tool and method for communicating a disruption of service.

All staff training will be documented. This will be accomplished using the minutes of team meetings and having staff sign off on a document confirming that they have received training. This training will include all volunteers and placement students.

Training will include:

- Understanding the requirements of the customer service standard and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- How to interact and communicate with clients who have a disability
- How to interact with clients with a disability who require an assistive device, assistance of a service animal or a support person
- Understanding of LWCC'S current policies, practices and procedures relating to the Customer Service Standard
- What to do if a client/family with a disability is having difficulty in accessing services

### STAFF TRAINING

#### Areas to review regarding providing Accessible Customer Service at LWCC

- Provides flexible service that meets the needs of an individual customer.
- Puts the person first.
- Understands that some methods of service may not work for all people.
- Allows for comments and suggestions on how to improve accessible customer service.
- Provides as much notice as possible if there is a disruption in service.

#### What are Some of Our Barriers?

In your groups identify any barriers that may apply to LWCC.

1. Architectural and physical barriers
2. Information or communications barriers
3. Attitudinal barriers
4. Technology barriers
5. Systemic barriers

## How Can Staff Assist in Making Our Centre More Accessible?

- Offer a variety of communication methods to your clients.
- Accept feedback both positive and negative from your clients.
- Identify and try to remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in the program.
- Take the time to understand the needs of each individual client.
- Work in co-operation with people with disabilities to find the best solution.

## STAFF INFORMATION

### Some Tips on How to Interact with Clients with a Disability

1. Don't make assumptions about your client's disability.
  - Not all disabilities are visible and some clients may have more than one.
2. If you don't know ask. Don't assume that you know what is best for your client encourage their participation and feedback when attempting to accommodate their needs.

## SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER

### If Your Client Is Visually Impaired

- Don't assume the individual can't see you
- Ask for permission before you attempt to physically guide them
- Do not touch or pet the service animal
- Don't raise your voice when speaking
- If you have to leave them alone let them know that you are leaving and when you will be back.

### If Your Client Is Hearing Impaired

- Don't assume the individual cannot hear anything; they may be oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
- Don't assume that the individual can read lips.
- Some individuals may use hearing aids, lip reading and /or gestures to aid hearing and communication. Try to limit the amount of background noise.
- Don't shout. Make sure you are in a well lit area, facing the individual and have their attention. Be sure to speak slowly and do not cover your mouth if gesturing with your hands.
- Do not pet or touch their service animal.
- If the individual is using the services of an interpreter remember to direct your comments to your client and not to the interpreter.

### **If Your Client Is Physically Disabled**

- Speak naturally to your client. If the individual is in a wheelchair consider sitting so that you can maintain eye contact easily.
- Ask before you help. Don't assume the individual requires your assistance.
- Do not move items or equipment out of their reach.

### **If Your Client Has a Developmental Delay**

- Speak clearly and naturally to the individual
- Allow extra time to ensure that they understand what is being discussed. Take the time to clarify the major points of any discussion
- Avoid using jargon.
- Don't interrupt and give them time to ask questions.
- Don't finish their sentences or assume that you know what they are going to say.

### **Some General Things to Remember**

- Don't assume what the person can and can't do
- IF you cannot understand what is being said, politely ask them again or rephrase what you heard and ask if you have understood them correctly.
- Provide one piece of information at a time
- Ask your client how you can help. Don't assume you have the solution.
- If necessary, make alternate arrangements that will better meet the individual's needs.

**NOTE: If legal advice is required for a specific issue or situation, centres/organizations should contact a lawyer.**



## The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD MANUAL QUESTIONS FOR STAFF & CLIENTS

### **Some Good Questions to Obtain Information from Clients/Parents**

- Have you noticed similar behaviour outside of school?
- Tell me a bit about what happens at mealtimes, bedtimes, etc. Is this a problem for you?
- What is the child like outside of school? What does he/she like to play with? What happens when he/she has to share their toys?
- Are you ever concerned about her behaviour when she is playing with friends or relatives? If so what?
- Have you spoken to anyone about these concerns?
- How can I best help you?

### **Great Questions for Clients/Parents to Ask the Teacher**

- Is my child's development on track for his age?
- What is my child's strength's and challenges?
- What is he/she like in class?
- What is my child's learning style?
- How does my child interact with the other kids?
- Does my child participate in group activities?
- Is there anything that I can share with you about my child and what he is like at home?
- What can we do at home to reinforce what you are doing in the classroom?



## The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD MANUAL EMPLOYEES

### **AODA-The Accessible Emergency Response Standard**

This standard requires organizations and employers to take a proactive approach in identifying, removing and preventing barriers faced by persons with disabilities in employment. This is the only Employment Standard that will come into effect on January 1, 2012.

All employers will be expected to provide individualized workplace response information to employees who have a disability. This may require the employer to adapt their current emergency response procedures in order to meet the individual needs of the employee(s) with a disability. For example, the employer may need to identify specific emergency exists that are suitable for individuals with mobility problems.

### **To Ensure Compliance with This Standard**

- Meet individually with all staff members who have been identified as having a disability.
- Review the organization's emergency response procedures and identify any possible barriers
- If no modification is required, document that you have reviewed the organization's emergency response procedures with the employee and that no accommodations are required.
- If accommodation is required, create an individualized emergency response procedure for the employee.
- Provide the employee with a copy of the plan and have them sign off indicating that it has been reviewed with them. Provide one copy to the employee and keep one for your files.
- Provide relevant staff with the updated changes to the organization's emergency response procedures. Highlight any changes in the staff roles and responsibilities
- Make sure all staff sign off indicating they have read, reviewed and understood the changes to your organization's emergency response procedures.

Staff is to acknowledge that they have read this Accessibility Policy which was provided to have had an opportunity to ask questions and understand;

- A person with a disability may include someone who is visually impaired challenges, hearing impaired, has physical disabilities as well as learning, intellectual and/or mental health disabilities
- Many disabilities are not obvious or visible
- People with disabilities will be provided with services from LWCC in an equitable manner which respects their dignity and independence
- Provision of services to persons with disabilities will be integrated unless an alternate measure is required
- Service animals are permitted
- Support persons may accompany and assist people with disabilities when accessing services
- Assistive devices are used to allow independence to persons with disabilities and will be respected accordingly
- Accessible Feedback method is a process for both employees as well as our clients/families and members of the public to express any issues or comments on accessibility within LWCC



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**RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION TIPS**

In keeping with the principles of the AODA, it is important to be aware of the way we speak about people who have a disability to ensure that we do so in manner that treats them with dignity and equality. Identifying people by their disability (e.g. “she is blind” or “he is an epileptic”) is demeaning and derogatory.

<b>Negative, Disrespectful or Derogatory Phrases</b>		<b>Respectful Phrases</b>
The blind	➔	People who have vision loss; or People who are blind
He or she is mute	➔	He or she uses an assistive communication device; or He or she uses synthetic speech
The deaf/deaf and dumb	➔	People who are deaf
He or she suffers a hearing loss	➔	He or she has a hearing impairment; or He or she is hard of hearing
He or She is disabled/handicapped	➔	He or she has a disability
He or She is slow/retarded/dumb	➔	He or she has a cognitive developmental disability
People who are restricted to a wheelchair	➔	People who use a wheelchair
He or she is crippled/lame/deformed	➔	He or she has a physical disability; or He or she is physically disabled
He or she is depressed/manic depressive	➔	He or she has a depression
He or she is crazy/has mental issues	➔	He or she has a psychiatric disability
People who are afflicted by/suffer from muscular dystrophy	➔	People how have muscular dystrophy
He or she is an epileptic	➔	He or she has epilepsy