

	<b>Policy Name:</b> Accessible Customer Service
<b>Section:</b> Core Capacity - Programs and Services	<b>Policy Number:</b> PROG-18v2
<b>Initially Approved:</b> September 6, 2012	<b>Organization Lead:</b> Clinical Services
<b>Last Revised:</b> May 15, 2022	<b>CEO Approved Date:</b> June 9, 2022

**Purpose:** To ensure that people have a barrier-free experience at Mind Forward Brain Injury Services.

**Policy:**

Mind Forward respects the dignity, and promotes the independence of people with disabilities.

Programs and services are provided so that all people (including those with disabilities) have the opportunity to access and benefit from programs and service.

Staff are trained to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

**Procedure:**

Mind Forward exists so that there will be the highest quality of life possible for people whose lives have been touched by acquired brain injury. It is important that clients and their families can access programs and services, whatever their disabilities.

1. Persons with disabilities (including disabilities that accompany brain injury) are encouraged to contact us to identify and discuss whether the provision of our programs and services could be provided in ways that would better take into account their disability
2. Mind Forward staff ask people with disabilities (clients, families, community partners and visitors) how they can help and take guidance from the person. Staff speak clearly and at a pace the person can understand.
3. Staff are up-to-date on the most effective assistive devices, they identify assistive devices clients and participants can use, they help clients and families identify assistive devices that will help access programs and services.
4. Mind Forward welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal, and always help maintain the client's access to their service animal. Staff are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

5. An important role of Mind Forward staff is a “support person” for clients. The agency also welcomes all support persons who accompany a person with disability, and always help maintain the clients’ access to their support person. Support persons who participate in a program or service for the purposes of supporting a person with a disability are not charged a fee.
6. If there is a planned or unexpected disruption Mind Forward provide clients, their families and external agency support staff with as much advance notice as is possible. The notice of the disruption will normally be posted at all public entrances to our premises. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notice will also be provided on outgoing telephone messages and on the web site.
7. Mind Forward has a designated Accessibility Officer to support compliance with the AODA 2005 and the IASR Integrated Accessible Standards Regulations. The Officer reports quarterly to the Agency, and the Board of Directors in areas of concerns or complaints of accessibility in our Agency, and assist in resolutions to any identified barriers. The Accessibility Officer also remains current with the AODA Standards and timelines, ensuring Mind Forward remains compliant each year. The Accessibility Officer also ensures the Mind Forward Ombudsperson is notified of accessibility concerns or feedback.

### **Training for Staff**

1. Staff are trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to policies, practices and procedures. New staff will be trained as part of their orientation upon employment. This orientation takes place shortly after they are hired.
2. Human Resources and Managers make sure that the training and orientation occurs and keeps a record of the training.
3. Orientation includes:
  - the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard
  - a review of this policy and any other practices and procedures relating to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
  - 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
  - what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Mind Forward programs and services

### **Feedback, Complaints and Questions**

Comments on programs and services regarding how well expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated. Privacy is respected and all feedback is reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve access to our programs and services.

1. Comments and feedback can be made to any staff or manager. They may also be made more formally according to Mind Forward: PROG-06 Complaints (See also Appendix C: Client Feedback Form.)
2. Mind Forward will respond quickly to any complaints and feedback and describe what action will be taken. Staff members will be attentive to the concerns of clients, their families and visitors and to resolve concerns related to accessibility

### **References:**

Legislation

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005)

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

## **Appendix A Definitions:**

### **Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07**

#### **Assistive Devices and Measures:**

Assistive devices and measures are supports made available by providers to improve access to care for clients with disabilities. Examples are wheelchairs, real-time captioning services (on-screen typing of what speakers are saying), and sign language interpreters of deaf-blind interveners. Other examples include Telephone Teletypes (TTY) to communicate with clients who are deaf, hard of hearing, have speech impairments or are deaf-blind (Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation).

#### **Disability:**

According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, a “Disability” is defined as:

- 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 of 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 an intellectual disability,
- c. a learning disability, of a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- d. a mental health impairment, 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.

The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disability, and disabilities the effects of which many come and go.

#### **Personal Assistive Devices:**

For the purpose of this policy, Personal Assistive Devices are personal supports used by persons with disabilities that enable them to carry out the activities of daily living and allow access to all services. Client- owned equipment such as power-mobility devices (power wheelchairs or scooters) are regarded as Personal Assistive Devices.

#### **Services Animals:**

Service animals are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities. Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who are blind, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety (Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation)

**Support Person:**

A “Support Person” accompanies a person with a disability, in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring an individuals’ health or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure. A Support Person may be a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend of a person with a disability (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation).

**Appendix B**

**Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act  
Alternative Format Request Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received By: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Information:**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Document Needed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Format Needed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Large Font: \_\_\_\_\_ Size of font required: \_\_\_\_\_

Colour Contrast: \_\_\_\_\_ Contrast required: \_\_\_\_\_

Audio : \_\_\_\_\_

ASL Interpreter: \_\_\_\_\_

Braille: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The personal information that you have provided to us to enable us to respond to your inquiry for information in an alternative format will be used by staff for that purpose only. You will not be placed on any mailing list, nor will your information be released to any third party, except as authorized by law. The authority for obtaining this information from you complies with the Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, S.O. 2005, Chapter 1.

Questions about this collection can be directed to the **Mind Forward Brain Injury Services Accessibility Officer** by phone (905-949-4411 ext. 237), by mail (176 Robert Speck Parkway, Mississauga ON, L4Z 3G1) or by email ([Accessibility.Officer@mindforward.org](mailto:Accessibility.Officer@mindforward.org))

**Appendix C**

**Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities**

**Feedback Form**

Mind Forward Brain Injury Services has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods, services and programming to persons with disabilities. Feedback may be provided in person, by telephone, in writing or by delivering an electronic text by email to the Mind Forward Ombudsperson at the following location:

Address: 176 Robert Speck Parkway, Mississauga, ON L4Z 3G1  
E-mail: Accessibility.Officer@mindforward.org  
Telephone: 905.949.4411 ext. 237

This form is intended to provide a consistent format for receiving feedback information, but is not meant to be the exclusive format for receiving feedback.

Feedback: \_\_\_\_\_ or Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Format Received: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Information:**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Filled out by Staff? Yes: \_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_ Staff Person: \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The personal information that you have provided to us to enable us to respond to your inquiry for information in an alternative format will be used by staff for that purpose only. You will not be placed on any mailing list, nor will your information be released to any third party, except as authorized by law. The authority for obtaining this information from you complies with the

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