



NATIVE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES OF TORONTO

AODA Customer Service Standard

Communication with Persons with Disabilities

When communicating with a person with a disability, NCFST will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. NCFST commits to provide training on customer service to all current and future employees, students, volunteers and contract trainers. This training will include how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

Website accessibility

As of 1 January 2014, under the AODA, public sector organizations shall make new internet websites and web content on them conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 to Level A. This requirement will extend to Level AA on all websites by 1 January 2021.

What is web accessibility?

Accessibility requirements refer to the navigation, design, and coding considerations that help visitors using different types of web-enabled devices and visitors with disabilities use the website.

The requirements of WCAG 2.0 provide criteria to assist in making websites perceivable, operable, understandable and robust for persons with various types of disabilities. These four principles are described in more detail below:

1. **Perceivable:** web-based content and interface components must be presented in ways that all users can perceive. This takes into consideration the effect of colour, size, typeface and sound.
2. **Operable:** all users must be able to simply and accurately manipulate all interface and navigation components, taking in account how they operate their computers.
3. **Understandable:** content and interfaces must be clear so that all people can understand a website. Consistency of interface elements, intuition in appearance and operation, and plain language are part of this principle.
4. **Robust:** robust websites can be reliably interpreted by a wide variety of browsers, devices and assistive technologies.

Notice of Disruption in Services

In the event of a service disruption affecting access, NCFST will take reasonable steps to report such disruption to those impacted in a timely fashion through appropriate information channels. Such channels include, but are not limited to, NCFST website, physical postings and/or communication via email or phone call to affected individuals.

The required information necessary for any communication of a temporary disruption may include:

- *The time, date and location of the disruption;*
- *Information about the reason for the disruption;*
- *Anticipated duration of the disruption; and*
- *Descriptions of alternative facilities or services, if any.*

Assistive Devices

Personal assistive devices are permitted in all NCFST offices and training facilities except when subject to operator safety. NCFST will train its current and future employees, volunteers and contract trainers on the use of various assistive devices available at NCFST. It should be noted that the provision, use and safety of personal assistive devices is the responsibility of the person with a disability.

So that adherence to this policy can be achieved efficiently and effectively, NCFST will take into account the impact on persons with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, designing new systems or planning a new initiative.

Service Animals

Persons with a disability who are accompanied by a service animal may access premises owned and operated by NCFST provided the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If a service animal is excluded by law, NCFST will ensure that alternate means are available within reasonable time and location to provide persons with a disability access to NCFST's services.

There may be rare circumstances where, for reasons of health and safety of another person, allowing a person with a disability to enter a premises accompanied by a service animal needs to be considered. An example of such a situation may include where a person is allergic to animals and adversely affected if they are in close proximity to a service animal. If deemed necessary, a risk assessment will be conducted by the Human Resources.

The risk assessment will include identifying the risks inherent with the service animal being in the area of concern and identify alternate measures available to enable the person with a disability to access the service.

If Human Resources cannot be easily identified that the animal is a service animal, they can ask the person to provide documentation from a regulated health professional. The documentation must confirm that the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability. The use, safety and clean-up of the service animal is the responsibility of the person with a disability.

Support Persons

NCFST welcomes individuals who are accompanied by a support person, when the support person has been hired or chosen by the person with a disability to accompany them in order to assist in accessing goods or services and/or for the purpose of providing support with mobility, personal assistance and/or communication.

Individuals who are accompanied by a support person are encouraged to inform relevant NCFST persons of their participation.

In certain cases, NCFST may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for health and safety reasons. Before making the decision NCFST will complete the following:

- Consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs.
- Consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence.
- Determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

Support persons shall be permitted entry to all NCFST facilities and meeting rooms that are open to the public. Where there are admission fees for an event or training session organized by NCFST, persons with a disability shall be expected to pay the same fees as other attendees, but no admission fee shall be charged to their support person.

Please note that Support Persons will not receive certification or documentation of course completion, although they have attended a training session, they are not considered an active participant.

Feedback

Feedback about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities is welcomed, as it may identify areas that require change and assist in continuous service improvement.

Such feedback may be by telephone, in person, in writing or by email. NCFST will arrange for accessible formats and communication supports, on request and will make best efforts to provide a response in the same format in which the feedback was received.

Where possible, feedback will be addressed immediately. Some feedback may, however, require more effort to address and may need to be reviewed before an action is taken.

Feedback may be provided directly to Human Resources addressed below, who respond within 21 working days.

Director, People & Culture
30 College Street
Toronto, ON
M5G 1K2
Telephone Number: 416-969-8510, Ext. 3172
Fax: 416-928-0706
Email AODA@nativechild.org