



## **Accessibility Policy for the Customer Service Standard under AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Human Rights Code)**

The J is committed to developing policies, practices, and procedures that provide accessible quality services to its members, guests, staff and volunteers. Services will be provided to customers with disabilities in a manner that promotes and respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The J is dedicated to ensuring all programs, services and events are accessible to customers in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429.07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Services. The J endeavors to ensure that the Accessibility Policy and related practices and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

- i. **Dignity** - Persons with a disability must be treated as valued customers as deserving of service as any other customer.
- ii. **Equality of Opportunity** - Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our services.
- iii. **Integration** - Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other customer. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs.
- iv. **Independence** - Services shall be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, we will always be willing to assist a person with a disability but will not do so without the express permission of the person.

The J is also committed to providing Accessible Customer Service in the following additional areas:

### **Communication**

The J is committed to communicating with customers, staff and volunteers with disabilities in different or alternative ways that take into consideration their disability.

Any J public information, for example information on our websites, will be made accessible to an individual who requests it in an alternative format as soon as possible wherever possible, including via email, mail, verbal over the phone and orally in person at the Customer Service Desks or in a meeting.

Staff are trained on how to interact and communicate with customers with disabilities in a manner that is respectful of a customer's dignity and independence.

Alternative methods of communication shall be provided as requested. Staff will be trained to communicate with customers over the telephone in an articulate manner and to speak clearly and answer questions patiently.

## **Use of Assistive Devices and Support Persons**

Assistive Devices, guide animals and/or support persons may be used by customers to assist in accessing services at the J.

The J may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises. Support persons will not be required to pay entrance fees, where applicable, when accompanying and providing aid to a customer with disabilities.

All service animals must have proof of inoculations/vaccinations required under the Childcare Centre Early Years Act and the Toronto Operating Criteria.

Staff and volunteers will be properly trained in how to interact with customers with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal, a support person or an assistive device.

## **Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

The J will notify customers if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of a facility or service that persons with a disability use to access our services. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the applicable premises as well as being provided verbally, electronically or in person as applicable. The notice will include the following information:

- That a facility or service is unavailable.
- The anticipated duration of the disruption.
- The reason for the disruption.
- Alternative facilities or services, if available.

## **Feedback Procedure**

AODA requires Organizations to implement a feedback method that allows clients to provide feedback on perceived barriers, including how to ask for assistance.

The J accepts feedback in a variety of ways including in person through the J Ambassadors, by telephone, in writing or electronically via email [info@srcentre.ca](mailto:info@srcentre.ca) and/or through the contact us section of our website. Our feedback protocol requires the J to respond to all customer inquiries within 3 business days.

## **Training and Records**

The J provides training at time of hire and ongoing training as required under the Act, to all persons to whom this Policy applies as well as to those persons charged with developing this Policy and related procedures and practices.

### ***A. Content of Training***

Training will include:

- A review of the purpose of the Accessibility Legislation and requirements of the Accessibilities Standards.
- A review of the J Accessibility Policy.
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with persons with a disability who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person.
- How to use equipment or devices made available on our premises to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises and/or services.

### *B. Timing of Training*

It is a condition of hire that all J employees, full time and part time, and volunteers complete the required training prior to their start date by viewing the links below:

**Access Forward – Training for an accessible Ontario** effective January 1, 2015 as per Government of Ontario mandate: Please find the link below:

<http://www.accessforward.ca/>

**Human Rights Code training** effective January 1, 2015 as per Government of Ontario mandate: Please find the link below:

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/working-together-code-and-aoda>

All employees, full time and part time, and volunteers are required to sign in their employment contracts /volunteer agreements that they have viewed all the training outlined above.

A verbal review of the J AODA policy is conducted during the on-boarding process. Additional training and updates are provided periodically through staff meetings, webinars, emails and in-person staff training so all persons to whom this policy applies is kept updated.

### *C. Documenting Training*

Records of the training are maintained in the J Business Office who houses all employment contracts and volunteer agreements.

## **Employment Practices**

The above AODA policies and procedures apply to all goods and services that are delivered by the J including services delivered in person, by telephone, electronically, visually, orally or by written materials.

All Accessibility Policies of the J are available to our customers. They are posted on our Health and Safety bulletin boards and on our websites. Alternative formats are available upon request.

All Accessibility Policies of the J are included in our staff handbook and employment contracts and agreements. Accessibility training is a condition of hire and is elaborated upon during on-boarding and staff training.

All workplace information, including emergency information, job descriptions, employment manuals, and health and safety information shall be provided to an employee in an alternative form, if requested.

All job posts on our J websites and external recruiting sites include information that informs the public that the J will accommodate the needs of people with disabilities through all stages of the hire process.

In addition, on-boarding training, job training and talent and performance management are adapted where needed and where requested to accommodate staff with disabilities to afford them equal opportunities for career growth and development.

Employees returning to work from disability are catered to where possible with modified duties and/or adapted work space devices as reflected in their return to work transition plan and advised by their medical practitioners.

The J is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to fair and equal treatment of all our staff, volunteers and those who use our facilities and enjoy our services, including people with disabilities.