



Administration

Section:	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act
Policy:	Support Persons
Policy #:	10.7
Approved by:	Executive Director
Effective:	February 8, 2012
Date revised:	September 26, 2012; May 1, 2014; February 1, 2016

PREAMBLE:

Elgin St. Thomas Public Health (ESTPH) is committed to serving people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines regarding the provision of ESTPH goods and services to people with disabilities when they are accompanied by a support person.

POLICY:

This procedure applies to every person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person. This procedure also applies to every person interacting with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of ESTPH, whether an employee, or affiliate of the organization.

PROCEDURE:

Identifying Support Persons:

A support person may be a personal support worker, volunteer, friend or family member. He or she may help a person with a disability with communicating, mobility, personal care, or medical needs, or with access to goods and services.

In some situations, it may not be clear which person is the support person. A person with a disability might not introduce his/her support person. To determine who the support person is, the ESTPH employee should take the lead from the person who is requesting the goods and services, or ask. When it is determined who the customer is (as opposed to the support person), the ESTPH employee should speak directly to the customer, not to the support person.

Areas Open to Support Persons:

A person with a disability and his/her support person are permitted to enter those areas of ESTPH property that are open to the public or other third parties. Unless otherwise

requested by the person with a disability, the support person will be permitted to remain with the person with the disability throughout the entire duration of time that he/she is accessing ESTPH's goods and services.

Confidential Information:

When an ESTPH employee must discuss confidential information with a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person, the ESTPH employee will ask the person with a disability whether the support person may remain present. If the person with a disability chooses not to have the support person present, the ESTPH employee will offer a close, comfortable location where the support person can wait.

Lack of Adequate Space:

If there is not adequate space for both the person with a disability and his/her support person to be present while accessing ESTPH's goods and services, the ESTPH employee will arrange for an alternate location with adequate space. If an alternate location is not available, the ESTPH employee will:

- Make a reasonable effort to accommodate both the person with a disability and the support person within the available space.
- If reasonable, offer a close, comfortable location where the support person can wait, preferably where the person with a disability and his/her support person can remain within sight of each other.

Appropriate Behaviour:

Support persons are required to adhere to the same rules, and demonstrate appropriate behavior, as are all other persons accessing ESTPH goods and services.

Admission Fees for Support Persons:

ESTPH will not charge any admission fees for support people to access its property, programs or services.

When a Support Person is Required:

ESTPH may require a support person to accompany a person with a disability on its property, if the support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability, or the health or safety of others, on such property.

DEFINITIONS:

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.

The foregoing definition includes disabilities of differing severity, whether visible or non-visible and whether temporary or permanent in nature.

Support Person means any person (whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend) who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods and services.

Related Policies & Documents

Accessible Customer Service Plan