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Policy: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS	Date Approved: June 2018
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Policy Attachment(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not Applicable 	

POLICY

Crest Support Services, in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) and corresponding Customer Service Standards, strives to offer services that are barrier free in relation to services, buildings, environment, transportation and information and communication. For the purposes of this policy terms are defined as follows:

Accessibility: The term accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. It is used to describe how widely a service, product, device, or environment is available to as many people as possible. Accessibility can be seen as the ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment.

Barrier: Barriers are obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered from the beginning.

Disability: Ontario's accessibility law adopts the definition for disability that is in the Ontario Human Rights Code. It defines disability broadly:

- (i) "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 coordination, 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;
- (ii) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- (iii) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- (iv) a mental disorder; or

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- (v) 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 AODA legislation identifies three types of barriers to providing quality services including:

- (i) Visible barriers (building environment, information/communication, transportation);
- (ii) Invisible barriers (attitudes); and
- (iii) Systemic barriers (expectations).

Crest Support Services has responded to these types of barriers as follows:

A. VISIBLE BARRIERS

Building/Environment

- (i) All main service properties and program areas where services are provided by Crest Support Services are physically accessible to program participants with mobility disabilities. This may include all or part of a building or program area but, at minimum, an accessible entrance and bathroom facilities that are wheelchair accessible.
- (ii) Access to common program areas or household areas, unless specified for safety reasons, are accessible to all people participating in the program. For instances, kitchen, dining and living room areas are accessible or alternatives provided.
- (iii) Notice of Temporary Disruption of Service Requirements are in place to inform the public when facilities or services provided to people with disabilities are temporarily not available. This is accomplished through public radio announcements and internal communication systems (e.g. website).

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Information/Communication

- (iv) Information and communication about services provided is presented in a manner that is understood by the participant and takes into consideration his or her disability. This involves a complaint processes people can utilize if they are not satisfied with the accessibility standards of Crest Support Services.
- (v) Access to communication aids that support people to communicate or understand other's communication are available and utilized by staff members.
- (vi) Interpreters to support people when their main language differs from the usual language the service are provided when required and available, especially for any legal or medical information where consent is required.

Transportation

- (vii) In services where transportation is provided, participants involved in that service or accommodations have access to accessible transportation.

B. INVISIBLE BARRIERS

- (i) Attitudes of employees, Managers and Directors who provide services to people with disabilities are monitored through annual performance evaluations.
- (ii) Crest Support Services endorses ongoing staff training for all its employees to maintain best practices in service provision of people with disabilities.

C. SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

- (i) Systemic barriers to quality service provision are addressed through Crest Support Services employment requirements which require knowledge, competency experience and capacity that is geared towards supporting people with disabilities so that expectations are realistic of the people who are supported.

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- (ii) Expectations are monitored through internal and external staff training, policies and procedures and the feedback of people using services.

When barriers are identified, it is the responsibility of Crest Support Services to make every effort to minimize the barrier to meet the needs of the people accessing services. This is accomplished through a legislative reporting procedure that requires that "all designated public sector organizations and obligated business or organizations in the private or non-profit sector with twenty (20) or more employees will:

- (i) document in writing all their policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities;
- (ii) document how they are meeting all the requirements of the accessible customer service regulations;
- (iii) let customers know that these documents are available upon request; and
- (iv) provide this information to a person with a disability in a format that takes into account his or her disability."

PROCEDURES

- 1.0 The designated Director or Manager will review with new employees and placement students the requirements under the AODA Act of the Province of Ontario.
- 2.0 The designated employee will review with the person supported by the organization and/or their designated advocate(s) their rights with respect to accessible services, information/communication, transportation and building/environment.
- 3.0 Employees and placement students of Crest Support Services will identify any barriers or potential barriers that would impact negatively on the service it

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provides to people with disabilities and document on an Incident Report and forward to their designated Manager or Director.

- 4.0 If a complaint is made, the designated employee or placement student receiving the complaint will document the identified concern on an Incident Report and forward to their designated Manager or Director.
- 5.0 The designated Director or Manager will investigate and respond to the complaint and will send the result of the action taken to their designated Director.
- 6.0 The designated Director will file a report on-line through Service Ontario's website at www.ontario.ca/en/services