

**NUMBER: 2.11**  
**TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY**  
**APPROVED: December 31, 2011**      **REVISED: March 24, 2015**  
**SECTION: Overarching Policies, Procedures and Protocols**

SACHA strives to make our services fully accessible and grounded in principles of dignity and equity. All SACHA services will operate in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA); SACHA further endeavours to exceed standards outlined in AODA.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Definition of disAbilities (from the AODA 2005):

- 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*; ("handicap")

**PROCEDURES:**

- 1) SACHA is committed to accommodating the needs of service users and Members living with disabilities who use assistive devices.
- 2) Working animals are permitted at SACHA.
  - a. Service animals must wear a rabies vaccination tag.
  - b. Service animals need to be maintained on a leash, harness or other type of restraint. However, exceptions are granted when the service animal needs to perform a task requiring it to travel beyond the length of the restraint or when the owner is unable to retain a service animal on a leash due to a disAbility.
- 3) Support persons may accompany service users with disAbilities.
  - a. As per the Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, a support person is an individual hired or chosen by a person with a disAbility to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services. The support person could be a paid personal support worker, a volunteer, a friend or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

- b. If any safety and/or privacy concerns are identified in regards to the support person, alternative arrangements will be made to ensure continued access to service.
- 4) When possible, SACHA will inform service users of any planned or unexpected disruption in facilities or services that affects accessibility.

**Training:**

SACHA is committed to provide appropriate and ongoing training on accessibility issues to all SACHA members. We will comply with the accessibility training requirements laid out by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Services (Ontario Regulation 429/07).

**Feedback or complaints from service users or members of the community:**

Our ultimate goal is to provide accessible services to all Hamilton communities. Comments regarding the quality of our services are welcomed and appreciated.

Feedback or complaints can be offered in writing, by email or verbally. Complaints in regards to the accessibility of our services will be addressed according to SACHA's Formal Complaint Policy Procedure - Internal (2.7) or Complaint Policy and Procedure – Community (2.6)

**Related Policies:**

Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression (#2.4)  
Anti-Harassment (#2.5)