



CRPO / OPAO

Transitional Council
College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario
Conseil transitoire
Ordre des psychothérapeutes autorisés de l'Ontario

Accessible Customer Service Policy

April 14, 2014

This policy is applicable to all employees, as well as to all persons who interact with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the transitional Council/College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO), including agents and volunteers.

Purpose

This and any related policies, procedures and practices are designed to ensure that CRPO continues to be accessible to all, including those with one or more disabilities, and to comply with the legal requirements under *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

Policy

CRPO supports the full inclusion of persons with disabilities as required by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Ontario *Human Rights Code*, and the AODA.

CRPO implements this policy in the following ways:

1. Accessible Customer Service

CRPO respects the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for persons with disabilities.

Whether a person's disability is apparent or not, everyone should be treated with courtesy, made to feel welcome, and have their need for accommodation respected whenever they interact with CRPO.

CRPO will strive at all times to provide barrier-free access and services in ways that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. CRPO is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities receive accessible services with the same respect, quality, and timeliness as do others. Accommodation will be customized to each person according to individual needs.

2. Facilities

Some persons with disabilities may require assistance in accessing the CRPO office. The building is wheelchair accessible but staff will need to arrange for assistance at the building entrance as the doors are not automated. Once inside the main entrance, the offices are accessible via one elevator by persons with mobility impairments. The building has accessible washrooms on each floor.

In selecting meeting rooms for functions held off-site, preference will be given to accessible meeting rooms where possible and practical. In the event that it is neither possible nor practical to accommodate a person with a disability at a specific meeting/event, CRPO will make alternative arrangements such that the person with a disability may:

- i. participate via videoconferencing or teleconferencing; or
- ii. receive information that was presented at the meeting and provide input on the issues that were discussed through an accessible format.

Each situation will be addressed on an as needed basis according to individual needs and the nature of their desired participation.

Upon request, CRPO will provide information on accessible restaurants in the area to persons with disabilities attending its functions. In the event that CRPO intends to provide food or beverages other than water, identified dietary needs will be accommodated to the best of its abilities.

3. Use of Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use personal assistive devices (e.g., note taking devices, walkers, oxygen tanks, etc.) when visiting the CRPO office or attending CRPO functions. The CRPO may require that persons using assistive devices be seated in a specific location within the meeting room in order to facilitate the smooth running of the proceeding (e.g., seat persons with bulky assistive devices out of main traffic flow areas to minimize tripping risk; seat persons with noisy assistive devices in the least disruptive locations).

CRPO will review the need to acquire assistive devices to meet individual needs on an as needed basis.

4. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

There are no areas in the CRPO office where service animals are excluded by law. Persons with disabilities may bring their service animal into the areas of the premises that are open to the public or third parties. CRPO will ensure all employees and representatives dealing with the public are trained in how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by service animals. Where it is known in advance that a person will attend accompanied by a service animal, CRPO will:

- provide adequate seating for the person and the service animal;
- determine a suitable outdoor area and allow sufficient time at breaks for the service animal;
- identify a nearby veterinarian; and

- have a water bowl for the animal.

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter areas of CRPO premises that are open to the public or third parties. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on CRPO premises.

5. Communication

CRPO will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This means that staff will communicate in a manner that enables persons with disabilities to communicate effectively for the purposes of using, receiving, and requesting CRPO services.

CRPO will strive to incorporate good accessibility practices in its processes and operations. Such practices could include:

- using appropriate language, e.g., “persons with disabilities” instead of “the disabled”;
- planning meetings to allow for accessibility (e.g., inviting individuals to identify accessibility needs in event promotional material, using accessible meeting facilities, organizing meeting space to allow for ease of movement, having large print format handouts available, etc.);
- training employees in alternative communication methods such as TTY or relay service when voice communication is unsuitable;
- regarding alternative communication formats:
 - offering alternative formats (e.g. html, pdf, MS Word, audio, large print) upon request;
 - providing communication supports such as captioning and sign language where needed;
 - using plain language whenever possible; and
 - notifying the public, Council and members of accessible formats available.

6. Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of this policy is to meet service delivery expectations while serving persons with disabilities. Comments on CRPO services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Where possible, feedback will be addressed immediately. Individuals can expect an acknowledgement of verbal/telephone feedback within five business days, or a response to a mailed/e-mailed complaint within ten business days of receipt. The response will indicate how the matter will be addressed. CRPO will follow up with any required action within the timeframe noted in the response. CRPO will adapt the feedback/response as necessary to accommodate the needs of the individual and in a format that is appropriate and accessible.

Feedback on the provision of services to persons with disabilities may be provided as follows:

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|----------------|---|
| E-mail: | info@crpo.ca |
| Fax: | 416-874-4079 |
| Phone: | 416-862-4801 or 1-888 661-4801 |
| Mail: | 163 Queen Street East, 4th floor, Toronto, ON M5A 1S1 |

If the above methods are not suitable, individuals may request another method. Privacy will be respected.

7. Notice of Temporary Disruptions

CRPO will provide employees and members of the public with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services used by persons with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption is expected to last, and a description of any alternative facilities or services available.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances on the premises. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notice may also be provided on outgoing telephone messages and/or on the CRPO website.

8. Training for Employees

Within three-months of hire, all CRPO employees and representatives are to receive training on:

- the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service;
- CRPO policies, practices, and procedures relating to the provision of services to persons with disabilities;
- how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities, including those who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
- how to use equipment or devices that may assist with the provision of services to persons with disabilities; and
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing CRPO services.

All employees will review the online training course, Serve-Ability, available on the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at: <http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/en/serve-ability/>

9. Modifications to this Policy or Related Policies

CRPO is committed to ensuring its policies, practices and procedures respect and promote the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the effect on persons with disabilities.

Any CRPO operational policy affecting customer service that does not respect and promote the dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity of persons with disabilities will be modified or revoked.

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to individuals with disabilities. Questions about this policy or suggestions on how to improve CRPO policies and practices may be directed to the Registrar.

External Resources:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_01o32_e.htm

Ontario Human Rights Code:

www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm

Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment (Making Ontario Accessible):

www.accesson.ca