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**ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE –
SUPPORT PERSONS**

POLICY

Canadian Mental Health Association is committed to being responsive to the needs of all individuals. We strive to provide quality goods and services that are accessible to all. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines on providing goods and services to people with disabilities that require support persons.

Definitions:

Support Person

A support person is defined as another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

PROCEDURES

1. CMHA is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. People with disabilities have the right to have access to their support person while accessing goods and services of CMHA.
2. If confidential information is going to be discussed, the person with the disability should be asked if they prefer their support person to remain present. If the support person is present when confidential information is to be disclosed, signed consent must be received from the person with the disability. A signed confidentiality agreement should also be obtained from the support person. Written documentation will be provided outlining support persons expectations. See [support person guidelines](#).
3. CMHA may request a person with a disability be accompanied by a support person, in the event that it is considered necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. This will only occur after consultation with the person with a disability and when it is the only means to allow the person with a disability and when it is the only means to allow the person with a disability to access CMHA's goods or services. The following criteria shall be used in consulting with the tenant/customer:
 - a) When the risk is greater than the risk associated with other individuals;
 - b) When there is a clear and significant risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or others;
 - c) When the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means;
 - d) When the assessment of the risk is based on consideration of the nature and severity of the potential harm, the duration of the risk, the likelihood that potential harm will occur and how imminent the potential risk is;
 - e) When the assessment of risk is based on the person's actual characteristics, not on perceived risk.

4. When a support person attends an event with an individual hosted by CMHA, admission fees will be deemed a fare cost or waived for the support person. Advanced notice of such fees will be publicized prior to events.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

AUTHORITY: CEO