

PRIMATE'S WORLD RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

Accessible Customer Service Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this is to fulfill the requirements set out in Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 Ontario Regulation 429/07, to establish a policy governing the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

2. Policy

In fulfilling our mission, The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) strives at all times to provide its services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients.

3. Providing services to people with disabilities

PWRDF is committed to excellence in serving all clients including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

3.1 Communication

Staff shall communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

3.2 Assistive devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients with disabilities while accessing our services.

4. Use of service animals and support persons

- Employees shall allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal unless the animal is excluded by law.
- Where the animal is excluded by law, the reason shall be explained to the person with disability, and other reasonable arrangements to provide the service shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- When a service animal is unruly, disruptive or exhibits harmful behaviour, an employee may ask the person with disability to remove the animal from the area or refuse access to services. In this event, other reasonable arrangements to provide services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- Persons with a disability may be accompanied by a support person while accessing our services.

PRIMATE'S WORLD RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

5. Notice of Service disruption

PWRDF will provide clients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice may be provided in a number of ways (including a posting at the entrance to PWRDF's premises) and will be done as quickly as possible.

6. Training for Staff

PWRDF will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on its behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of policies, practices and procedures.

This training will be provided as soon as practicable, after commencement of duties. The content of the training will be dependent on the trainee's role in terms of accessibility.

Training will be on an ongoing basis as changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Training records shall be kept, including the dates when training is provided and the number of individuals to whom the training was provided.

7. Feedback Process

Feedback from our clients provides us with opportunities to learn and improve. We recognize the right of our clients to make a complaint, compliment or make suggestions on ways to improve our services. Comments on our services regarding how we are performing are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way PWRDF provides services to people with disabilities can be made in writing, in person, e-mail, or telephone to *the Accessibility Coordinator*, as mandated by Ontario regulation 429/07 and appointed by the Executive Director:

The Accessibility Coordinator will respond either in writing, in person, e-mail or telephone acknowledging receipt of the feedback and will set out the action to be taken in response to any complaints.

8. Modifications to this or other policies

PWRDF is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

9. Exclusions

PRIMATE'S WORLD RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

This Accessibility Customer Service Policy shall not apply during any period where PWRDF has declared a "State of Emergency" as defined under the Emergency Management Act.

10. Definitions

- **Accessibility Coordinator** - The person appointed by PWRDF to ensure that the implemented system is operating as it should.
- **Assistive Devices** - Any auxiliary aid, such as communication aids, cognitive aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids).
- **Disabilities** - The same as the definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code.*
- **Employees** - Any person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of PWRDF, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
- **Persons with Disabilities** - Individuals who are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- **Service Animals** - Any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.
- **Support Persons** - Any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services.

oOo

The definition in the Human Rights Code*

Section 10 (1) of the *Code* defines "disability" as follows:

"because of disability" means for the reason that the person has or has had, or is believed to have or have had,

- 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,

PRIMATE'S WORLD RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

- 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*.

“Disability” should be interpreted in broad terms. It includes both present and past conditions, as well as a subjective component based on perception of disability. Although sections 10(a) to (e) set out various types of conditions, it is clear that they are merely illustrative and not exhaustive. Protection for persons with disabilities under this subsection explicitly includes mental illness,^[X] developmental disabilities and learning disabilities. Even minor illnesses or infirmities can be “disabilities,” if a person can show that she was treated unfairly because of the perception of a disability.^[XX] Conversely, persons with an ailment who cannot show they were treated unequally because of a perceived or actual disability will be unable to meet even the *prima facie* test for discrimination. It will always be critical to assess the context of the differential treatment to determine whether discrimination has taken place, and whether the ground of disability is engaged.

[X] Mental illness has been described as “significant clinical patterns of behaviour or emotions associated with some level of distress, suffering (pain, death), or impairment in one or more areas of functioning (school, work, social and family interactions). At the root of this impairment are symptoms of biological, psychological or behavioural dysfunction, or a combination of these.” See Canadian Psychiatric Association, *Mental Illness and Work* (brochure), online: Canadian Psychiatric Association homepage <http://cpa.medical.org/MIAW/MIAW.asp> at pg. 1.

[XX] The *Code*'s definition of “disability” includes perceived disability.

Approval Date: May 3, 2012

Last Review Date: