



Effective: Nov. 1, 2011 **Last Reviewed/Revised:** Dec. 1, 2023 **Next Review By:** March 1, 2025

Author: Director, People and Culture

Approved by: Executive Director & Board of Directors

This policy should be read and understood by NYCH:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full-time Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Contractors |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part-time Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Placement Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors and Officers |

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY & ACCESSIBLE CLIENT SERVICE PLAN

NYCH is committed to serving all clients, including people with disabilities, in a manner that respects and preserves their right to independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity. NYCH will ensure the general requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the AODA are met to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The AODA requires NYCH to establish, implement, maintain, and make public a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlining our strategy to identify, remove and prevent barriers and meet the legislated requirements of the IASR. NYCH's Multi-Year Accessibility plan is posted on our website.

To ensure that NYCH adheres to this commitment to providing an accessible environment in which people with disabilities can access NYCH's programs, services and systems, the Joint Health and Safety Committee will oversee the implementation of policies, plans, procedures, and training in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

Accessibility is a shared responsibility, and our staff, volunteers and students have a part to play in making NYCH accessible by:

- Ensuring that they have a thorough understanding of and maintain compliance with this policy,
- Being familiar with their rights and responsibilities under this policy,
- Preventing accessibility barriers by including accessibility considerations in the development of programs, services, systems, and facilities,
- Participating in identifying accessibility barriers and planning for barrier removal,
- Providing a welcoming environment for people with disabilities, including any person with a disability using assistive devices or accompanied by a support person or service animal,
- Communicating with persons with disabilities in a manner that considers their disability,
- Providing information and communications in accessible formats upon request, or with communication supports, consulting with the requestor about their preferred format,

- Facilitating the process of receiving and responding to feedback about the manner that NYCH provides programs and services to persons with disabilities,
- Ensuring all feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports upon request.
- Completing mandatory training on the AODA, as listed below under Training.

Additionally, the following **Accessible Client Service Plan** will be followed across the organization:

1. Assistive devices

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

2. Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

3. Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

4. Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. Fees will not be charged for support persons for admission to NYCH's premises. If a third-party fee (or a portion thereof) must be paid by a support person to attend a field trip, gain access to a venue, event, etc., we will notify customers of this in advance, if possible, as well as through a notice posted on our premises and on our website.

5. Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for clients with disabilities, NYCH will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed at all affected locations, and on NYCH's website.

6. Training

NYCH will provide training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf. This training will be provided to staff within 3 months of their date of hire, and to volunteers within 2 months of their start date. Board members will be trained within 3 months of the first meeting after joining the board, depending on the board's training schedule. Staff and volunteers will also be notified/trained when changes are made to NYCH's Accessible Client Service Plan.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- NYCH's Accessible Client Service Plan
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to use any on-site or available equipment or devices that may help with providing goods or services to people with disabilities; and
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing NYCH's programs and services

7. **Feedback process**

Clients who wish to provide feedback on the way NYCH provides programs and services to people with disabilities can do so via e-mail, verbally, or through our suggestion box. All feedback will be directed by staff to the Director of People and Culture, Program Director, or Executive Director. Clients can expect to hear back within 5 days about their complaint and any related process. Complaints will be addressed according to our organization's regular complaint management procedures.

8. **Modifications to this or other policies**

Any policy of NYCH that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.