

### **Our Mission**

The mission of FACS Niagara is to protect, support, and strengthen the lives of children, youth, adults and families.

### **Our Vision**

The vision of FACS Niagara is a community where children, youth, adults and families achieve their full potential in a safe, supportive environment.

### **Our Values**

- We are Caring
- We are Respectful
- We are Collaborative
- We act with Integrity
- We are Accountable

### **Our Commitment**

FACS Niagara strives to provide our services in a manner that is accessible to all of our clients, and respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are committed to offering equal opportunity to access our services and to providing the benefit of the same services, in the same place and in a similar way to all clients.

### **Providing Services to People with Disabilities**

FACS Niagara 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:

#### Communication

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

We will train staff who communicate with clients on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

#### Telephone Services

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our clients. We will train staff to communicate with clients over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with clients by TTY, email, mail, or whatever means the disabled person uses, if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

### 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.

### Billing

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our clients. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print, or e-mail.

We will answer any questions clients may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

### Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. If a health and safety concern presents itself in the form of a severe allergy to the service animal, all reasonable efforts will be made to meet the needs of all individuals.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter FACS Niagara's premises with his or her support person. 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 our premises, unless a health and safety concern arises regarding the behavior of the support person.

### Notice of Temporary Disruption

FACS Niagara 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 will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises. If possible, we will make all reasonable efforts to contact those with appointments who are affected by the disruption.

In the case of an office closure, closure information will be placed on the FACS website and advertised through various community media outlets.

### Training for Staff

FACS Niagara will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- 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 the TTY and other equipment or devices available on FACS premises that may help with the provision of services to people with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing FACS Niagara's services
- FACS Niagara's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

### Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of FACS Niagara is to meet and surpass client expectations while serving clients with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well these expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way FACS Niagara provides services to people with disabilities can be made verbally (in person or by phone) or in writing (email or mail). All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility Coordinator. Clients can expect to receive a response in 7 business days

Complaints will be addressed according to complaint procedures already established in the agency's Internal Complaint Review Process.

### Modifications to This or Other Policies

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

### Questions About This Policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to clients with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to the Accessibility Coordinator of FACS Niagara.

### **PROCEDURE**

FACS Niagara has adopted procedures in the pursuit of providing consistently high service standards for all clients, regardless of race, creed, age, gender, or disability.

All client service provided by FACS Niagara shall follow the ideals of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. We will meet or exceed all applicable legislation regarding the provision of customer service.

All employees must follow these procedures.

### Service Animals

- Do not distract or disrupt any service animal by touching, petting or talking to the animal

### Assistive Devices

- Offer assistance
- Make worksite accommodations to ease the use of any assistive devices

### Support Persons

- Direct client service to the client
- Treat all parties with respect and dignity
- If required, ask for confidentiality releases to be signed by the client

### Feedback Process

- Assist with the feedback process
- Accommodate the feedback process to meet individual client's needs
- Forward and follow up on all feedback

### Notice of Disruptions in Service

- Immediately notify the Accessibility Coordinator when service disruptions happen
- If possible, notify all scheduled clients of any disruptions