



ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Section: Human Resources - Health and Safety

Accessible Customer Service	Date Approved:	November 2023
	Director Responsible:	Vice President of People & Culture
	Date for Review:	November 2025

POLICY

KidsAbility is committed to excellence in serving all customers with care and respect. Every person has an equal and inherent right to access the services provided by KidsAbility (KA) in a manner that upholds their dignity, autonomy, respect, privacy, and safety.

This policy applies without exception to all staff, volunteers, physicians, consultants, contract workers, board members, or other third parties that engage in the provision of services at KA.

DEFINITIONS

Customers: Refers to clients, their families, volunteers, vendors, visitors, donors, and any other members of the public that may choose to access the facilities or services of KA.

SCOPE

The entire organization

PROCEDURE

Assistive Devices

KidsAbility will ensure that we have staff and volunteers that are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while obtaining, using, or benefiting from our services.

Communication

We will communicate with individuals with disabilities in a manner that take into account their unique needs and preferences, ensuring that they can request, use, receive, and provide feedback on our facilities and services.

Service Animals

KidsAbility welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are specially trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities and are not considered pets. Persons with disabilities may bring their service animal with them to parts of our premises that are open to the public, unless otherwise excluded by law (e.g., food preparation areas). For reasons of safety as well as infection prevention and control, the service animal must remain with the owner at all times. However, in rare circumstances when a manager may determine that a situation would require the separation of the individual and their service animal, the manager will endeavour to discuss the circumstances with the individual in advance, and always suggest appropriate alternatives for assistance.

While KA respects the privacy of individuals, we may request proof of the service animal's necessity for the individual's disability. Such proof should be in the form of a letter, signed by a qualified medical professional, confirming the need for a service animal without disclosing any specific details about the individual's disability or the service animal's tasks.

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on KidsAbility premises. Any situation that would require the separation of the individual and their support worker will be discussed with the individual in advance, if possible, appropriate alternatives for assistance will be suggested. In certain circumstances, KidsAbility may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for health or safety reasons but before making this request, KidsAbility shall consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs. In the rare event that there would be an admission or other fee required for the support person, KA would waive the fee.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of any planned or unexpected disruption of service, KidsAbility endeavours to advise all clients and visitors promptly. For planned disruptions, such as all-staff training days, notices will be clearly posted at the site and on social media/our website indicating the date, time and anticipated length of the disruption, and any alternative facilities or services, if available.

For unexpected disruptions, such as closures due to inclement weather conditions, KA places notices on our website, social media, voice mail, and with local radio stations (see below) as well as on the agency voicemail services.

570 NEWS – newsroom@570news.com

CBC KW - yournewskw@cbc.ca

91.5 The Beat - info@915thebeat.com

Magic – darren.baxter@corusent.com

Training for Staff

KidsAbility will provide training for all employees, students, volunteers, board members, and others who engage with the public or other third parties on our behalf. This commitment extends to both existing staff and new hires, who will receive training as part of their Orientation to KidsAbility.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, and its Customer Service Standard requirements
- KidsAbility's plan related to the Customer Service Standard
- Comprehensive guidance on interacting and communicating with individuals with various disabilities
- Detailed instructions on interacting with people with disabilities who use assistive devices, require the assistance of a service animal, or rely on support persons
- How to use the equipment or devices available at KidsAbility that may help provide services to people with disabilities

- Clear protocols for addressing situations where individuals with disabilities encounter difficulties accessing KidsAbility or its services
- Any changes or updates to the regulations or this plan

Feedback Process

Customers who wish to provide feedback to KidsAbility on the way we provide our services to people with disabilities can submit:

- By Email
- In print
- Verbally
- Telephone or social media

KidsAbility will carefully consider all feedback received.

REFERENCE

KidsAbility Accessibility Plan