



## AODA Policy: Accessible Customer Service

### I. PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT

The goal of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “Act”) is to create a more accessible Ontario, by identifying, and to the extent possible, preventing, and eliminating barriers experienced by persons with a disability.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (“the Standard”) has been established under the Act to ensure goods and services are, where at all possible, equally accessible to every member of the public.

We at 564332 Ontario Incorporated d.b.a. an independently owned and operated Home Instead® franchise (the “Company”) strive to provide an accessible customer service experience. The objective of this policy (the “Policy”) is to ensure we meet the requirements of the Standard and promote its underlying core principles, described below.

### 2. APPLICATION

The Policy applies to all persons who, on behalf of the Company, deal with members of the public or other third parties.

The Policy also applies to all persons responsible for the development, implementation or oversight of the Company’s policies, practices, and procedures.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

i. **Assistive Device** - Any device used to assist a person in performing a particular task or tasks or to aid that person in activities of daily living.

ii. **Disability** – means:

- 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

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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,
- 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*.

iii. **Guide Dog** - A guide dog as defined in section 1 of the Blind Persons Rights' Act is a dog trained as a guide for a person who is blind and having qualifications prescribed by the regulations under the Blind Persons' Rights Act.

iv. **Service Animal** - An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,

- (a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- (b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

v. **Support Person** – A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

vi. **“We”, “Our” and “Staff”** means the Company and its employees, volunteers, agents and contractors.

#### 4. CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

We endeavor to ensure that the Policy and related practices, policies and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

- i. **Dignity** - Persons with a disability should be treated as valued individuals as deserving of service as any other person.

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ii. **Equality of Opportunity** - Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our goods and services.

iii. **Integration** - Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our goods and services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other person. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs.

iv. **Independence** – Services should, where possible, be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, we will be willing to assist a person with a disability but will not do so without first attempting to get the permission of the person with a disability.

## **5. PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

### **I. Policies, Practices and Procedures**

The Company shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures which impact the delivery of its services to the public or to other third parties are consistent with the principles of dignity, equality of opportunity, integration and independence as defined above.

### **II. Communication**

The Company strives to communicate with persons with a disability in a manner that takes into account the disability. Approaches for communication are set out in our accessibility training program.

### **III. Assistive Devices**

Persons with a disability are permitted, where possible, to use their own Assistive Device when on our premises for the purposes of obtaining, using, or benefiting from our services.

If there is a physical, technological, or other type of barrier that prevents the use of an Assistive Device on our premises we will make efforts to provide an alternative means of assistance to the person with a disability.

### **IV. Accessibility at Our Premises**

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We offer the following facilities and services to enable persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our services:

- Wheelchair ramps
- Elevator to access the floor our office is located on

#### **V. Service Animals**

Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by the Company accompanied by a Guide Dog or Service Animal and keep the Guide Dog or Service Animal with them, if the public has access to such premises and the Guide Dog or Service Animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If a Guide Dog or Service Animal must be excluded by law, we explain to the individual why this is the case and explore alternative ways to meet the individual's needs.

#### **VI. Support Persons**

A person with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by the Company with a Support Person and have access to the Support Person while on the premises.

The Company may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

#### **VII. Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

The Company will notify individuals if there is a planned or unexpected disruption to a facility or service persons with a disability use to access our services. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the applicable premises and/or on the home page of the Company's website.

The notice will include the following information:

- i. That a facility or service is unavailable.
- ii. The anticipated duration of the disruption.
- iii. The reason for the disruption.
- iv. Alternative facilities or services, if available.

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## 6. TRAINING AND RECORDS

The Company will provide training, and ongoing training as required under the Standard, to all persons to whom this Policy applies.

### A. Content of Training

Training will include:

- i. A review of the purpose of the Act and requirements of the Standard.
- ii. A review of the Policy.
- iii. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- iv. How to interact with persons with a disability who use an Assistive Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or Support Person.
- v. How to use equipment or devices made available on our premises to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.
- vi. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises and/or services.

### B. Timing of Training

The Company will ensure training will be provided to all persons to whom this Policy applies as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties. On-going training will occur as changes are made to policies, procedures and practices and as new individuals assume the applicable duties.

### C. Documenting Training

Records of the training provided, including the training protocol, the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom the training is provided shall be maintained in accordance the requirements of the Standard

## 7. FEEDBACK PROCEDURE

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#### A. Receiving Feedback

The Company welcomes and appreciates feedback regarding this Policy and its implementation. Feedback can be provided in the following ways:

- i. In person at 300-209 Dundas Street East, Whitby, ON Canada L1N 7H8
- ii. By telephone at (905)723-1800
- iii. In writing to 300-209 Dundas Street East, Whitby, ON Canada L1N 7H8
- iv. Electronically to [cathydow@homeinstead.com](mailto:cathydow@homeinstead.com)

#### B. Responding to Feedback

We will respond to complaints received and will do so as soon as is practicable. In certain circumstances we may be required to take more action to effectively address the complaint and as such, it may take us longer to respond.

### **8. DOCUMENTATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE**

This Policy, and related practices and protocols, shall be made available to any member of the public upon request.

### **9. FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS**

The Company will provide documents, or the information contained in documents, required to be provided under the Standard, to a person with a disability in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

### **10. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY**

For more information about the Policy or for questions regarding the Company's policies, practices and procedures for accessible customer service please contact:

Cathy Dow, Owner, [cathydow@homeinstead.com](mailto:cathydow@homeinstead.com)

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