



STANDARD & PROCEDURES

Category:	Human Resources	
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Cross – References:	HR-350 Workplace Accommodation	
Lead:	Director of Corporate Services	
Code:	HR-250	

CUSTOMER SERVICE & ACCESSIBILITY

PREAMBLE/PURPOSE

In fulfilling its mission, BGCFS strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. BGCFS is committed to ensuring that all persons with disabilities have equal access to employment, programs, services and activities offered by BGCFS, in the same place and in a similar way as other persons.

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility: means that people of all abilities have the opportunity to participate fully in everyday life.

Customers: for the purpose of this standard and procedure, includes employees, volunteers, resource families, service users, and members of the public.

STANDARD

Standards are basic rules of practice to support Board Policy and provide context for Procedures. They are also informed by intent of legislation, Ministry Directives, accreditation requirements, best practice research and quality improvement activities. Departures require written approval from the Chief Executive Officer or member of the Senior Team and may be considered if reasons are beyond the control of the employee, e.g. service user is not available for interview. Workload is not a valid reason for not meeting standards.

In accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)*, BGCFS has standards and procedures consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

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PROCEDURES

Procedures are a practical guide regarding what to do, when to do it and who is responsible. They detail the implementation of Standards and ensure that professional practice is delivered within a consistent framework. They are also informed by requirements of legislation, Ministry Directives, accreditation requirements, best practice research and quality improvement activities. Procedural departures may be approved in writing by a supervisor if circumstances are beyond the control of an employee, e.g. service user is not available

1. Providing Goods and Service to People with Disabilities

- 1.1 BGCFS is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

Communication

BGCFS communicates with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Employees are trained to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Telephone Services

BGCFS is committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. Employees are trained to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

BGCFS offers to communicate with customers by email or written document if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

Assistive Devices

BGCFS is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from BGCFS goods and services. Employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities.

Employees also know how to use the any assistive devices available on BGCFS premises for customers.

Billing

BGCFS is committed to providing accessible invoices. For this reason, invoices are provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print, e-mail.

Any questions about the content of the invoice can be answered in person, by telephone or email.

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2. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

- 2.1 BGCFS is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of the premises that are open to the public and other third parties. Where a service animal can not be easily identified, BGCFS may ask for verification from a regulated health professional to be provided. All employees, 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.
- 2.2 BGCFS is 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 BGCFS premises with their support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to their support person while on BGCFS premises.
- 2.3 Should a situation occur where a person with a disability requires a support person for Health or Safety reasons the following shall occur:
- a) Consultation will occur with the person with the disability to understand their needs;
 - b) BGCFS will consider the Health or Safety reasons based on available evidence;
 - c) BGCFS will determine if there if there is any other way to protect the Health or Safety of the person while receiving service.
- 2.4 Where it is determined that a person with a disability requires a support person for Health or Safety reasons, no additional costs shall be incurred by the person with the disability.

3. Notice of Temporary Disruption

- 3.1 BGCFS provides customers 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. Notices will also be posted on BGCFS' website.

4. Training for Employees

- 4.1 BGCFS provides 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. Individuals in the following positions will be trained:

- Child Protection Worker

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- Family Resource Workers
- Volunteers who have direct service user contact
- Administrative employees who have direct service user contact
- Management employees who have direct service user contact
- Resource Parents

4.2 This training is provided after employees commence their duties and includes 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 any assistive devices available on site.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing goods and services.
- BGCFS policies, standards and procedures relating to accessibility and customer service.

4.3 Applicable employees are trained on policies, standards and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Employees are also trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, standards and procedures.

5. Feedback Process

5.1 The ultimate goal of BGCFS is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on BGCFS services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

5.2 Feedback regarding the way BGCFS provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by e-mail, verbally, or through the compliments and complaints process. All feedback is directed to any supervisor. Customers can expect to hear back within ten (10) business days.

5.3 Complaints are addressed according to complaint categories already established in BGCFS's complaints process standards and procedures.

6. Accessibility Advisory Committee and Commitment to Accessibility Planning:

6.1 A Director or designate will be assigned to Chair the committee.

6.2 The committee will prepare an annual report to include:

- list of committee members
- the organization's process to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities

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- set, review and report each year on objectives to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities
- The annual report will be submitted to the Senior Team in December.

6.3 The annual report will be submitted to Senior Leadership and will be available to all employees and the public. The report will be posted on BGCFS' intranet and website.

6.4 The committee will ensure AODA reporting requirements are completed.

7. Modifications to This or Other Policies, Standards or Procedures

7.1 BGCFS is committed to developing customer service practices that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this or other policies, standards and procedures before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy, standard and procedure of BCGFS that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

7.2 Standard and Procedure HR 250 will be posted on BGCFS website.

PRACTICE NOTES

Practice Notes are guidelines developed to provide users with recommendations for best practice.

Forms:

Approval History:

Revised / approved Jan 2018
March 18, 2014

Source References:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)

<http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/en/mcscs/programs/accessibility/index.aspx>