



## **POLICY: Customer Service Including Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities**

### **1. Our Mission**

St. Joseph's Hospice is a charitable organization that provides compassionate care and companionship to palliative and bereaved individuals and families; recognizing and embracing their unique needs.

### **2. Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, St. Joseph's Hospice strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

### **3. Definitions**

#### **3.1 Customer**

A customer can be anyone who is accessing Hospice's goods, services or facilities. They may be paying and non-paying members of the public, and individuals we may refer to as clients, residents, guests, and visitors. Customers can also be other businesses or organizations (also referred to as third parties).

### **4. Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities**

St. Joseph's Hospice is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

#### **4.1 Communication**

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

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

#### **4.2 Telephone Services**

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

We will offer to communicate with customers in writing or in person if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

### **4.3 Assistive Devices**

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff and volunteers are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

We will also ensure that staff and volunteers know how to use the following assistive devices available on our premises for customers: walkers, wheelchairs, Broada chair, stretcher chair, commodes, beds, and mechanical lift.

### **5. 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.

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 the premises of St. Joseph's Hospice 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 our premises.

**Admission Fees** will not be charged to support persons at our events.

### **6. Notice of Temporary Disruption**

St. Joseph's Hospice will provide 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 our entrance and the reception counter on our premises.

### **7. Training for Staff**

St. Joseph's Hospice will provide training to all employees, volunteers, contractors, 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: Executive Director, Director of Human Resources, Director of Residential Services, Director of Community Engagement and Development, Volunteer Services Coordinator, fund development, fund raising and communications, administration and support, client care and support services, IT, maintenance and housekeeping, clinical services, Board Members, Committee members, volunteers, students, interns, and other relevant parties who deal with the public or other third parties on the organization's behalf. This training will be provided as soon as possible after staff/volunteers commence their duties.

Training will include the following:

- The Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities
- 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 St. Joseph's Hospice equipment or devices, e.g. wheelchairs, etc., available on our premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing St. Joseph's
- Hospice's goods and services
- St. Joseph's Hospice's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer
- service standard.

Staff and volunteers will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff and volunteers will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures. Training records will be available to the public, upon request.

## **8. Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of St. Joseph's Hospice is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way St. Joseph's Hospice provides goods and services to people with disabilities, and on our feedback process itself, can be made by telephone, email, letter or in person by making an appointment to share their feedback. Customers can expect a response in 4 business days.

## **9. 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 St. Joseph's Hospice that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

## **10. Questions about this Policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone

has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of the policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to the executive director of St. Joseph's Hospice.

**Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request.**