



## **Use of Support Person by the General Public**

**Date: 2010 01 01 / 2015 04 28 / 2023 06 20**

### **Applicable Reference from Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy:**

The Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to our facilities by committing our staff and volunteers to providing services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities, such service to incorporate measures that include but are not limited to the use of support persons.

## **Administrative Procedures**

### **1. Responsibilities**

- 1.1 Supervisory Officers, Principals and Managers will ensure that staff receive training in interacting with people with disabilities who are accessing board services accompanied by a support person.

### **2. Expectations**

#### **Access to Premises**

- 2.1 Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on Board and/or school premises with his or her support person. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.
- 2.2 This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or board offices where the public does not have access.

#### **Confidentiality**

- 2.3 Where a support person is accompanying a person with a disability, who is the parent/guardian of a student, for the purpose of assisting in a discussion that may involve confidential information concerning the student, the Superintendent, Principal or other staff member must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure). A sample of a consent document is provided below in Appendix A.



- 2.4 The parent/guardian must provide documented consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person.
- 2.5 The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.
- 2.6 A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school/board office by the Principal or Superintendent.
- 2.7 If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required.

### **Support Persons Accompanying a Person with a Disability at School Events for which there is an admission fee**

- 2.8 Where a support person attends a school, family of schools or board-organized event at school or Board facilities for which a fee is charged, such fee will be waived for the support person who accompanies an individual with a disability who has paid a fee for attendance.

### **Where the Board may Require the Presence of a Support Person**

- 2.9 The Board may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

(NOTE: This would be a highly rare situation and would only occur where, after consultation with the person with the disability, requiring a support person is the only means available to allow the person to be on the premises and, at the same time, fulfill the Board's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or of others on the premises.)

It is further noted that people with disabilities are free to accept a reasonable risk of injury to themselves just as other people do. Different individuals will have a different tolerance for risk. Risk should be weighed against any benefit for the person with a disability. It is not enough that the support person might help to protect health and safety; a support person must be necessary or essential to protect health and safety before you can require one – the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means. Any considerations on protecting health or safety should be based on specific factors and not on assumptions. Just because someone has a disability doesn't mean they're not capable of meeting health or safety requirements.)

## **3. Additional Information**

- 3.1 The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.

## References

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom Ontario  
Ontario Human Rights Code  
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)  
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

## Definitions

**Disability** - 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:

- a) 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 impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog 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,
- 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; ("handicap").

**Support Person** - is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability as they access the services of the Board. A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system. A support person is chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services and could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

## Appendix A

### SAMPLE CONSENT FORM

I, (parent/guardian) consent to the sharing of confidential information by (name of principal/teacher/other staff member) related to my child/ward (name) in the presence of my support person (name).

My support person (name) consents to safeguarding the confidentiality of the information shared.

Affirmation of consent:

Parent/Guardian

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Printed Name of Parent/Guardian) \_\_\_\_\_

I undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of information shared between (school staff) and (parent/guardian) for whom I am a support person.

Support Person

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Printed Name of Support Person) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Witness –

Principal/Staff Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Printed Name of Staff Person)

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