

Section: Accessibility	Subsection: Removing Barriers	Policy Number: ACC-101
Subject Accessibility Policy Statement & Removing Barriers		Effective Date: May 2015
Standard: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)	Authority: CEO	Reviewed: June 2014, May 2021, November 2022, November 2023
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1.0. POLICY STATEMENT

Belvedere Heights is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities and strives to ensure all interactions support their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and are committed to meeting people’s needs in a timely manner. This will be accomplished by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario’s accessibility laws.

Belvedere Heights understands that obligations under the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Belvedere Heights is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services and facilities to all Residents including people with disabilities. Our accessible customer services policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

2.0 TRAINING

We are committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, with Ontario’s accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, we will train:

- 2.1 All persons who participate in developing the organization’s policies; and
- 2.2 All other persons who provide goods, services, or facilitate on behalf of the organization.

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles and includes:

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- 2.3 Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
 - 2.4 Our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
 - 2.5 How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
 - 2.6 How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- 2.7 How to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services, or facilities to people with disabilities. These include:
 - 2.7.1 Amplifiers
 - 2.7.2 Magnifiers
 - 2.7.3 Adaptive call bells
 - 2.7.4 Closed captioning services
 - 2.7.5 Various height and width seating options
 - 2.7.6 Various mobility aids
 - 2.7.7 Pictogram communications boards
 - 2.7.8 Adaptive equipment for personal care and toileting

3.0 ASSISTIVE DEVICES

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services, or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services, or facilities.

Through completion of the general orientation upon hire and the required yearly self-directed education, we ensure our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

4.0 COMMUNICATION

Belvedere Heights will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports:

- 4.1 In a timely manner, taking into account, the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- 4.2 At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

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We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If the organization determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization shall provide the requestor with:

- 4.3 An explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- 4.4 A summary of the unconvertible information or communications

We notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports by posting on our website and at Accessibility information Board.

We will also meet internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

5.0 SERVICE ANIMALS

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- 5.1 College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- 5.2 College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- 5.3 College of Nurses of Ontario
- 5.4 College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- 5.5 College of Optometrists of Ontario
- 5.6 College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- 5.7 College of Psychologists of Ontario
- 5.8 College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services, or facilities:

- 5.9 Explain why the animal is excluded
- 5.10 Discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services, or facilities

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Service animals are prohibited from the following areas: food preparation areas, medication preparation areas, and storage areas, all sterile storage areas

6.0 SUPPORT PERSONS

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

Whenever possible, arrangements will be made to allow support people unlimited access to the Resident. If not possible, other plans will be made to provide the same level of support by other means.

7.0 NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, this organization will notify customers promptly. This will include disruptions to our elevator services, availability of accessible bathrooms, availability of assistive devices and inaccessibility of public areas.

This notice posted on our website, entrances and care centers will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services.

8.0 FEEDBACK PROCESS

Belvedere Heights welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns. Feedback may be provided in the following ways:

8.1 Online via our website or e-mail to our senior leadership team

8.2 In writing, delivered to our switchboard or by mail to:

Belvedere Heights
21 Belvedere Ave
Parry Sound
P2A2A2

8.3 Over the phone by dialing 705-746-5871

8.4 In person by asking to speak with a staff member or asking for the manager responsible of a specific area.

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9.0 NOTICE OF AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

Belvedere Heights notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on our website and at entrances of the Home.

10.0 SELF-SERVICE KIOSK

Belvedere Heights will incorporate accessibility features/consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-service kiosk. Belvedere Heights currently does not use self-service Kiosks.

11.0 PROCUREMENT

Belvedere Heights will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, including self-serve kiosks. If it is not possible and practical to do so, we will provide an explanation upon request.

12. EMPLOYMENT

Belvedere Heights notifies employees, potential hires and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. We notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

We notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment. We notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. We provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that consider an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

We have a written process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees. We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that considers the accessibility needs due to disability. We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- 12.1 Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- 12.2 Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

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Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee’s consent, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee’s disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- 12.3 When the employee moves to a different location in the organization; and
- 12.4 When the employee’s overall accommodations, needs, or plans are reviewed; and
- 12.5 When the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

We have a written process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. Our performance management, career development and redeployment processes take into account the accessibility needs of all employees.

13. DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

We will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Our public spaces include:

- 13.1 Accessible off-street parking
- 13.2 Service-related elements like service counters, fixed cueing lines, and waiting areas

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Removing Barriers

Policy:

Belvedere Heights will endeavor to address and remove barriers that will negatively affect services and programs provided to its stakeholders which include residents, families, prospective residents, life lease tenants, and visitors, and as well, barriers that keep employees from effectively performing their jobs.

Procedure:

The Home have an accessibility plan that will be reviewed on an annual basis. The plan will focus on providing a barrier free environment and safe access to the building and grounds to enhance quality of life. It will address the following components:

Architectural

- To maintain the building in a safe condition
- To ensure the building is physically accessible by the above noted stakeholders

Environment

- To provide adequate designated parking for the disabled at the front and rear entry to the building
- To ensure adequate lighting in parking lots and entry ways to the building
- To provide appropriate directional signage to guide persons to their internal destination
- To provide adequate on-site parking for families, staff, visitors, suppliers, contractors and community residents who attend meetings, workshops and social functions in the Home

Attitudes

- To be non biased with respect to ethnic backgrounds of individuals, socioeconomic status, and assumptions based on age

Finance

- To endeavor to procure funds that are not readily available in the budget to improve accessibility, by submitting grant proposals, fund raising and making requests to various charities and other entities
- To develop priorities and timelines to proceed with and complete projects that will remove barriers

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Employment

- To provide equal employment opportunities for current and prospective employees by adhering to Ontario Labor Guidelines, and following personnel policies and collective agreements
- To not discriminate against any race, ethnicity, national or sexual orientation
- To offer student placement whenever possible to attract future prospective employees

Communication

- To communicate effectively with Belvedere Heights Stakeholders through a variety of methods

Transportation

- To provide transportation as necessary /required via the use of Belvedere Heights Community Support Service Program vehicles.

Community Integration

- To partner with the community by offering a variety of programs in Belvedere’s auditorium, chapel, activity areas
- To provide opportunities for residents to access community programs and activities
- To partner with providers/suppliers with expertise in assessing residents and assisting them to procure aides/equipment that will enhance mobility and/or quality of life

The plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, and submitted to the Board of Management for review.

Authorized Signing Authority

Date

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Strategies and Actions

Belvedere Heights will endeavor to completed the following accessibility initiatives:

Customer Service
 Belvedere Heights is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timelines as others.

Barrier	Objective	Means to Remove/Prevent	Timing	Responsibility	Status
Main admin office door no longer accessible via push button	Complete repair to door – install new automatic access for residents	funding	Dec 2022	Env Services	Completed

Information and Communications
 Belvedere Heights is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

Barrier	Objective	Means to Remove/Prevent	Timing	Responsibility	Status
Accessibility information Board – requires updating	Improved means of communicating accessibility resources in the home.	Move accessibility Board to front entrance for greater visibility Update Board to reflect new information / revised policy and means to get more information	2023	Kami Johnson Sheri Cox	Completed
Signage / Symbols	Improve signage; incorporate international symbol system	Create new signage	2023-27	Collaborate with LLTC and WPSHC re: signage used at their organizations	Ongoing

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Enhance communication / translation devises for Residents, staff and visitors	Review of translation technology solutions – purchase of devices to be available on each home area	Funding	Ongoing 2023	IT / Nsg / Admin	Has been added to all staff iphones – accessible to all team members
Website: Do all your organization’s internet websites conform to World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA	WPSHC IT to confirm		Ongoing	IT	Ongoing

Employment

Belvedere Heights is committed to fair and accessible employment practices including meeting the accommodation needs of employees with disabilities. A local organization, LINC Employment Services (Leading Into New Careers), offers integrated employment support services for individuals with disabilities. BH has an established relationship with LINC and can access these services upon request.

Barrier	Objective	Means to Remove/Prevent	Timing	Responsibility	Status
Feedback	Actively solicit feedback from applicants with self-disclosed disabilities to improving hiring process Information is shared upon hire related to accessibility options	Create process to solicit feedback	2023-27	Human Resources	ongoing

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	within the home				
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Procurement
 Belvedere Heights is committed to ensuring accessibility design, criteria and features are considered throughout the procurement process.

Barrier	Objective	Means to Remove/Prevent	Timing	Responsibility	Status
Misplaced adaptive hearing devices	Improve communications	Purchase additional units	2023-27	Betty Jo Peltomaki	Completed

Design of Public Spaces
 Belvedere Heights will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes in public spaces.

Barrier	Objective	Means to Remove/Prevent	Timing	Responsibility	Status
Accessible seating	Improve type of seating in waiting areas (armrests, hip-height chairs etc)	Standardize purchasing process for waiting area seating	2023-27	Env Manager	Ongoing
Card reader – Elevators	Some Residents have found the pin pad difficult – would prefer a card reader	Will research quote for changing pin pad on elevators and/or entrance to home area to improve accessibility for residents	2023-2027	Env Manager	Ongoing
Parking Lot	Lines are being		2024	Env Manager	Ongoing

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	repainted for improved accessibility for staff, residents and visitors.				
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Training

Belvedere Heights is committed to providing training in the requirement of Ontario’s accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities. The Health Centre has implemented measures to ensure AODA training is offered to all employees, students, and volunteers.

Barrier	Objective	Means to Remove/Prevent	Timing	Responsibility	Status
Compliance rate	Improve compliance rate for annual mandatory AODA training for employees and volunteers; obtain baseline numbers for contracted service providers training	Develop monitoring process	2023-27	Administrator	Ongoing
Does education refer to: The Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities?	Education must include this information	Included as part of Surge training at orientation	2023-27	Administrator	Completed
Does the training include all of the following: * • A review of the purposes of the AODA? • A review of the purposes of the Customer Service Standards? • How to interact and communicate	Education must include this information	The following education will be added to Surge training annual and orientation: Accessible Customer Service 2019 (A Module for All Staff) -	2023-2024	Glenn	Completed

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with persons with various types of disability? • How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person? • How to use equipment or devices available on the provider’s premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to a person with a disability? • What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider’s goods, services or facilities?		Surge Learning Inc			
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