

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

GlenOak Academy (“GlenOak”) is a warm and vibrant learning community providing quality education for students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8. Among other things, GlenOak strives to provide an environment that is accessible for all students, parents and community members.

GlenOak is committed to providing excellent customer service in a manner that, as much as reasonably possible, respects an individual’s dignity and independence for persons with disabilities. In its ongoing efforts to strive for accessibility, the school is committed to the principles and goals of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the Regulations supporting this Act. GlenOak welcomes and encourages all members of its community to collaborate and provide input in future initiatives for accessibility.

The Principles

1. GlenOak operates in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. The provision of services to persons with disabilities and others will be integrated, unless an alternate measure is necessary, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the school services.
3. Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the school services.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the practices and procedures approved by GlenOak in order to meet the obligations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and, specifically the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07). GlenOak, through this policy, establishes and implements practices and procedures consistent with its goal of compliance, as well as its commitment to excellent customer service for all.

This policy aims to ensure that people with disabilities, visible or invisible, are given the same opportunity as others to obtain, use and benefit from the services offered by GlenOak. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that services offered by GlenOak are provided in such a way that the key principles of dignity and independence for persons with disabilities are respected. In particular, GlenOak will use reasonable efforts in the following areas:

(i) Communication

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

GlenOak will train its staff and volunteers on how to interact and communicate with its community, including people with diverse disabilities.

(ii) Telephone Services

GlenOak is committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to all customers.

GlenOak will train its staff and volunteers to communicate over the telephone in plain language and to speak clearly.

(iii) Assistive Devices

GlenOak is committed to providing services to people with diverse disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from its services.

GlenOak will ensure that its employees and volunteers are aware and trained in the use of the various assistive devices provided by the school for customers with disabilities while accessing its services.

(iv) Billing

GlenOak is committed to providing accessible invoices to its customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in alternative formats, upon request.

(v) Use of Service Animals

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, GlenOak will ensure that the person is permitted to enter school premises and to keep the animal with him or her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. While visiting GlenOak, it is the responsibility of the person with a service animal to control the animal at all times.

If a service animal is excluded by law from GlenOak premises, GlenOak will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the school's services.

In the event a staff member or student is allergic to a service animal, alternative arrangements will be negotiated.

(vi) Use of a Support Person

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, GlenOak will ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the school premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

GlenOak may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on school premises, in situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability, or the health and safety of others on the school premises.

Consent from the person with a disability is required when communicating private issues related to the person with a disability, in the presence of a support person.

For those school events where admission fees apply, these fees will be waived for support persons. GlenOak will ensure that notice is given in advance of relevant events or activities that admission fees will be waived for support persons.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

GlenOak will make reasonable effort to provide customers with notice in the event of a 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 any, that are available. The school will not be able to give adequate notice in case of an emergency temporary disruption.

In order to make information accessible, the signs and printed notices of sufficient size that are easily readable will be prepared.

The signs and printed notices will be displayed prominently at the entrance to the school, on notice-boards and at service desks.

Telephone messages will be left in clear and concise language.

Training for Staff

GlenOak will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07). Training will be provided to GlenOak employees as part of orientation training for new employees. Training will be provided to each person as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned to relevant duties. Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to the policies and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

GlenOak will ensure that the following persons receive training about the provisions of services to persons with disabilities:

1. Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of GlenOak, whether the person does so as an employee, volunteer or otherwise; and
2. Every person who participates in developing GlenOak policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public.

Training for GlenOak staff will focus on the following areas:

- The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07).
- Information about GlenOak's policies, procedures, and guidelines pertaining to the provision of services to users with disabilities.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- How to use equipment or devices available on GlenOak's premises or otherwise provided by the school that may help with the provision of services to a person with a disability.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the school's services.

The amount and format of training will depend on the person's interaction with customers.

A record of training received by staff and volunteers will be kept in their file.

Feedback Process

GlenOak welcomes feedback, including feedback about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities. Any concerns or complaints regarding accessibility for persons with disabilities should be placed directly with the Head of School. In the event that a complaint is made, GlenOak will review the complaint with relevant personnel and school administration and provide a response within 10 business days.

Questions About this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework through which GlenOak can achieve service excellence for people with disabilities. If anyone has questions about this policy, please contact the school principal.

Monitoring

- The school principal is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and revision of this policy.
- This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.