



## POLICY

Dentistry on Sinclair	Accessibility Policy
Effective: November 1, 2012 Revised: April 11, 2023	Review: Annually

This policy has been established pursuant to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

**Dentistry on Sinclair** will use reasonable efforts to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

**Dentistry on Sinclair** is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so 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.

**Dentistry on Sinclair** is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

**Dentistry on Sinclair** understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for 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.

**Dentistry on Sinclair** is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services or facilities to all customers including people with disabilities. Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

### Definitions

**Dignity** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people.

**Independence** – when a person with a disability is allowed to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

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**Integration** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with the disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same similar way as others unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods and services.

**Equal Opportunity** – service is provided to a person with a disability in such a way that they have an opportunity to access goods or services equal to that given to others.

### **Patient Services: Providing Goods and Services to people with disabilities**

#### **1. Our Mission:**

**Dentistry on Sinclair** is dedicated to providing excellence in Dentistry in an honest and caring environment.

#### **2. Providing Services to People with Disabilities:**

**Dentistry on Sinclair** is committed to excellence in serving all patients, their families and care givers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

##### **2.1 Communication**

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its service in accessible formats or with communication supports:

- a) in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- b) at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

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

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

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Communication options for patients with disabilities include in person, telephone, digital devices, email, text, in writing or web form or through a support person.

### **2.2 Assistive Devices**

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

### **2.3 Billing**

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all our patients. For this reason invoices will be provided in alternate forms upon request. We will answer any questions about the content of the invoice by person, by telephone or email in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

## **3. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law, in which case, steps will be taken to ensure that other measures are available to enable a person with a disability to access dental services. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with patients, their families and others are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by an animal. An animal is a service animal if it is readily apparent that the reasons relating to his or her disability, or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse, in accordance with section 4 of the AODA.

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 our dental office with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises. Support persons will be asked to agree to maintain privacy and confidentiality of personal information related to the provision of dental care services provided to patients, in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

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### **4. Notice of Temporary Disruption**

If our dental office relies upon particular equipment, devices, facilities or services in order to provide dental services to persons with disabilities we will provide details in Appendix “A” of this policy. In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the use of such equipment, devices, facilities or services, we will provide notice which 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 entrances and service counters on our premises, on our website and social media platforms and necessary patients will be contacted in advance. The notice will be given in accordance with requirements under section 5 of the AODA.

### **5. Training for Staff**

We will provide training to all employees, independent contractors, agents volunteers and others who work with us and on our behalf, with a view to ensuring that they are familiarized with our policies, practices and procedures for providing persons with disabilities and their families with dental services. This training will be provided to existing staff at the time this policy is implemented; for new staff, when they commence their duties; and for all staff on an on-going basis. Training will include the following:

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the regulations and accessibility standards established under the Act;

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 equipment, devices, services and/or facilities currently available on our premises or through our office, if any (and described more fully in Appendix “A” to this policy where applicable) to help people with disabilities who obtain dental services from our office;

How to locate and implement our office policies, practices and procedures on accessibility standards;

What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing our dental services;

How to obtain additional information on assisting people with disabilities, available through Ontario’s Ministry of Community and Social Services

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and the Accessibility Directorate website: [www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/accessibilityonatrio/](http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/accessibilityonatrio/). Applicable staff will be trained on developing and updating our policies, practices and procedures that affect the way dental services are provided to people with disabilities and their families. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

### **6. Feedback Process**

Our ultimate goal is to meet and surpass patient expectations while serving people with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated. Feedback regarding the way our dental office provides services to people with disabilities can be brought directly to the attention of our office manager by any of the following ways: in person, telephone, digital devices, email, text, in writing, web form or through a personal support person.

If you have a complaint regarding accessibility we ask that you communicate with our office manager. Dentistry on Sinclair is committed to working with you to resolve your concerns.

### **7. Notice of Availability of Documents**

Dentistry on Sinclair notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on site in waiting areas and on our website.

### **8. Employment**

We notify employees, job applicants 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 take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

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We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account 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:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

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:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
  - b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
  - c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.
9. We will develop individual accommodation plans for employees and employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

### **10. Modifications to This or Other Policies**

We are committed to developing office policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. No changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. We will modify or remove any office policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

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### **11. Questions about This Policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to people with disabilities who seek dental services through our dental office. If anyone has a question about this policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided, or you should be referred to our office manager.

### **12. Dental Offices with at Least 20 Employees in Ontario**

It is acknowledged that any dental office with at least 20 employees in Ontario has additional obligations under AODA in that it must:

Self evaluate and certify their compliance with the accessibility standard for patient service by completing and filing an annual accessibility report with the Government of Ontario:

Prepare one or more documents describing its policies, practices and procedures including those relating to service animals, temporary service disruptions, training and other issues: and upon request provide a copy of such documentation to any person

Prepare a document describing its training policy, a summary of the contents of the training, details of when the training is to be provided, the dates actually provided and number of individuals to whom it was provided

Notify persons to whom it provides dental services that documents required by regulations under the AODA are available upon request, and such notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on the premises, on the provider's website, or by other method that is reasonable in the circumstances.

These additional obligations as outlined in this item (Item 10) apply to our dental office.

Policy Revision Effective: April 11, 2023

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### Appendix A

In this appendix, we address what equipment, devices, services and/or facilities are currently available through our office and on our premises to help people with disabilities to communicate with us and to obtain dental services from our office:

The building is equipped with an elevator and accessible doors.

We offer communication in the following ways: in person, telephone, digital devices, email, text, in writing, web form or through a support person.

Office and treatment Rooms are equipped to fit wheelchairs and other assistive devices.

Services animals are allowed in the facilities.

Support persons are all welcome in the office and in the treatment rooms

Notices are posted and necessary patients are contacted regarding disruptions in services.

Notice is posted on our website regarding our Accessibility Policy and our Accessibility Compliance.



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### Appendix B

In this appendix, we provide definitions for key terms which appear in the document:

An Assistive Device is a tool, technology or other mechanisms that enables a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities, such as moving, communicating or lifting.

Barrier means anything that prevents a person with a disability from participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Disability means:

- a) 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 diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal 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

A Guide Dog means a dog that has been trained as a guide for a blind person at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons' Rights Act

An animal is a Service Animal if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, or if the person has a letter from a physician or nurse verifying that the animal is required for reasons relating to his or her disability

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A Support Person is an individual hired or chosen to accompany a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods or services

1. Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. Accessibility Standard for Customer Service: training tips for employees (online) Available at [www.ontario.ca/accesson](http://www.ontario.ca/accesson)
2. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, S. O. 2005 c. 11.
3. Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, cH, 19.
4. Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. Accessibility Standard for Customer Services: training resource (online) Available: [www.ontario.ca/accesson](http://www.ontario.ca/accesson) (December 1, 2011)
5. Ibid
6. Ibid