

Title: **ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS: USE OF SUPPORT PERSON BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

Adopted: October 6, 2009

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Related Document: Policy PCE.001 – Accessibility Standards

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**Purpose:** Bloorview School Authority 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.

**Definition/Explanation of Support Person:**

A support person is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability who accesses the services of Bloorview School Authority. A support person is distinct from an employee who provides support services to a student or staff person in the system – separate and specific procedures apply.

**Additional Information:**

A support person is an individual 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. Personal care needs may include, but are not limited to, physically transferring an individual from one location to another or assisting an individual with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring an individual's health or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure.

The support person 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.

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

**1.0 LIABILITY**

The Principal will ensure that all staff receive training in interacting with people with disabilities who are accessing the Authority's services accompanied by a support person.

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## **2.0 ACCESS TO BLOORVIEW SCHOOL AUTHORITY PREMISES**

- 2.1 Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on Bloorview School Authority 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 where the public does not have access.

## **3.0 CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 3.1 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 Principal must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure (sample attached).
- 3.2 Consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person must be given in writing by the parent or guardian.
- 3.3 The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.
- 3.4 A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school office.
- 3.5 If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required.

## **4.0 SUPPORT PERSONS ACCOMPANYING A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY AT SCHOOL EVENTS FOR WHICH THERE IS AN ADMISSION FEE**

Where an individual with a disability who is accompanied by a support person wishes to attend a school organized event for which a fee is charged, the school must consult and ask the person with a disability (or the parent/guardian) how to assist them to consider all reasonable accommodation options or alternatives. If the school cannot assist or accommodate the person with a disability, the school must not charge admission fee for the support person. If the school can assist or accommodate the person with a disability, the notice of the event will include the information specifying the amount of the fee.

## **5.0 WHERE THE AUTHORITY MAY REQUIRE THE PRESENCE OF A SUPPORT PERSON**

The Authority 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

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time, fulfill the Authority'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.

**CONSENT FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian) consent to the sharing of confidential information by Principal related to \_\_\_\_\_ (name of child) 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 Bloorview School staff and the parent for whom I am a support person.**

Support Person  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of  
Support Person \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of  
Principal/Staff  
Member \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of  
Principal/Staff  
Member \_\_\_\_\_