

Title: **ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS: USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

Adopted: October 6, 2009

Revised: April 9, 2014, November 2017

Reviewed: April 2014, March 2016, November 2017

Related Document: Policy PCE.001 – Accessibility Standards

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 services incorporate measures that include but are not limited to the use of assistive devices.

Definition/Explanation of Assistive Devices:

An assistive device is any device used by people with disabilities to help with daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

1.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 The Principal will ensure that all staff are trained to support parents and the general public who may use assistive devices while accessing the Authority's services.
- 1.2 Training is focused on how to interact with people using assistive devices rather than on the technical use of the assistive devices.
- 1.3 Students and staff have separate and specific procedures related to their personal use of assistive devices.

2.0 COMMUNICATION RE USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Assistive Devices Carried by Persons with Disabilities

- 2.1 The Bloorview School Authority website will indicate that the school provides services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities and offers services that include the use of assistive devices.
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- 2.2 Bloorview School Authority will post information in the front office/reception area that welcomes the use of assistive devices and encourages users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.

Assistive Devices/Services – Made available by the Authority

- 2.3 The Bloorview School Authority website, as applicable, will indicate the availability of assistive devices provided by the Authority to assist in provision of services to people with disabilities.
- 2.4 Bloorview School Authority will, as applicable, post information in the front office/reception area that indicates the availability of assistive devices and encourage potential users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.

This could include alternative service methods such as the assistance of a staff person to complete a transaction, e.g., school registration.

TIPS FOR HELPING SOMEONE WITH AN ASSISTIVE DEVICE

Many users of the Authority's services who have disabilities will have their own personal assistive devices.

Examples of personal assistive devices include:

- wheelchairs,
- scooters
- walker
- amplification devices that boost sound for listeners who are hard-of-hearing without reducing background noise
- hearing aids
- oxygen tanks
- electronic notebooks or laptop computers
- personal data managers
- communication boards used to communicate using symbols, words or pictures
- speech-generating devices that "speak" when a symbol, word or picture is pressed

Key Point to Remember: One should not touch or handle an assistive device without permission.

MOVING PERSONAL ASSISTIVE DEVICES

If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to:

- wait for and follow the person's instructions;
- confirm that the person is ready to move;
- describe what you are going to do before you do it;
- avoid uneven ground and objects that create bumpy and unsafe ride; and
- practice consideration and safety – do not leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.

Do not move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the user's reach.

Respect personal space. Do not lean over a person with a disability or lean on their assistive device.

Let the person know about accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

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HOW TO USE CANADA RELAY SERVICES

(Telecommunications service that enables people with hearing or speech disabilities who use sign language to communicate with voice telephone users)

To make a call using the Relay System

1. Phone the number (1-800-855-0511), and tell the operator your name, the name of the person you are calling, and the number you wish to reach.
2. The operator will make the call for you, and you speak to the operator as if you were talking directly to the person you are calling. For example, say "Hi, `How are you doing?" Do not say: "Tell him I said hello." Remember to say "Go Ahead" when you finish speaking, so the person on the other end will know it is his or her turn to speak.
3. If you normally speak very quickly, the operator may ask you to speak slower so your message can be typed. There will be brief silences as the operator types to the TTY user and the user replies.
4. Operators will not betray confidences. They will not relay profanity, threats or criminal propositions, but will relay marriage proposals, banking and personal financial information and other personal (and even intimate) conversations.

Note: Bloorview does not have access to TTY service.