 Thames Valley Family Health Team	<b>Policy Title</b> Accessibility Policy	<b>Policy Number</b>
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	<b>Approval Body:</b> The Board of Directors	<b>Policy Effective Date:</b> December 1, 2011  <b>Policy Reviewed Date:</b> January 28, 2021

## PURPOSE

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and addresses how the Thames Valley Family Health Team will go beyond the standards of responsibility and legal obligation to provide our services in an equitable and accessible manner.

## POLICY

The Thames Valley Family Health Team (TVFHT) commits to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do all that is reasonably possible to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Given our unique situation as a “multisite” organization where in many cases staff are working in facilities owned and managed by other entities (i.e., physician clinics), it is important to understand our responsibilities, our limitations, and our potential impact on the physicians we work with.

The TVFHT will align its procedures with the Act which will include, but may not be limited to:


**Communication** - The TVFHT is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. It is the responsibility of the organization to source an interpreter if necessary. When asked, we will make every reasonable effort to provide information and communications materials in accessible formats or with communication supports. This includes publicly available information.

**Assistive Devices** - The TVFHT supports persons with disabilities to use their assistive devices when accessing services that are offered by the TVFHT.

**Service Animals** - Persons with disabilities may enter our premises accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with them, if the public has access to such premises, and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. It is the responsibility of the person with a service animal to control the animal at all times. A service animal means any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

In the event a staff member or patient is allergic to animals, alternative arrangements will be negotiated.

**Support Persons** - Persons with disabilities may enter our premises accompanied by a support person and may have access to that support person at all times. Consent from the

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person with a disability is required when communicating private issues related to the person with a disability, in the presence of a support person. Non-verbal consent is to be recognized.

**Accessibility Training** - All employees, contractors, volunteers, board/committee and individuals of TVFHT who oversee policies are trained on the Act and the implementation of its standards. A record will be kept of employees who have received training, including dates on which training was provided. Training is to be provided on an ongoing basis and delivered in a timely manner after an individual is employed or accepts volunteer position.

**Employment** - The TVFHT is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We will notify the public and staff that, when requested, we will make all reasonable attempts to accommodate disabilities during recruitment and assessment processes, assuming this disability does not preclude the applicant from being able to fulfill the job requirements.

If needed, we will make all reasonable attempts to create an individual accommodation plan and/or workplace emergency information for any employees who have a disability. Our performance management, career development, redeployment, and return-to-work processes will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.

**Feedback Process** - The TVFHT welcomes feedback on our customer service to people with disabilities, and comments will be accepted through a variety of mechanisms such as email, phone or through our website. Employees can provide feedback to their Supervisor.

**Notice of Temporary Disruption** - The TVFHT provides clients with notice in the event that a planned or unexpected disruption occurs in regards to services provided to people with disabilities. Notice will be provided in as timely a way as is reasonably possible accompanied with information for people with disabilities of the alternatives of the temporary disruption, this may be provided through a variety of mechanisms, including our website.

## REFERENCES

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>