

<b>Manual</b>	<b>Counselling Service Policies</b>
<b>Section</b>	<b>SP - 11.0</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Accessibility to Services</b>
<b>Date Approved:</b>	<b>September 12, 2016</b>
<b>Revision/Review Approved:</b>	



## Accessibility to Services

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### Policy Intent

This policy is intended to reflect the commitment of Family Service Thames Valley to provide services in a manner that respects the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity of those served.

### Policy

Family Service Thames Valley will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- Allowing clients with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing services as long as this does not present a safety risk.
- Using alternative methods when possible to ensure that clients with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner.
- Taking into account individual needs when providing services.
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the client's disability.

The term disability is defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

### Procedure

#### Assistive Devices

In the event an individual requires an assistive device (i.e. technical aid, communication device or other instrument) in order to benefit from/participate in service at Family Service Thames Valley, a device will be accommodated whenever possible. When or if such a device cannot be accommodated, every reasonable effort will be made to offer alternate assistance or to refer the individual to services which can accommodate this need.

#### Service Animals

When an individual who requires a service animal to benefit from/participate in services at Family Service Thames Valley, the registered service animal will be welcomed on the premises.

#### Support Persons

When an individual with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Family Service Thames Valley will ensure that the support person will be welcomed and the client is not prevented from having access to the support person.

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### Notice of Temporary Disruptions

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control of Family Service Thames Valley. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice and alternate assistance if possible to those served. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

When disruptions occur Family Service Thames Valley will provide notice by:

- Posting notices in conspicuous places including the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the Family Service Thames Valley website;
- Contacting clients with scheduled appointments;
- Verbally notifying clients when they are making an appointment; or
- By any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

### Feedback Process

Family Service Thames Valley welcomes feedback from clients with disabilities. All feedback is reviewed by the Director of Client Services. Clients that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted. Feedback can be submitted verbally to any Family Service Thames Valley employee, independent contractor, student, intern or volunteer, by telephone, in writing or via email. Clients can submit feedback to:

- Kevin Dickins
- 519-433-0183 x 8221
- 125 Woodward Avenue, London, ON N6H 2H1
- KDickins@familyservicethamesvalley.com

All employees, independent contractors, students, interns and volunteers of Family Service Thames Valley shall receive training on accessible client/customer services in the first week of their employment/placement at Family Service Thames Valley and in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

### Training Provisions

Training at Family Service Thames Valley will cover the following:

- An overview of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the requirements of the client/customer service standard.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person

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- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.
- Family Service Thames Valley's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible client service to clients with disabilities.

A copy of the Family Service Thames Valley Accessible Client Service Policy and Procedures shall be made available to persons with a disability upon request. A copy is maintained on the Family Service Thames Valley website.

Copies of documents or the information contained within a document provided to a person with a disability shall be provided in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director