

## **ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

### **STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT:**

The Village BITO Inc. is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating all persons 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.

The Village BITO Inc. is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

The Village BITO Inc. 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 law.

The Village BITO Inc. is committed to excellence in providing services 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.

### **TRAINING:**

The Village BITO Inc. is committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer care, other Ontario's accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, we will train:

- All persons who participate in developing the organization's policies
- All other persons who provide services on behalf of our organization

Training our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes;

- Purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirement of our policies related to customer service standards
- 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 requires assistance of a service animal or support person
- How to use the equipment of devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing services to people with disabilities. These include;



- Augmentative Communication Devices (i.e. Proloquo2go program on ipad)
- Laptops and Chromebooks with assistive technology
- White Cane training for appropriate clients
- Specialized seating and recreational equipment
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organizations services

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect to any changes to our policies. We maintain records of training provided including dates of training and number of individuals who participated.

### **ASSISTIVE DEVICES:**

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our services. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant or unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our services. These other measures are on a case by case basis.

We ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with specific assistive devices on site and in the community, on an as needed, ongoing basis.

### **COMMUNICATION:**

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This may include the following:

- In writing via email
- In person
- By phone
- Talk to text

We will work with the person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works best for them.

### **SERVICE ANIMALS:**

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties. There are currently no prohibited areas on our premises. When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation from a regulated health care professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our services:

- Explain why the animal is excluded



- Offer alternative ways of providing services such as home sessions versus center based services

### **SUPPORT PERSONS:**

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. No additional fee or fare will be charged for support persons.

In certain circumstances, the organization may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of:

- The person with the disability
- Others on the premises

Before making the decision, this organization will;

- Consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
- Consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
- Determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

### **NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION:**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers, this organization will notify all customers promptly.

Any Notice of Disruption will contain the following:

- Reason for the disruption
- Anticipated duration
- Alternative facilities or services

Any Notice of Disruption will be made publicly available in the following ways:

- Notice physically posted at the site of the disruption
- Notice posted on our website
- An email sent to all current customers

### **FEEDBACK PROCESS:**

The Village BITO Inc. welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback identifies barriers and helps us respond to concerns.

As a family-centred organization, we maintain direct and ongoing communication with the parents and guardians of all clients receiving our services. Rather than relying on publicly posted feedback mechanisms such as website forms or QR codes in waiting areas, families have immediate access to our leadership team and are encouraged to share feedback, concerns, or suggestions directly with a member of the Director team.



Feedback is acknowledged promptly and addressed in a timely, collaborative manner. This approach allows concerns to be resolved personally and, whenever possible, in the moment. Our accessible feedback process ensures that families can communicate using the method that best meets their needs, including in person, by telephone, or by email.

Feedback may be provided in the following ways:

- By email to [info@thevillagebito.com](mailto:info@thevillagebito.com) (check by Executive Director's of the company daily)
- By phoning our office at 905-553-2485
- In person, onsite

The Village BITO Inc. ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication support, upon request.

#### **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS:**

The Village BITO Inc. notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service are available upon request. The Village BITO Inc. will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, upon request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner, at no additional cost.

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

The Village BITO Inc. will provide, or will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication support at no increased cost, for persons with disabilities, in a timely manner, upon request. This will take into account the person's accessibility needs. We will consult with the person making the request as well as, notifying the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication support via our public website [www.thevillagebito.com](http://www.thevillagebito.com).

#### **EMPLOYMENT:**

We will notify employees, job applicants and the public that accommodations can be made during the hiring process. We notify job applicants that accommodations are available upon request. We consult with applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodations.

Where needed, we will provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. Our fire emergency system is designed to accommodate employees and clients with both hearing and visual impairments, ensuring accessible emergency notification and response within the building.

#### **DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES:**

Our public space includes accessible off- street parking

#### **TRANSPORTATION:**

The Village BITO Inc. does not provide any transportation services.



**CHANGES TO EXISTING POLICIES:**

Any policies of The Village BITO Inc. that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

This document is publicly available. Accessible formats are available upon request.