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## Accessibility

Document No.: 325  
Responsibility: Membership & Finance  
Approved By: CEO  
Approval Date: March 2017

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### Policy Statements:

CSMLS strives at all times to provide its goods, services and opportunities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. CSMLS gives people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our services and opportunities in the same place and in a similar way as others.

Note that this policy may be revised as other standards are introduced under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

### Providing goods and service to people with disabilities

In order to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, the principles of approach are:

**Dignity** – service is provided in a way that allows the individual to maintain self-respect and the respect of other persons.

**Independence** – when a person is able to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

**Integration** – service is provided in a way that allows the individual to benefit from equivalent services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as other individuals, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable the individual to access goods or services.

**Equal Opportunity** – service is provided to individuals in such a way that they have an opportunity to access goods or services equal to that given to others.

**Reasonable Efforts** – taking approaches that meet the required needs of the individual.

The CSMLS building at 33 Wellington Street North is access by appointment only regardless of visitor ability.

CSMLS is committed to excellence in serving everyone including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

### Communication

Whenever possible we will plan ahead when providing goods, services, programs and opportunities to ensure that technical devices, which assist communication, are fully operational and appropriate for the needs of the individuals or group with disabilities.

### Telephone services

We train staff personnel to communicate over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

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### Document History:

**Created** March 2017  
**Revision** March 2019

**Assistive devices**

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. It is the responsibility of persons with disabilities to ensure that their assistive devices are operated in a safe and controlled manner. It is the responsibility of our staff charged to oversee a person with disabilities to ensure their health and safety in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy & Procedures while on property, and to make necessary measures of accommodation where possible.

We will also ensure that staff know how to use the following assistive devices available on our premises for members: elevator, accessible washroom & front door.

**Billing**

Invoices will be provided in alternative format upon request. We will answer any questions members may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

**Use of Service Animals**

We welcome people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. The person will be permitted to enter the facility with the service animal and will be permitted to keep the animal with her/him unless the animal is excluded by law from the premise, or due to concerns for their health and safety.

**Support persons for Persons with Disabilities**

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter CSMLS's premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises. There will be no additional cost for a support person at meetings or conferences (i.e. LABCON) the regular registration fees will apply for the member only.

**Emergency Evacuation**

It is the responsibility of the staff charged to oversee persons with disabilities to ensure their health and safety in accordance to our Health and Safety policy and procedures and to make necessary measures to assist with a safe exit during an emergency where possible.

**Recruitment Practices**

CSMLS is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes. If you are contacted regarding an employment opportunity, please advise Human Resources ([hr@csmls.org](mailto:hr@csmls.org) or 800.263.8277 x8602) if you require an accommodation. If an applicant or successful candidate request an accommodation, their needs will be discussed with them and adjustments made to support them.

**Workplace Information**

Employees with disabilities may make requests to their supervisor or to Human Resources regarding access to workplace information in alternate accessible formats. Information needed to perform their jobs (job descriptions and manuals) as well as general information that is available to all employees at work (company intranet information, bulletins about policies and health and safety information) will be made available upon request in a format that meets the employee's needs.

**Talent and Performance Management**

All documentation relating to the CSMLS performance review process will be available in alternate formats to meet the needs of employees with disabilities upon request. Performance feedback meetings and coaching sessions will be conducted in a way that is accessible to all employees. All reasonable accommodation requests made to supervisors will be considered. CSMLS is committed to continuous development of staff and, upon request, will provide accommodations needed to successfully learn new skills or take on more responsibility over the course of their employment with CSMLS.

### **Notice of temporary disruption**

The CSMLS website, staff email as well as telephone system will provide members with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities.

This notice will include:

Information about the reason for the disruption,

Anticipated duration of disruption,

Description of alternative facilities or services if available,

Who to contact for assistance, and

Any other relevant information for accessing the facility or service

### **Training**

CSMLS will provide training to all employees, volunteers and anyone involved in the development and approvals of member service policies, practices and procedures.

This training will be provided:

in the first week of staff commencing their duties with CSMLS

during volunteer orientation

during project orientation for contractors and third parties

Staff and volunteers will also receive annual refresher training and updates when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Training will include the following:

1. The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the integrated standards
2. How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
3. How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
4. CSMLS's policies, practices and procedures relating to the integrated standards

Upon completion of the AODA Awareness Quiz, employees, volunteers and other third parties will be considered trained on this policy.

### **Feedback**

The ultimate goal of CSMLS is to meet and surpass member expectations while serving members with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way CSMLS provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by [e-mail](#), or verbally (1-800-263-8277). You can expect to hear back in 48 hours or submission of feedback.

Complaints will be addressed according to processes already established in our company's complaint management procedures.

### **Modifications to this or other policies**

We are committed to developing policies and procedures that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of CSMLS that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

### **Questions about this policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to members/customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, please contact [CSMLS](#).

**Purpose of Policy:**

To ensure that accessibility remains a priority in CSMLS's decision-making process and will serve to assist in ensuring that decisions are improving accessibility and not inadvertently creating barriers.

**Scope:**

This policy will extend from interactions with members and/or members of the public in our office, on the phone and to include interactions at conferences or meetings as well.

This Policy applies to: CSMLS Staff, Board of Directors visitors and volunteers as well as contractors and third parties engaged by the CSMLS.

**Responsibility:**

- All staff & volunteers: participate in training, commit to providing excellent service to everyone including people with disabilities, recommend ways to improve accessibility, adhere to this policy in full
- All Supervisors: participate in training, ensure staff have the tools, resources and information required
- HR Coordinator: conduct training for all staff & supervisors, make updates to policy as needed

**Associated Policies and Procedures:**

Recruitment Procedure

Evacuation Procedure

Accommodation Procedure

**Associated Documents:**

CSMLS Accessibility for Ontarians Policy - Training Document