**POLICY:**

LLGAMH is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Agency recognizes the importance of providing services, where feasible, in the client’s language of choice, as a means of enhancing the level of client support. Where a client is unable to communicate in English, or is visually or hearing impaired, or has any other communication limitation, the Agency will undertake to link with the appropriate resources within the community to better serve our client.

It is the policy of the LLGAMH that people with disabilities or any communication limitations achieve accessibility in the provision of services provided by LLGAMH and its contractors, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and contractors who interact with the tenants and the public on behalf of LLGAMH.

**Definitions**

Assistive Device

A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing services.

Disability

The definition of the term “disability,” for the purpose of this policy, is as defined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005.

Service Animal

Any animal used by a person with a disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability.

Contractor

For the purpose of this policy, a “contractor” is defined as an individual or company that is being paid (contracted) to provide goods or services on LLGAMH’s behalf. This policy applies to all contractors who interact with the tenants on behalf of the LLGAMH.

Support Person

A person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services. This person can be a paid support worker, a volunteer, a friend, or a family member.

**PROCEDURES**

LLGAMH will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

* LLGAMH’ services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
* The provision of LLGAMH services are facilitated via assistance with communications if required.
* The provision of LLGAMH’ services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from LLGAMH’ goods and services.
* Persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from LLGAMH’ services.

**Assistive Devices:** A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using or benefiting from LLGAMH’ services, unless said device may pose a risk to the health and safety of themselves or others, in which case LLGAMH may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist him or her in obtaining, using or benefiting from services, where such other measures available.

* In such cases where an assistive device (for example, an assistive listening device) is required for access to LLGAMH’ services, or events (such as tenant meetings or the annual meeting) but where the person with a disability requires assistance to obtain said device, LLGAMH will take reasonable measures to assist in obtaining access to such devices if notified at least 30 days in advance of such requirements.

**Service Animals:** LLGAMH and contractors/agents providing services on LLGAMH’ behalf shall accommodate the use of service animals by people with disabilities who are accessing LLGAMH’s services, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their service animal is in good health, does not pose a risk to the health and safety of others and is under their care and control at all times.

**Support Persons:** Where a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the LLGAMH and its contractors shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability has access to the support person while on the premises. The support person can be a paid support worker, volunteer, a friend or a family member.

* **Admission Fees & Conference Registration Fees:** If the Association charges an admission fee in connection to a support person’s attendance an event or function (such as the Annual Conference or an Association facilitated educational course), the Association shall provide advance notice of the amount, if any, payable by the support person.

**Communications:** When a client expressing a preference of service in his/her own language, the Agency will seek the assistance of another staff to assist or will seek external services for assistance. If an external individual who is not a health care provider under the PHIPA guidelines is used, the client must sign an express consent to allow this person to hear their Personal Health Information.

When communicating with a person with a disability, LLGAMH and its contractors shall do so in a manner that respects the person’s dignity and independence.

* **Availability and Format of Documents and Materials:** When providing a document to a person with a disability, the LLGAMH will provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person’s disability into account. Every attempt will be made to provide documents in alternative format within a reasonable time frame.

**Service Disruption/Notice of Service Disruption:** Temporary disruptions in LLGAMH’s services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within LLGAMH’ control or knowledge.The LLGAMH will make reasonable efforts to provide notice of disruptions to tenants.

**Feedback:** Feedback from LLGAMH’ tenants/residents and members of the public is welcome. Feedback about LLGAMH’ delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic format or through other methods.

**Training:** LLGAMH will ensure that all employees and volunteers receive appropriate training on customer service requirements in regard to people with disabilities. The format of training will vary based on individual circumstances and records of training will be kept. Please see LLGAMH’ “Training Policy on Accessibility and Customer Service” for more information.

Third party contractors who deliver goods and services on behalf of LLGAMH are also required to ensure that they meet legislative requirements of accessible customer service and that they have read, understood and acknowledged LLGAMH’ Accessibility Policy.

This policy will be posted for all employees on the Staff Manual shared drive.