

March 17, 2010

**Halton Community Legal Services
Access and Accommodation policy
Notice to the public**

Halton Community Legal Services wants to make sure that people using our services have equal access to the legal services provided by us. Staff of Halton Community Legal Services will make every effort to provide service that accommodates a variety of physical, mental, language and cultural needs, while respecting the privacy and dignity and independence of the people served.

Accommodation:

All requests for accommodation will be met unless they create extreme costs or health and safety risks (defined as “undue hardship” under Ontario’s *Human Rights Code*). “Accommodation” means making sure you receive the full benefit of our services by providing you with service in a way that makes sense to you, depending on your physical, mental, emotional and linguistic needs. We want to make sure that our service is as “barrier-free” as possible.

Examples of accommodation:

We will provide you with the accommodation that you need, such as:

- an interpreter (including ASL sign language interpreters),
- making sure the physical space is wheelchair accessible,
- making sure we are flexible on what time of the day you get help and for how long so that you can discuss your legal issue.

All persons using the clinic’s services will be free to use assistive devices (such as walkers, wheelchairs) and service animals (such as guide dogs).

We welcome the use of alphabet boards, Bliss symbol boards or other communication devices.

If your interview has been scheduled on your religious holiday, we will reschedule it.

If you need to bring a support person with you, you do not have to tell us why they have to be with you, just that “I need this person with me.”

If you have limited vision we can give you documents in large print, Braille, on CD or the format that works best for you.

If you have a disability that makes it very difficult to be in a closed room, you do not have to tell us why, but you could say “I would like to be in a larger room with the door open.”

If you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to understand speech:

- bring a support person with you
- ask the person speaking to you to speak slowly and clearly
- ask the staff person or your support person to write down some key points to take with you

Telling us about your disability or your need for accommodation

You do not have to give details of your disability or, for example, your religion, when you ask for accommodation, just the way in which you need to be accommodated. Each person's needs are individual; please tell our staff what you need to serve you better.

You will want to tell us about your disability in relation to your legal problem and what you need by way of accommodation.

Off site meetings

Requests for meetings outside of Halton Community Legal Services' offices will be considered if it is required to meet your accommodation needs.

Scent-free policy

Please do not wear perfume or after-shave or use scented products if you are meeting with Halton Community Legal Services staff in person or if you are attending an event at our office.

Asking for accommodation

If you would like to ask for accommodation in advance of your conversation with a member of the staff, you should contact the intake worker.

Telephone: (905) 877-5256, (905) 875-2069
TTY: (905) 877-8223
Mail: 72 Mill St., Georgetown, ON L7G 2C9
Fax: (905) 877-8223
E-mail: mhlangm@lao.on.ca

Or, you can speak privately with the staff person who is helping you with your legal problem.

Staff training

Halton Community Legal Services staff receive ongoing training on access, accommodation of disability and a wide range of issues to try to make sure that staff have a broad knowledge of disability issues.