

## BLD Homes AODA Accessible Customer Service Policy/Accessibility Statement of Commitment

At BLD Homes, we're dedicated to our customers and try to make every accommodation we can to suit their needs. Our employees are trained and understand how to best assist those with accessibility challenges. Our accessibility plan is below. If you have any questions or concerns to improve your experience with BLD Homes, please don't hesitate to contact us at [info@bldhomes.ca](mailto:info@bldhomes.ca)

### Our Commitment

Brownlee Land Development Inc. (BLD Homes) is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination. We understand 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 other law. BLD Homes is committed to complying with both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA. We're also committed to providing excellent, inclusive, and accessible customer service to all customers including people with Disabilities. Our Accessible Customer Service Policy is consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for people with Disabilities.

### Definitions:

#### Disability means

- a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness, or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a Guide Dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) A mental disorder, or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 (WSIA).

Guide Dog means a dog trained as a guide for a person who is blind and having qualifications prescribed by the regulations under the Blind Persons Rights Act.

Service Animal means any animal used by a person with a Disability for reasons relating to their Disability. It may be readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her Disability or the person may provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her Disability. Alternatively, the person may provide a valid identification card or certificate of training from a recognized Guide Dogs or Service Animal training school.

Support Person means someone who accompanies a person with a Disability for the purpose of assisting them with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

### Assistive Devices

BLD Homes head office location will soon be barrier free. People with Disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing services at the head office. For our model homes that aren't barrier free, our sales staff will gladly arrange for access, such as ramps, to accommodate anyone with assistive devices such as wheelchairs.

Staff providing services will follow appropriate etiquette when interacting with customers who use assistive devices. The staff will not touch or otherwise interfere with a person's assistive device.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and 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 BLD Homes' goods, services, or facilities.

For safety reasons, BLD Homes is not able to accommodate people with Disabilities on the construction sites during site-hosted walkthroughs. In this case, a Support Person, friend, or family member is recommended to attend the scheduled site walkthrough on behalf of the customer.

BLD Homes will ensure that staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices on site, or that may be provided to be used by customers with Disabilities while accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

### Communication

BLD Homes will communicate with people with Disabilities in ways that consider their Disability. For example, when providing services to someone who is blind, staff will explain the appearance of design features and materials, and when interacting with someone who may be deaf, staff will understand the importance of looking directly at the person when speaking.

BLD Homes will work with the person with a Disability to determine what method of communication works best for them.

## Service Animals

BLD Homes welcomes people with Disabilities and their Service Animals. Service Animals are permitted on company premises that are open to the public.

A Service Animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

When BLD Homes can't easily identify that an animal is a Service Animal, the staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the Service Animal for reasons relating to their Disability.

If Service Animals are prohibited by another law, the following will be done to ensure people with Disabilities can access BLD Homes' goods, services, or facilities:

- Explain why the animal is excluded.
- Discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services, or access to facilities.

## Support Persons

A person with a Disability who is accompanied by a Support Person will be permitted to have that person accompany them on BLD Homes' premises.

In certain cases, BLD Homes might require a person with a Disability to be accompanied by a Support Person for the health or safety of the person with a Disability or others on the premises. Before making that decision, BLD Homes 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 any other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Optometrists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

## Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with Disabilities BLD Homes will notify customers promptly. This notice will be clearly posted and will include information regarding the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if they exist.

Services/Facilities may include:

- Accessible parking spaces.
- Automatic doors.
- Accessible washrooms.
- Accessible curb ramps.
- Accessible ramped entrances.
- Elevators (if applicable).

Notices will be provided in a format that is reasonable under the circumstances such as notices on building entrances, service counters, or other reasonable methods.

Disruptions such as community power outages do not require a notice under the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

### Training

BLD Homes will provide accessible customer service training to:

- All staff and volunteers.
- Anyone involved in developing company policies.
- Anyone who provides goods, services, or facilities to customers on behalf of BLD Homes.

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service within one week of hiring. The training material will be included in their new employee package. All staff will receive instruction on how to access the mandatory training courses online. All staff will receive a certificate of training upon completion.

Mandatory training will include:

- Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
- Best practice advice on improving essential customer service skills.
- BLD Homes' policies related to the customer service standard.
- 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 require the assistance of a Service Animal or a Support Person.
- Information about the assistive devices made available by BLD Homes.
- What to do if a person with a Disability is having difficulty in accessing goods, services, or facilities.

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to BLD Homes accessible customer service policies.

Records of training will be kept in employee files.

#### Feedback Process

BLD Homes welcomes feedback on how it provides accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Feedback and complaints about the way goods and services are provided to customers with Disabilities may be made by visiting the BLD Homes website at [bldhomes.ca](http://bldhomes.ca) and emailing any concerns or comments to [info@bldhomes.ca](mailto:info@bldhomes.ca)

Customers will be contacted about the progress of their feedback in a timely manner.

BLD Homes will make sure the feedback process is accessible to people with Disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

#### Notice of availability of documents

BLD Homes will provide this document in an accessible format or with communication support, on request and will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. BLD Homes will provide the accessible format in a timely manner at no additional cost.

This policy will be updated as required.