



Volunteer Handbook





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Introduction

HCSS works to help people maintain independence and enhance their quality of life. HCSS offers Transportation, Friendly Visiting, Hot & Frozen Meals on Wheels Delivery, Adult Day Programming, Overnight Respite, and Housekeeping Services.

Our Mission

Uniting a caring community that supports people to live with dignity.

Services You Can Volunteer With:



Transportation

Our transportation service provides trips for social purposes and non-emergency medical appointments. We provide transport to those who meet the eligibility criteria by trained volunteers. Our volunteers use their personal vehicles, and paid drivers utilize wheelchair accessible vans. This service is also available for long distance medical appointments. Volunteers do receive mileage for their trips, which is paid out monthly. One can also donate mileage back to HCSS if they wish.

Friendly Visiting

This program matches volunteers to an isolated senior or adult living with a disability on a regular basis. The visits will generally be in the client's home, but the volunteer can also schedule social phone calls. The purpose of this program is to provide socialization and opportunities to interact with others. Clients and volunteers of the friendly visiting program provide information about their interests and background to match interests for a successful visiting relationship.

Meals on Wheels

Hot meals are available for individuals who are having difficulty obtaining and/or preparing nutritious meals on a short-term or long-term basis. A hot meal is delivered directly to the client's home on a regularly scheduled basis. Meals are usually delivered at lunch time Monday through Friday.

Each day's hot meal consists of a meat or fish, vegetables, bread, soup or salad and dessert.



Frozen meals are ordered by clients and delivered by volunteers on a bi-weekly basis. This popular program offers a wide range of entrées, desserts, soups, sides, and breakfast items.

Hot & Frozen Meals on Wheels are provided to individuals who cannot obtain and/or prepare adequate and nutritious meals for themselves.

Volunteers receive mileage for their delivery, which they can also donate back if they choose.

Some examples of our Meals clients include those:

- physically unable to prepare meals.
- have difficulty using kitchen appliances.
- do not have the necessary food preparation skills.
- have inadequate cooking facilities.
- are not motivated to prepare and eat healthy meals (depression, loss of a spouse, etc.)
- are living alone and homebound.
- are living with someone unable or unwilling to provide nutritious meals.
- pregnant and/or postpartum families.
- are recovering from medical procedures or surgery.
- caregiver on holiday.

Adult Day Program (Day Away)

The Adult Day Program is a community program that provides socialization and medical monitoring for adults. Our clients come to the program and take part in a wide variety of activities, assisted by professional staff and trained volunteers. A meal with friends, a game of cards, music, exercise, crafts and just visiting are common activities. Transportation to and from the program can be arranged. There is also a Community Stroke Rehabilitation Day program offered at our Hanover site. Volunteers will be working at specific Adult Day Program sites with staff and clients.

And more!

Watch for our Volunteer Newsletter for other opportunities to volunteer like administrative volunteering at our head office, or at fundraising events. Ask Community Development Department for more information.

Policies and Procedures:



Training

HCSS will ensure that all volunteers have access to ongoing training to ensure quality service delivery.

- a. Training begins during the orientation period for each new volunteer.
- b. Training will be ongoing and specific to the volunteers within each program. Volunteers will be actively involved in determining their education/training needs and how best to address them.
- c. Recognizing that learning styles vary, training may be provided on both an individual basis and group basis. Training may involve a variety of techniques: audio-visual resources, books and articles, experiential learning, guest speakers, etc.
- d. Volunteers working within some programs may be asked to participate in training new volunteers.

Education/training may include:

- a. Relevant information on the community.
- b. Education on specific health conditions of clients and risk factors that may impact the volunteer's position.
- c. Their role and limitations in supporting/providing services to the clients.
- d. Emergency policies and procedures.
- e. Risk management.
- f. Continuous quality improvement.
- g. Ethno-cultural sensitivity/awareness of diversity issues.
- h. Information on personal growth/affirmation.
- i. Privacy and confidentiality techniques training.
- j. Evaluation by volunteers of their training is incorporated in improving future education sessions.

Attendance at education opportunities beyond those offered by HCSS will be encouraged and promoted as they relate to the training needs of the volunteer group and to the personal needs of the individual volunteer.

For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-3-20.

Code of Conduct

Volunteers of HCSS must always observe the highest standards of professional ethics.

In representing HCSS, volunteers should be aware of the degree to which they have authority to act on the Agency's behalf. It is improper conduct for a volunteer to imply the Agency's support of actions, products, candidates, etc., when in fact they are simply expressing a personal opinion.

Where any possible conflict of interest exists or may develop, or if in doubt, volunteers are required to declare to the agency the full extent of any other employment when accepted into a volunteer position. Also, any changes to that outside commitment must be disclosed to the Agency when they occur.



The “Standard of Conduct” in reference to the staff of HCSS, also pertains to the volunteers of the organization. Please see policy HR-206 Standard of Conduct.

Rights of Volunteers

- To be treated as a co-worker, not just free help
- To a suitable assignment with consideration for personal preference, temperament, education and skills
- To a well-planned program of training and supervision
- To volunteer training opportunities and the opportunity to work in various HCSS service areas with clients with greater needs if this is of interest to the volunteer
- To sound guidance and direction
- To a variety of experiences based on the volunteer’s interest, training and background.
- To be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, and to have respect shown for an honest opinion
- To recognition in the form of promotion and rewards, and through day-to-day expression of appreciation
- To have access to a reliable emergency on call system when transporting clients outside of regular business hours.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

- To respect the privacy of clients by maintaining confidentiality
- To be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value (worth) of the job to be done
- To be loyal to the organization and its policies and procedures.
- To maintain the dignity and integrity of the organization with the public
- To understand the job he or she undertakes, its responsibilities and the skills required by the volunteer
- To carry out duties promptly and reliably to the best of their ability
- To be willing to learn and participate in orientation and training programs, and to continue to learn on the job
- To accept the guidance and decisions of the program staff
- To maintain a smooth-working relationship with other volunteers, clients, caregivers and HCSS employees and stay within the bounds of the volunteer placement description
- To contribute to supervision by self-evaluation and willingness to ask.
- To handle all client information (name, address, phone number, trip details, etc.) with care ensuring that unauthorized person do not gain access to them

For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-1-10

Conflict of Interest

No volunteer may directly or indirectly engage in any outside business or financial activity that will in any way conflict with the interests of HCSS or that interferes with a volunteer's ability to perform their duties. Such activity may result in termination of their volunteer position. Any possible conflict should be discussed first with the Community Development Department to avoid future problems.

For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-40

Legal/Financial/Family Conflict

Volunteers will refrain from being involved in the legal and financial affairs of whom they are serving.

Volunteers will maintain a professional relationship with clients.

All volunteers will adhere to the code of conduct, and the rights and responsibilities of volunteers. If a client requests assistance with banking, bill payment, etc, the volunteer may discuss the process with the client but will not perform any tasks related to money transfer or legal documents.

Volunteers will not become involved in family conflicts. The volunteer should listen and be supportive of the client, without adding personal opinions or providing advice. If a client is asking advice or drawing a volunteer into matters of a highly personal nature or matters which make the volunteer uncomfortable, the volunteer has the right to terminate the conversation and minimize contact with the client until the appropriate staff member can be notified. In the above mentioned situations, the volunteer will, at their first opportunity, inform the Manager of the program, who will seek an alternate solution to the client's needs. Conversely, the volunteer will refrain from drawing the client into their personal/family affairs. Should HCSS staff become aware of inappropriate involvement, immediate action will be taken.

Confidentiality

All information concerning clients, agency personnel, or other confidential Agency information must be safeguarded. Volunteers must respect confidentiality whether such information is available to them in the normal performance of their duties or occasionally and/or inadvertently received. Any information obtained by an individual in the role of an Home & Community Support Services Grey-Bruce (HCSS) volunteer is included in this policy. Volunteers must exercise all reasonable care and caution in protecting printed or written information from casual observation, unauthorized perusal, or other abuse. Volunteers must not divulge confidential information disclosed to them within or outside the Agency unless required to do so in the normal performance of their duties expressly authorized by the Agency.

For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-20

Reasonable Care

The first type of client information is written information such as client records or documents or any other client related information that exists in either paper or electronic form. If a volunteer is required to remove this information from its usual storage place, special care must be taken. The information should be kept on

the person at all times and when not in use, it should be stored in a locked satchel or other such location that cannot be easily tampered with by a casual observer. When the information is being used, it should be concealed from onlookers.

The other type of client information which volunteers will have access to is verbal information. This includes any information about a client that a volunteer learns as an agent of HCSS. All information obtained in this way is to be considered confidential and volunteers should never reveal it unless they are doing so as part of their normal function as a volunteer. Confidentiality extends to interaction with other volunteers or employees of HCSS. If the person does not need to know the information to perform their job, they should not have access to it. Gossip or stories about a client is not useful and is most likely unwanted by the client and as such is not permitted.

The final situation that volunteers need to be concerned with is indirectly revealing information. This situation would most likely happen when volunteers accompany clients in public. Volunteers should avoid discussing confidential information in public and they should avoid acting in a manner that clearly identifies their client as a recipient of HCSS support.

The policy and procedure “Confidentiality” in reference to the staff of HCSS, also pertains to the volunteers of the organization.

For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-20

Workplace Violence and Harassment

Volunteers of the Home & Community Support Services Grey Bruce (HCSS) are entitled to work in an environment free from personal or sexual harassment from staff, clients or other volunteers, and to have any complaints in this area dealt with by management. The policy and procedure “Workplace Safety” in reference to the staff of HCSS also pertains to the volunteers of the organization.

ask to see policy no: VM-4-30

Gifts From Clients

Volunteers of HCSS are not to accept any remuneration or gifts from clients beyond approved client fees. From time to time a client may wish to give a small token of appreciation, and this is acceptable (chocolate, gift card). Volunteers will not accept cash or personal property belonging to the client or caregiver. The volunteer will notify the program Manager when gifts are received from clients. Volunteers will not suggest a tip for service in addition to the predetermined fee.

ask to see policy no: VM-4-50

Smoking

HCSS is a smoke-free workplace. Volunteers are not to smoke while performing a volunteer service. Volunteers have the right to be informed if the client is a smoker,



and they can decide if they want to fulfill the request for service. Special arrangements may be worked out if the volunteer and clients are in agreement.

Volunteer Identification

All volunteers in the performance of their duties with clients of HCSS, are required to wear their identification badge. These badges will be given to the volunteer by Community Development before they begin their duties. Volunteer drivers will also be issued dashboard signs which confirm they are driving for a program of HCSS. If these pieces of identification are lost, HCSS is to be notified immediately.

Volunteer Conduct

Volunteers will refrain from being involved in the legal and financial affairs of whom they are serving. Volunteers will maintain a professional relationship with clients.

If a client of HCSS requests assistance with banking, bill payment, etc., the volunteer may discuss the process with the client, but not perform any tasks related to money transfer or legal documents.

Volunteers will not become involved in family conflicts. The volunteer should listen and be supportive to the client, without adding personal opinions or providing advice.

If a client is asking for advice or drawing a volunteer into matters of a highly personal nature or matters which make the volunteer uncomfortable, the volunteer has the right to terminate the conversation and minimize contact with the client until appropriate staff members can be notified.

Conversely, the volunteer will refrain from drawing the client into their personal or family affairs. Should HCSS staff become aware of inappropriate involvement, immediate action will be taken. *For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-60*

Right of Refusal

HCSS recognizes that a volunteer may refuse to serve a client and this is the volunteer's right. If a volunteer receives a client assignment which they feel uncomfortable with, the volunteer should immediately contact the appropriate HCSS staff member. The staff member will discuss this with their manager who will then review the situation with the volunteer and make any reasonable adjustments to the volunteer's duties.

If the adjustments are not possible within that that program of HCSS, the staff member will explore alternate placements within the organization. This will be done in conjunction with Community Development. If no alternatives can be found, the volunteer may choose to resign from their position within the organization or remain inactive until a more suitable assignment is found.

Inappropriate Activities for Volunteers

All volunteers providing service within Home & Community Support Services Grey Bruce (HCSS) will have a written service description and will be expected to adhere to this description.

In addition there is a general listing of rights and responsibilities and a code of conduct for all volunteers, as well as specific responsibilities and limitations for each program area.

The following are activities judged to be inappropriate for any volunteer of HCSS:

- those activities for which the volunteer has not received training
- those activities which have been identified in the individual program plan as the responsibility of paid staff
- those activities which could put the volunteer or the client at risk
- those activities which would not be covered under the agency's liability insurance
- those activities which could breach any existing agreements, contract, professional policies or standards of practice
- those activities that would put the client's privacy at risk.
- cannot run personal errands when the client is in the vehicle or when this activity will delay the scheduled pick up time of the client

Procedure

1. The Community Development Department will ensure that all volunteers are informed of these limitations during the orientation process. These will be reinforced in ongoing training sessions.
2. All volunteer positions will have a service description which outlines the duties to be performed. HCSS will ensure that all volunteers new to the position have a copy of the service description and that those performing the duties are updated as changes are made to the service description.
3. All service descriptions will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director of HCSS.

For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-100

Volunteer Discipline Procedure

Discipline, when applied in the Home & Community Support Services Grey Bruce (HCSS), is of a positive nature with emphasis on correcting the problem rather than punishing the volunteer. It puts the onus on the volunteer to restore a level of performance which is compatible with the requirements of the position and the Organization.

Whenever possible, supervisors will provide volunteers with the opportunity and method of correcting unacceptable performance or behaviour. Staff will dismiss a volunteer if they have committed a serious violation that may pose a threat or concern for the Organization's clients or staff.

Grounds for dismissal:

- breach of client confidentiality;
- use of alcohol/illegal drugs while on assignment;
- abuse of client or co-workers;
- Providing private transportation service to an active HCSS client for a fee;
- insubordination;
- theft or other relevant criminal activity;
- breach of organization policy;
- lies or falsification of records;
- unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission of the organization and/or objectives of the program.
- Inappropriate use of client records

Progressive Disciplinary Procedure

Corrective discipline is appropriate when, after a period of counselling, a performance problem persists. At this time the Manager or the Senior Director will contact the Executive Director, and this contact should be maintained at all stages of the discipline process. Under no circumstances will involuntary termination be effected without such consultations.

Corrective discipline is a process designed to progressively impress upon the volunteer the existence of a performance problem, where improvement is required, and the consequences of not correcting the problem. The following steps represent increasingly serious contacts with the volunteer designed to bring about change in performance or behaviour. While these steps are normally followed, certain serious circumstances may warrant the modification of this process.

STEP ONE: Oral warning

1. The oral warning is a conversation between a supervisor and a volunteer regarding a discipline problem previously identified in counselling sessions. The supervisor will inform the volunteer where improvement is expected and required and advise that the conversation is the first step in the discipline process.
2. The supervisor will document for their own records that the oral warning conversation took place and note the substance of the discussion; however, no notation shall be placed on the volunteer's personnel file.
3. The oral warning shall normally be followed by a monitoring period. This period is typically three months in length; however, this may vary depending on the nature of the problem. Should the monitoring period result in the volunteer's failure to correct their problem the matter will proceed to STEP TWO of the corrective discipline process.

STEP TWO: Written Warning

1. The written warning meeting is a formal conversation between a supervisor and an volunteer regarding the discipline problem. Normally, at this stage the supervisor's manager is also involved.
2. During the written warning meeting the supervisor will present the volunteer with a letter outlining where improvement is necessary. This letter shall become part of the volunteer's personnel file.
3. The written warning will be followed by a monitoring period. Although the length of this period will vary depending on the nature of the problem, it will normally be somewhat shorter than the period following the oral warning. Indicate that further discipline may result from any future offence.

STEP THREE: Final Warning

1. The final warning is normally the most serious step in the corrective discipline process. It consists of a formal conversation between a supervisor and a volunteer regarding a discipline problem.
2. Normally at this stage both the supervisor's manager and the Executive Director are present. During the final warning meeting, the supervisor will present the volunteer with a letter that will in essence inform him/her that should he/she not quickly restore their performance to a satisfactory level and sustain this improvement, it shall become necessary to terminate the employment relationship.
3. The final warning implies a decision to be made by the volunteer. Their options are to reaffirm their intention to carry out all of their obligations under their inherent employment contract with the Organization or, if their feels incapable of making such a commitment, to resign.
4. Depending on the nature and full circumstances of the problem, a final warning may be accompanied by a suspension in order to impress upon the volunteer the seriousness of the problem.

DISCHARGE

1. Before discharge is implemented, the volunteer will be provided with an opportunity to explain their behaviour. Discharge is only implemented failing a satisfactory explanation.
2. Discharge is not a step in the corrective discipline process but rather the Organization's normal recourse should a volunteer fail to use the process to re-establish an acceptable working relationship. Where discharge is effected, it normally occurs at the point of a culminating incident following the final warning.

3. In the event a volunteer commits an offence which is so serious that it calls into immediate question the continued viability of the employment relationship, e.g. theft, discharge may be warranted whether or not there is a previous record of disciplinary action.

4. IN ALL CASES, DISMISSAL WILL ONLY TAKE PLACE FOLLOWING A FULL INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT.

5. In certain circumstances a demotion rather than discharge, may be a more appropriate response to a continuing performance problem. Such action will be taken only after careful consideration of the case by the Executive Director and the supervisor/manager.

Volunteer Resignation

Volunteers who wish to resign from Home and Community Support Services Grey-Bruce (HCSS) may be interviewed by telephone or in person. Volunteers are asked to provide staff of HCSS with advance notice of resignation so that staff can arrange for a replacement volunteer.

An exit interview may be arranged by the Community Development Department. This exit interview will include:

- Providing personal recognition of the volunteer's contribution;
- Ensuring the return of HCSS property, including identification badges and dashboard signs
- Reiterating the confidentiality policy to the volunteer, to protect the client's privacy and personal information;
- Eliciting feedback affecting the program, and the volunteer experience at HCSS
- If appropriate, extending an invite to return at a later date

The outcome of this exit interview will be documented in the volunteer's file, as well as on the volunteer's application form. If problems are identified, action will be planned and followed through in accordance with quality assurance standards. If a complaint is lodged, the Community Development Department will handle it accordingly with the program's team.

As appropriate, a letter or card will be sent to the volunteer, expressing the agency's appreciation for their volunteer work.

a. *ask to see policy no: VM-5-20*

Volunteer Absence/Vacation

Volunteers are expected to notify HCSS if they are unable to attend to their volunteer duties. HCSS encourages volunteers to give as much notice as possible, to allow staffing arrangements to be made, and volunteer

replacements to be found. If flexible hours would accommodate the volunteer, this can be negotiated with the appropriate HCSS employee.

For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-5-10

Reimbursement For Volunteer Expenses

Home & Community Support Services Grey Bruce (HCSS) reimburses volunteers for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as well as some out-of-pocket expenses.

Volunteers using personal vehicles to transport clients of HCSS and delivering MOW will be reimbursed for travel expenses according to the Board approved rate. Reimbursement amount is calculated by staff as the most efficient route to complete the trip.

Volunteers may claim the actual distances traveled when the expense has been pre-authorized by a staff member of HCSS. Volunteer drivers who transport immediate family members (parent, sibling, spouse, child, cohabitant in same dwelling) are not eligible for travel reimbursement.

Volunteers may charge parking costs incurred in the carrying out of their duties. If these costs occur, inform the Transportation scheduling office or the MOW Clerks.

Costs of overnight accommodation are covered in the policy TR-106. Additional expenses must be pre-approved by the program Manager and/or Senior Director

Emergencies & Medical:



Client Found or Becomes Unconscious:

Due to the nature of the client group which Home and Community Support Services Grey-Bruce (HCSS) serves, there is a potential for problems or emergencies to arise. Volunteers finding a client unconscious, or observing a client become unconscious, will immediately institute emergency measures.

The volunteer discovering an unconscious client, or witness a client fall unconscious, will assess the situation to ensure it is safe to render care to the client.

The volunteer will not move the client, unless the client is in immediate danger. If trained in CPR, the volunteer will start CPR. If not trained, the volunteer will seek the assistance of someone with CPR training. Regardless of whether CPR is initiated, the volunteer will place a call to 9-1-1 or emergency services.

The volunteer will stay with the client until the ambulance arrives. The volunteer will provide what details are available to assist the ambulance service. Once the ambulance is provided care to the client, the volunteer will immediately contact HCSS. Staff at HCSS will notify the hospital emergency department of any relevant additional information pertinent to the client. HCSS staff will contact the family or emergency numbers listed.

The appropriate HCSS staff member will ensure that an incident report is completed.

Client Not Home:

Due to the nature of the client group which Home and Community Support Services Grey-Bruce (HCSS) serves, there is a potential for problems or emergencies to arise. Volunteers encountering a client not at home when delivering a prearranged service must be aware and react as if they were in an emergency situation.

If a client is expected to be at home when the volunteer arrives (for any volunteer service that was prearranged) and the client is not found, the volunteer will act as follows:

- 1) If the client lives in an apartment, the volunteer will contact the superintendent and have them phone the client. If there is not a response, the volunteer will call HCSS office and simultaneously request that the superintendent accompany the volunteer to the client's apartment and unlock the door.
- 2) If the client lives in a house, the volunteer will go to a neighbour's home or if available use a cell phone to phone the client. If there is no response, the volunteer will call HCSS and proceed to investigate further at the client's home.
- 3) If the door of the house is unlocked, or the superintendent has unlocked the door, the volunteer will proceed inside cautiously and call the client's name loudly.



- 4) The volunteer will do a cursory search of the client's home, looking for the client. It is most important to check the bathroom and bedroom. The volunteer is instructed to knock loudly on any door before opening.
- 5) If there is no sign of the client after the search then the volunteer will call the HCSS office.
- 6) If the client is found unconscious, or in an abnormal state, the volunteer will contact 9-1-1. Please see VM-112 Client Found or Becomes Unconscious.
- 7) If, before entering the client's home, the client can be seen lying on the floor, unconscious, the volunteer will immediately call 9-1-1. Please see VM-112.
- 8) If in an isolated, rural area, and phone access is difficult, the volunteer upon seeing the medical emergency is within rights to gain access by force into the client's home in order to access a phone.

Upon resolution of the incident or at the first available opportunity, the volunteer is to contact HCSS. The appropriate HCSS staff member is responsible for the completion of an incident report form.

ask to see policy no: VM-6-10

Motor Vehicle Accident

The volunteer is responsible for the safe operation of their vehicle and the safe transportation of the client to and from their destinations. Circumstances beyond the volunteer's control, such as accidents and emergency situations must be reported immediately.

When the volunteer is involved in an accident while provided a ride for Home and Community Support Services Grey-Bruce (HCSS) the following steps should be taken:

- 1) The volunteer will assess injuries to client, themselves, and others involved.
- 2) The volunteer will render care and assistance in an emergency situation to the client or others if the volunteer feels capable of rendering such assistance without danger to the injured person, or to the volunteer themselves.
- 3) The volunteer will ensure the police and ambulance are contacted if required.
- 4) Once the immediate emergency situation is dealt with, the volunteer driver will contact the scheduler, Transportation Manager, or the On Call staff.
- 5) It is the responsibility of the Transportation Manager or On Call staff to notify a client's family or emergency contact person in the event of an emergency or unusual medical condition.
- 6) The Transportation Manager or On Call staff must complete an incident report as per policy, and will require information from the volunteer.

7) The volunteer will take responsibility to contact their insurance company.

Unusual Client Behaviour

All clients of HCSS will be assessed by the appropriate staff person and any unusual behaviour or medical conditions will be outlined to volunteers by the staff member before being assigned. Training will be provided to the volunteer to assist with dealing with known behaviours.

Any behaviour or conditions which would warrant special responses by a volunteer will be assessed by the staff at admission, and as the client's condition changes. This will be noted on the assessment form. This may include behaviours or conditions such as:

- Agitated behaviour
- Seizures
- Hallucinations

Before assigning a volunteer to provide service for this client, the staff member responsible for volunteer placement must feel confident that the behaviour will not put the volunteer or client at risk of harm or injury.

The volunteer has the right to refuse assignment to the client.

The volunteer will be instructed to notify the appropriate staff member of any unusual occurrences.

Dependent upon the nature of the incident, the staff member may be required to complete an incident report, provide further training for the volunteer, provide support and feedback to the volunteer and/or reassess the match of the client with the volunteer.

If the client's behaviour is such that they cannot be provided service in a safe fashion, the staff in charge of the program will proceed with discharging the client.

Frequently Asked Questions:



- **How many deliveries do I need to sign up for?**

There is no mandatory number for you to sign up for. You can sign up for weekly deliveries, or monthly deliveries, it's up to you!

- **What does ADP stand for?**

ADP stands for Adult Day Program, also known as the Day Away Program.

- **Can I volunteer for more than one program? Or switch?**

Absolutely! You can volunteer for more than one program at any given time, or switch to another program at any time.

- **Who do I talk to if I'm having conflict with a staff member of HCSS?**

Please reach out to the Community Development Department if you're having conflict with a staff member.

- **Can I change my mind about whether I receive mileage reimbursement or a charitable tax receipt?**

Yes! Please reach out to the Community Development Department for help facilitating this change.

- **Can I accept tips from clients?**

No, it is HCSS Policy that volunteers don't accept tips from clients. This is to ensure that there is no room for misinterpretation regarding whether or not a client has paid their fees.

- **How will people know that I am a volunteer?**

Each volunteer will receive an ID badge denoting that they are a volunteer. This badge should be always worn while you volunteer.

- **What should I wear while volunteering?**

Whatever makes you feel comfortable and capable of completing your volunteer duties. Some of our specific volunteer opportunities may require or suggest clothing options, but you will be provided with that information during orientation.

- **What do I do in the circumstances of inclement weather?**

If the weather conditions are such that it feels unsafe to drive, please reach out to your contact within the agency to let them know that you are unable to volunteer until the weather improves.

- **How old do you have to be to volunteer?**

Our volunteers must be 18 years old to volunteer, or volunteer with a guardian who is over the age of 18.

- **If I choose to donate my mileage, what happens?**

Your mileage is donated back into HCSS to use wherever we need it most! You will also receive a charitable return at the end of the year with the mileage that you have donated.

- **How do I keep my phone number private when calling a client?**

To block personal phone number dial #31# then telephone number. If using Bell, dial *67 then the telephone number.



Contact:



Need Assistance? Please call:

519-372-2091 or 1-800-267-3798

Press 1 for Intake (for new clients)

Press 2 for Adult Day Program (Day Away) & Overnight Respite

Press 3 for Meals on Wheels

Press 4 for Housekeeping

Press 5 for Transportation

Press 6 for Volunteer Opportunities

Press 7 for After Hours Emergency Assistance

Press 8 for Friendly Visiting

Press 9 for Donations & Fundraising



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Tips for Interacting with People with Disabilities



More information found at:

www.accessforward.ca

People who are Deafblind

A person who is deafblind has some degree of both hearing and vision loss. People who are deafblind are often accompanied by an intervenor, a professional support person who helps with communication. Intervenors are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client.

Tips:

- Speak directly to your customer, not to the intervenor.
- The customer is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note.

People who use Assistive Devices

An assistive device is a piece of equipment a person with a disability uses to help with daily living, for example, a wheelchair or walker, white cane, hearing aid, an oxygen tank or communication board.

Tips:

- Don't touch or handle any assistive device without permission.
- Don't move assistive devices or equipment (such as canes, walkers) out of the person's reach.

Home and Community Support Services Grey Bruce offers portable wheelchairs, portable rollators and voice amplifiers to support our clients. The organization is committed to enhancing its available assisted devices as needs are identified. Assisted devices are available at our main service delivery sites as well as through our mobile staff. This information is included in orientation for staff and volunteers. Make sure you know how to access and use them. Instruction manuals/instruction sheets are available where the device is located or stored.

Some examples of devices that Home and Community Support Services Grey Bruce offers include:

- mobility devices, such as a manual wheelchair
- lift, which raises or lowers people who use mobility devices
- technology that makes it easier for people with disabilities to communicate or access information, such as certain computer software or an amplification system
- adjustable desk or workstation, which changes the height or tilt of a writing surface
- accessible interactive kiosk, which might offer information in other formats such as through audio headsets

People who use Service Animals

There are various types of service animals who support people with various types of disabilities.

- People with vision loss may use a guide dog.
- Hearing alert animals help people with hearing loss.
- Other service animals are trained to alert a person to an oncoming seizure, or to assist people with autism, mental health disabilities, physical disabilities and other disabilities.

Under the Customer Service Standard, there are no restrictions on what type of animal can be used as a service animal.

An animal is considered a service animal if:

- You can easily identify it's a service animal through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or vest, or
- The person with a disability provides documentation from a regulated health professional that confirms they need the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Tips:

- Don't touch or distract a service animal, it's not a pet. It's a working animal and has to pay attention at all times.
- If you're not sure if the animal is a pet or a service animal, you may ask your customer. You may ask to see their documentation from a regulated health professional.
- The customer is responsible for the care and supervision of their service animal. However, you can provide water for the animal if your customer requests it.

If another person's health or safety could be seriously impacted by the presence of a service animal, such as a severe allergy, please speak to your supervisor for guidance.

If you cannot easily identify that it's a service animal:

- Don't make assumptions. You can ask the person to provide document from a regulated health professional that states that they require the animal because of their disability.
- If the person shows you documentation, then they must be allowed to be accompanied by the service animal.
- The person is not required to disclose the disability or demonstrate how the animal assists them.

People with Hearing Loss

People who have hearing loss may identify in different ways. They may be deaf, oral deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing. These terms are used to describe different levels of hearing or the way a person's hearing was diminished or lost.

A person with hearing loss may have preferred ways to communicate, for example, through sign language, by lip reading or using a pen and paper.

Tips:

- Once the customer has self-identified as having hearing loss, make sure you face the customer when talking and that you are in a well-lit area so the person can see you clearly.
- As needed, attract the person's attention before speaking. Try a gentle touch on the shoulder or wave of your hand.
- Maintain eye contact. Use body language, gestures and facial expression to help you communicate.
- If the person uses a hearing aid, reduce background noise or if possible, move to a quieter area.
- If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example, using a pen and paper.
- When using a sign language interpreter, look and speak directly to the customer, not to the interpreter. For example, say "What would you like?" not "Ask her what she'd like."

People with Developmental Disabilities

Developmental disabilities (such as Down syndrome) or intellectual disabilities, can mildly or profoundly limit a person's ability to learn, communicate, do everyday physical activities or live independently.

Tips:

- Don't make assumptions about what a person can or cannot do.
- Don't exaggerate your speech or speak in a patronizing way.

- Use plain language.
- Provide one piece of information at a time.
- If you're not sure of what is being said to you, confirm by summarizing or repeating what was said, or politely ask them to repeat it – don't pretend if you're not sure.
- Ask the customer if they would like help reading your material or completing a form and wait for them to accept the offer of assistance.
- Be patient and allow extra time if needed.

People with a Support Person

A support person can be a paid personal support worker, an intervenor, volunteer, family member or friend. A support person might help your customer with communication, mobility, personal care or with accessing your services.

A person with a disability is permitted to bring their support person with them to any area of your premises that is open to the public or to third parties.

There are no service fees for the inclusion of a support person. However, we ask that a support person be pre-registered for the service, as appropriate.

Tips:

- If you're not sure which person is the customer, take your lead from the person using or requesting service, or simply ask.
- Speak directly to your customer, not to their support person.
- Be familiar with the organization's policy on fees or fares for support persons.
- It's good practice to confirm with your customer that they want the support person to be present while confidential matters are being discussed.

People with Learning Disabilities

The term “learning disabilities” refers to a range of disorders. One example is dyslexia, which affects how a person takes in or retains information. This disability may become apparent when the person has difficulty reading material or understanding the information you are providing.

People with learning disabilities just learn in a different way.

Tips:

- Be patient and allow extra time if needed. People with some learning disabilities may take a little longer to process information, or to understand and respond.
- Try to provide information in a way that works for your customer. For example, some people with learning disabilities find written words difficult to understand, while others may have problems with numbers and math.
- Be willing to rephrase or explain something again in another way, if needed.

People with Developmental Disabilities

Developmental disabilities (such as Down syndrome) or intellectual disabilities, can mildly or profoundly limit a person’s ability to learn, communicate, do everyday physical activities or live independently.

Tips:

- Don’t make assumptions about what a person can or cannot do.
- Don’t exaggerate your speech or speak in a patronizing way.
- Use plain language.
- Provide one piece of information at a time.
- If you’re not sure of what is being said to you, confirm by summarizing or repeating what was said, or politely ask them to repeat it – don’t pretend if you’re not sure.

- Ask the customer if they would like help reading your material or completing a form and wait for them to accept the offer of assistance.
- Be patient and allow extra time if needed.

People with Mental Health Disabilities

Mental health disability is a broad term for many disorders that can range in severity. A person with a mental health disability may experience depression or acute mood swings, anxiety due to phobias or panic disorder, or hallucinations. It may affect a person's ability to think clearly, concentrate or remember things.

You may not know someone has this disability unless you are told. Stigma and lack of understanding are major barriers for people with mental health disabilities.

Tips:

- If you sense or know that a customer has a mental health disability, treat them with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else.
- Be confident, calm and reassuring.
- Listen carefully, and work with the customer to meet their needs.
- Respect your customer's personal space.
- Limit distractions that could affect your customer's ability to focus or concentrate – loud noise, crowded areas and interruptions could cause stress.
- Respond to the person's immediate behaviour and needs. Don't be confrontational. If needed, set limits with the person as you would others. For example, "If you scream, I will not be able to talk to you."

People with Physical or Mobility Devices

Only some people with physical disabilities use a wheelchair. Someone with arthritis may use a cane or walker, while someone with a heart or lung condition may not use a mobility device but may have difficulty walking longer distances.

Tips:

- Ask before you help. People with disabilities often have their own ways of doing things.
- Don't touch or move a person's equipment (e.g., walker, wheelchair) without permission.
- If you have permission to move a person's wheelchair, don't leave them in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position, such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.
- If you need to have a lengthy conversation with someone who uses a wheelchair or scooter, consider sitting so you can make eye contact at the same level.
- Think ahead and remove any items that may cause a physical barrier, such as boxes left in an aisle.
- If the service counter at your place of business is too high for a person using a wheelchair to see over, step around it to provide service. Have a clipboard handy if filling in forms or if a signature is required.
- Keep in mind that a person's physical disability may not be visible or obvious. For example, a person may have difficulty standing for long periods of time and may ask to sit while waiting to be served.

People with Speech or Language Difficulties

Cerebral palsy, stroke, hearing loss or other conditions may make it difficult for a person to pronounce words or express themselves. Some people who have severe difficulties may use a communication board or other assistive devices.

Tips:

- Don't assume that a person who has difficulty speaking doesn't understand you.

- Speak directly to the customer and not to their companion or support person.
- Whenever possible, ask questions that can be answered “yes” or “no.”
- If the person uses a communication device, take a moment to read visible instructions for communicating with them.
- Be patient. Don’t interrupt or finish your customer’s sentences.
- Confirm what the person has said by summarizing or repeating what you’ve understood and allow the person to respond – don’t pretend if you’re not sure.
- If necessary, provide other ways for the customer to contact you, such as email.

People with Vision Loss

Vision loss can restrict someone’s ability to read documents or signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. Some people may use a guide dog, a white cane, or a support person such as a sighted guide, but others may not.

Tips:

- When you know someone has vision loss, don’t assume the individual can’t see you. Not everyone with vision loss is totally blind, many have some vision.
- Identify yourself when you approach and speak directly to your customer if they are with a companion.
- Ask if they would like you to read any printed information out loud to them, such as a menu, a bill or schedule of fees.
- When providing directions or instructions, be precise and descriptive.
- Offer your elbow to guide them if needed. If they accept, lead – don’t pull.
- Identify landmarks or other details to orient the person to the surroundings. For example, if you’re approaching stairs or an obstacle, say so.
- If you need to leave the customer, let them know by telling them you’ll be back or saying good-bye.
- Don’t leave your customer in the middle of a room – guide them to a comfortable location.



Serving People with Disabilities – At Home

Tips for providing at-home service:

- Don't arrive unexpectedly. Confirm your arrival time in advance.
- Respect requests made by a customer with a disability to accommodate their needs. For example, a person with an environmental sensitivity may require that you refrain from wearing scented products in their home.
- Be patient. You may need to wait a few moments for your customer to open the door.
- Introduce yourself. Some customers may not be able to read identification cards and may want you to use a password. Check before you visit.
- Keep your customer informed of what you're doing.
- Make sure that you leave the home exactly as it was when you arrived. For example, someone with vision loss will expect that their furniture is in the same place and could trip if you've moved the sofa.
- Remember that you are a guest in their home and must respect how they choose to live, where they place their assistive devices, etc. unless it has been determined that they are in an unsafe situation.

Serving People with Disabilities – Over the Phone

Tips for providing over-the-phone service:

- Speak naturally, clearly and directly.
- Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences. Give your customer time to explain or respond.
- If you're not sure what is being said to you, politely ask the customer to repeat it, or repeat or rephrase what you heard and ask if you have understood correctly.
- If the customer is using an interpreter or a telephone relay service, speak naturally to the customer, not to the interpreter.

- If you encounter a situation where, after numerous attempts, you and your customer cannot communicate with each other, consider making alternate arrangements that may work best for them.
- If you notice that your customer is having difficulty accessing your goods, services or facilities, a good starting point is to ask “How can I help you?”