



## **ACCESSIBILITY POLICY FOR CAMP KODIAK**

### **1. FOREWORD**

Camp Kodiak strives to provide equitable and accessible services to individuals with disabilities, regardless of whether camp is in- or out-of-session. The Camp Kodiak Accessible Customer Service Plan was created to document the steps taken by our camp to ensure that our services and programming are accessible and equitable. This policy will be revised as other standards are introduced under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This policy will be reviewed annual to ensure that our services continue to respect the dignity and independence of individuals with disabilities.

Camp Kodiak strives to provide accessible and equitable services and programming:

- At our camp location, while camp is in-session
- Throughout our registration and application period while we are based out of our Mississauga office
- During periods when we are in the community making presentations, recruiting or attending conferences

### **2. CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS**

#### **2.1 Application & Registration**

Camp Kodiak provides a specialized overnight summer camp program for children and teens with learning disabilities, ADHD, autism spectrum disorder and other diagnoses of a similar learning and social skills profile. Due to providing a camp program specifically for this under-served population of campers, we do not have the programming, facilities and staff training to support the needs of every child with an exceptionality. For this reason, Camp Kodiak's application and registration process includes a number of steps to ensure that our interactions, programming and environment will be accessible and inclusive to every child for whom our program has been proven to be successful. is eligible to attend camp. We strive to be upfront and open with families so that a child is not placed into a situation where we are unable to support their needs. If it becomes apparent during the application process that we will not be able to provide the appropriate care for a child, Camp Kodiak strives to match the family with services that may be better equipped to support the needs of their child.

The following section outlines actions taken by Camp Kodiak to identify if, and how, we can accommodate and support the needs of a child:

- Our website, application package, and camp literature outlines the level of support our camp is equipped to provide.

- Our application package prompts families to provide thorough information concerning their child's needs. We use this information to provide insight as to how we may accommodate specialized needs.
- A camp director conducts a virtual or in-person meeting with each prospective camper and their parent(s)/guardian(s). During this meeting, we have a discussion with the family to identify if our environment and programming will be beneficial for the child. Families are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have regarding their child's needs.

## **2.2 Environmental & Programming Limitations**

A thorough application and registration process allows Camp Kodiak to ensure that every camper is able to be an active participant in camp life, without being limited by our environment or programming. Camp Kodiak aims to be open and flexible to accommodate a child's needs when possible, but our programming and environment may not be equipped to do so in certain situations. The following outlines our policies concerning assistive devices, support workers and service animals during the camping season:

**Assistive Devices:** The Camp Director will have a discussion with parents to determine if and how we may accommodate the use of a child's assistive device. If a camper has an assistive device, we will ensure that staff receive the necessary training specific to the apparatus. Note: Due to the uneven terrain and physical layout of the camp property, we cannot be deemed wheelchair accessible. However, our main buildings have ramp access, and we, therefore, can accommodate individuals who are able to walk but have limited mobility.

**Support Workers:** If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Camp Kodiak will ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the camp facilities, and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person. Camp Kodiak may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when in a camp facility, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others in the facility. Due to the nature of overnight summer camps, the support person may be required to live on the property. As a result, a charge will be levied to cover the costs of food and accommodation. This cost will be determined on a yearly basis as food costs are constantly increasing.

**Service Animals:** Camp Kodiak welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties. When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability. 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.

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

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded
- discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services or facilities

Note: Service animals must be under the care and control of the individual at all times.

### **2.3 Staff Training**

Camp Kodiak is committed to training all staff in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, we will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- b) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training of our employees on accessibility relates to their specific roles. Training includes:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- 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
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing services or facilities to people with disabilities. These include: grab bars in washrooms, ramps on buildings, hearing devices (if relevant), visual aids (if relevant).
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organization's services or facilities.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies. We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

All Camp Kodiak staff attend a 9-day pre-camp training session at the beginning of the summer. During this period we equip our staff with the tools and knowledge to provide respectful and equitable care for each of our campers and employees.

Training includes:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act [2005], and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Camp Kodiak's plan related to the customer service standard
- Discussions, seminars and workshops that address the various neurodiversities and exceptionalities that will be part of the profile of the campers

- Safe, effective and respectful ways to support individuals with disabilities
- Familiarizing staff to the various assistive devices that are used by our campers
- Completion of the online training module of the Human Rights Code (provided by the Ontario Human Rights Commission)

Throughout the summer we conduct weekly staff meetings to further the training of our staff and to address any concerns that need to be addressed.

### **3. COMMUNICATION STANDARDS**

Camp Kodiak makes information concerning our policies, practices and programming accessible through multiple mediums. We highlight to the public that they may receive information via:

- Electronic forms
- Printed material
- Phone conversations
- Face-to-face interactions
- Our website

When speaking to campers, families or prospective employees, Camp Kodiak aims to communicate with individuals in a manner that takes into account any physical, social, and/or cognitive differences. If we are unable to communicate in a manner that is accessible to a client, we will do our best to find services that will be able to assist in that process. We believe it is essential to meet all prospective campers and staff members prior to their attendance or employment at Camp Kodiak.

#### **Notice of Availability of Documents**

Camp Kodiak will provide the public notice of the availability of the documents, required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, (O. Reg 429/07) upon request. Notice of availability will be provided on the Camp Kodiak website ([www.campkodiak.com](http://www.campkodiak.com)) and through other printed methods.

Camp Kodiak will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and at no additional cost.

### **4. EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS**

Camp Kodiak provides an inclusive and nurturing work environment for staff members.

We notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We consult with the applicant to provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

We notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

We notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. We provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the accessibility needs due to disability. We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee's consent, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

For individuals with disabilities, we strive to provide them with the support they require to be active and successful members of our team of staff. Examples of the types of extra support we provide include:

- Providing feedback in a manner that is effective for the individual (i.e., providing written and verbal evaluations with specific examples)
- Providing support to staff where and when necessary to meet their emotional and/or physical needs
- Implementing unique plans to provide additional support for staff members, when necessary

NOTE: We strive to maintain transparency with prospective and current staff members to ensure that they are capable of managing the stress and incredible demands related to working in an overnight summer camp setting for children and teens with special needs. For the safety of the individual and the rest of the camp community, we cannot hire individuals when we believe the demands of the job may outweigh that individual's capacity to meet these requirements.

Previous campers who have disabilities are invited to participate in our leadership programs so that they may receive the coaching, strategies and extra support they need to be successful members of our staff. Former campers who have successfully demonstrated proficiency in meeting the expectations of these leadership programs may be invited to apply for employment.

## **5. FEEDBACK PROCESS**

Camp Kodiak welcomes and appreciates feedback concerning the accessibility of our services. Individuals who wish to provide feedback on the way Camp Kodiak provides service to people with disabilities can contact us in the following ways:

- Email: [info@campkodiak.com](mailto:info@campkodiak.com)
- Phone (905)569-7595
- Schedule an in-person appointment to speak with a member of the Directorial Team
- Through feedback forms such as surveys

All feedback, including feedback regarding services and facilities, will be reviewed and addressed by Ilana Stoch, of the owners/directors of Camp Kodiak ([ilana@campkodiak.com](mailto:ilana@campkodiak.com)).

We will ensure that feedback process is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports, upon request. A response will be provided in a timely fashion. Complaints, if/when they arise, will be addressed within 30 days of the date that it was issued. Our website provides a link for people to provide feedback, ask questions and make inquiries.