

## Customer Service Charter

### Our Purpose

The WorkPlace Group of Employment initiatives fulfills the Mission of the Special Needs Employment Service Inc. by assisting individuals to find, create and maintain meaningful employment, thereby supporting personal development and motivating participants to reach their potential as contributing members of society.

### Our Service

A comprehensive range of employment programs and services promotes self-awareness and self-reliance, adaptability and individual empowerment through the acquisition of employable and self-employment skills.

### Our Commitment

THE SPECIAL NEEDS EMPLOYMENT SERVICE INC. is committed to you and our community. We believe in quality customer service. You can expect the following:

***A confidential, timely, reliable, individualized, accessible service. You will work with knowledgeable professionals who are courteous and approachable.***

### Your Feedback

We like to receive your comments and concerns about our services. We encourage you to let us know by completing a client survey or talking to our staff.

### Your Rights

We guarantee to you the following rights:

- **Courteous Service** – Staff treat all customers equitably in a warm and welcoming manner
- **Knowledgeable Professionals** – Staff are well trained and current with respect to issues facing our clients
- **Confidentiality** – Participants and employers are guaranteed the right to confidential services

- **Accessibility** – Both our facility and our staff are accessible to our clients
- **Delivery of Timely Services** – Our staff are committed to meeting your needs in a timely manner. We provide same day screening for clients and strive to ensure that clients are accommodated within an acceptable time frame.
- **Reliable Services** – Both physical and program standards are of the highest quality
- **Accessible Complaints Procedure** – Customer concerns are taken seriously. Our Management team will be responsive to your issues.

### Your Rights

**1) Courteous Service** – Staff treat all customers equitably in a warm and welcoming manner

- THE SPECIAL NEEDS EMPLOYMENT SERVICE INC. is committed to continuously maintaining an open and supportive environment. All staff members are to greet every customer with a smile and initiate contact at every opportunity. (i.e.: say hi, ask about the weather, job search, open ended questions are better)
- Acknowledge customers as soon as possible
  - Make eye contact
  - Speak to client in a kind, caring and professional tone of voice
  - If there is a delay in service advise customer of timeframe
- Courteous service includes:
  - Personally guiding customers to resources (i.e. walking with them to show them the fax cover sheets)
  - Greeting customers in reception for appointments and workshops and escorting them to the door upon completion
  - Introducing new clients to at least one person in our Employment Resource Centre (ERC)

- Advising customers of the duration of appointments, workshops, meetings, etc.
- Calling clients the day before workshops to confirm
- Welcoming customers to return if further services are required
- We recognize that each customer's need is unique to them and we respect our customers' individuality by:
  - Taking the time to get to know our clients
  - Remembering details about our clients so they feel recognized
  - Being flexible
  - Addressing customers by their first names
  - Giving the same service to people no matter how they present (no pre-judgment)
- All staff members actively listen to customers and responds appropriately.
- When responding to telephone inquiries, staff actively listen and clarify customer's needs to ensure they are transferred to appropriate knowledgeable staff.
- We ensure that interoffice issues are discussed in appropriate venues. (i.e. office, meeting room and/or boardroom)

### **2) Knowledgeable Professionals** – Staff are well trained and current with respect to issues facing our clients

- We ensure that through our performance management process, staff has access to continuous education to attend training and workshops on an ongoing basis internally and externally.
- We ensure that staff has continuous contact with customers to ensure they are current with respect to the issues faced by:
  - Providing opportunities to work with customers through workshops cross training, etc.

- We are sensitive to the diversity of our customers and our community. We seek out and provide opportunities for staff training.
- We commit to keeping current with respect to developments in the employment area as well as social issues locally, provincially and federally by:
  - Using resources such as daily newspapers, community websites, directories, all other staff.
  - Sharing information and resources with each other when appropriate.
  - Researching issues for customers and providing answers in a timely manner.
  - Actively participating on community committees and events

### **3) Confidentiality** – Participants and employers are guaranteed the right to confidential services

- We take confidentiality very seriously and have all staff sign a confidentiality agreement according to our Personnel Policy on Confidentiality when they are hired.
- We have updated policies that are reviewed by our Board on a regular basis concerning all provincial and federal privacy legislation that are available for review.
- We ensure that participants understand our confidentiality document prior to signing.
- We ensure customer confidentiality by:
  - Enforcing the file office standards for storage and retention of both electronic and paper documents. This includes ensuring all private information is out of view and locked up at night. Additionally, everyone is responsible for ensuring that any information left in common areas, (i.e. boardrooms, sitting areas, photocopiers, and computer screens) is picked up and disposed of appropriately.
  - Ensuring staff discuss customer information only when necessary and in appropriately private areas (i.e. meeting rooms, board rooms, etc.)

- Determining the appropriate venue for meeting with customers depending upon their needs.
- Respecting their anonymity in public.

#### **4) Accessibility** – Both our facility and our staff are accessible to our customers physically

- We are accessible to customers with physical disabilities.
- We will attempt to accommodate clients who require services in other languages.
- We are open weekdays Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. We are open to meeting at other times to accommodate customers' depending on the need and the resources available.
- Our staff are accessible to customers by:
  - Scheduled appointment.
  - Client Support uses discretion to determine when it is appropriate to interrupt staff during a scheduled appointment.
- We provide individualized services to reflect our customers' unique needs.
- We review our programs and services regularly to ensure they remain accessible to our customers.
- We take our services into the community to meet the needs of our customers and the community at large.

#### **5) Use of Service Animals** – If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, we will:

- Ensure the person is allowed to enter the premises with the animal
- Ensure the person is allowed to keep the animal with them unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises
- If the animal is excluded by law, we will take alternate measures to allow the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our services

**6) Use of Support Persons** – If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, The WorkPlace Group will:

- Allow both people to enter the premises and the person with a disability will have full access to our services.
- If a fee is payable to allow the support person to access the premises, The WorkPlace Group will ensure that advance notice be given about the amount payable in respect of the support person.
- A confidentiality agreement must be signed by the support person before service can be provided to the person with a disability.

**7) Notice of Temporary Disruptions** – If there is a temporary disruption of service that affects the access to goods and services at The WorkPlace Group, we will:

- Give advanced notice to the public by various means to ensure all clients with disabilities have the opportunity to receive the notice
- Will include providing an audio and print versions of the notice through various communication technologies
- Will include the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration of the disruption and description of alternative facilities and services if available
- May also be posted on our website or other means as deemed reasonable in the circumstances

**8) Training for Staff** – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Customer Service training is provided to all new hire employees as soon as they begin practicing their assigned duties. Ongoing training is also provided to all existing employees with respect to any changes to the policies, practices, and procedures governing the provision of services to persons with disabilities. The training must include:

- A review of the AODA Act and the requirements of this regulation
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities

- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or requires the assistance of a service animal or support person
- How to use equipment or devices available on our premises or otherwise provided by us that may help with the provision of services to a person with a disability
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing our services

**9) Delivery of Timely Services** – Service delivery standards are provided in writing and are upheld by our staff

- We negotiate expectations, needs, and/or requirements up front and make a plan to fulfill obligations with our customers.
- We consistently use our information management systems to ensure that customers have the ability to schedule appointments within the following timeframes:
  - Walk-ins screened same day
  - Intake appointments as soon as available and/or depending on time constraints (positions with a time frame for applicants to apply attached)
  - Follow-ups weekly
- We respond to voicemail and email within 48 business hours.

**10) Reliable Services** – Both physical and program standards are of the highest quality

- We commit to reliability of staff, hours and equipment for our clients.
- We commit to having the highest programming standards by:
  - Reviewing workshops on an annual basis
  - Continuously improving

- We deliver what we commit to.

**11) Anti-harassment Policy** – Harassment at The WorkPlace Group is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All clients, visitors, and employees of The WorkPlace Group are entitled to a healthy, comfortable atmosphere. If a person believes they have been treated in an improper and offensive manner, the Resource Manager, Executive Director, or assigned delegate should be contacted. Appropriate action will be taken to resolve the matters.

The WorkPlace Group has a responsibility to:

- Provide an environment that encourage prospective complainants to report all incidents of harassment or discrimination
- Provide a mechanism to handle and investigate harassment and discrimination complaints

Management has a responsibility to:

- Respond immediately to complaints

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that their environment is free from harassment and discrimination for their co-workers and clients
- Refrain from engaging in any behaviour that may be perceived as harassment or discrimination
- Report incidents of harassment and discrimination or retaliation

Procedure:

1. A client who feels they are being harassed should make his/her disapproval known to the harasser and request all offensive behaviors to stop.
2. The complainant should maintain a personal written record of the alleged nature of the harassment/discrimination, dates, times, behaviour and list of witnesses.
3. If the harassment/discrimination has not ceased, the complainant is encouraged to make a written complaint to the Resource Manager, Executive Director or assigned delegate.



4. All complaints and investigation will be handled appropriately under the circumstances. The WorkPlace Group will make every effort to safeguard the confidentiality of all records relating to complaints, including contents of meetings, interviews, results of investigation and other relevant materials.
  5. The complainant will receive a response to the report of the event within 15 working days of the report. The assigned delegate will review all the relevant information and decide on the course of action.
- 12) **Complaints Procedure** – Customer concerns are taken seriously
  - 13) A client who has a complaint regarding any of the above is encouraged to report it directly to the Executive Director, Noeleen Tyczynski at 519-337-7377 ext. 23 or through email at [Noeleen.Tyczynski@theworkplacegroup.ca](mailto:Noeleen.Tyczynski@theworkplacegroup.ca). In the event the Executive Director is unavailable, clients are encouraged to contact the Operations Administrator, Tiziana Ingratta at 519-337-7377 ext. 26 or at through email at [Tiziana.Ingratta@theworkplacegroup.ca](mailto:Tiziana.Ingratta@theworkplacegroup.ca).
  - 14) All concerns are taken seriously and will be addressed in a thorough and professional manner by:
    - Allowing for an anonymous complaint procedure
    - Asking for input through surveys and focus groups
    - Acknowledging verbal and written complaints within 24 hours and committing to resolve them as soon as possible
    - If at any time a complaint is not resolved in a satisfactory manner, the Executive Director of THE SPECIAL NEEDS EMPLOYMENT SERVICE INC., and/or the Board of Directors will meet with the concerned party to resolve the issue

If you require any further elaboration on any area in our Customer Service Charter, please feel free to discuss it with any member of our staff or with the Operations Administrator of The WorkPlace Group.