

External Support Workers

Date approved: August 5, 2021

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The following procedure should be reviewed and adhered to by municipal staff as well as those external to the Municipality of Clarington staff team who are providing support to participants in a registered program.

Support workers and external personal support workers are welcome to attend our recreation programs and drop-in activities at no additional cost while supporting another individual.

Support can be provided by a family member, friend, trained support worker or social worker. Support workers must be at least 16 years of age and provide, at their own expense, a current (within the last 180 days) satisfactory criminal reference check with vulnerable sector screening, from a Canadian Police Information Centre, prior to the first day of the program or day camp.

We will require personal information from the support worker for emergency purposes, including the name and phone number of the support worker's emergency contact.

For preschool, child, youth, and day camp programs, families providing their own support worker must complete the External Support Worker Release Form before starting the program or day camp.

An external support worker is fully responsible for the care, support, and safety of the participant during all activities and must always stay with the participant. They can encourage independence, socialization, and participation in camp activities when appropriate. An external support worker must always comply with all of the Municipality of Clarington's rules and regulations, including those outlined below and within the facility.

Registered participants are the responsibility of the Municipality of Clarington. A support worker must always follow all registered program sign-in/sign-out procedures. If a support worker is listed on a participant's registration information, they may sign the participant in and out throughout the program and must do so if they are leaving the program space and the care and supervision of Clarington staff.

All support workers attending one of our municipal programs must be familiar with and understand the following information.

Program Staff

The program supervisor or designate will be there to greet you at the start of the program and confirm all required documentation has been received as well as government-issued photo

identification for the support worker. The program staff can answer any questions you may have about support expectations or modifications to activities.

Dress Code

You must wear clothing that provides professional coverage and is comfortable to participate in, for example, a t-shirt or long-sleeved athletic shirt, athletic shorts, or athletic pants. Running shoes are required. Avoid any items that could be grabbed, pulled, or caught (for example long earrings, necklaces). When supporting in aquatic programs, appropriate swimming attire will be required.

For day camp programs, please be prepared for outside activities (rain or shine) and at a minimum have sunscreen, a hat, and a reusable/non-breakable water bottle. Additional clothing requirements may also be in place, for example, a one-piece athletic swimsuit for camp swims, skates, warm clothing, and a CSA approved helmet for camp skates, etc.

Punctuality

A participant who needs support and is bringing an external support worker with them, cannot attend the program until their support worker arrives. It is not safe for the participant to be unsupported or unattended at any time, even for a few minutes. Communicate with the family of your participant if you are running late or going to be away so they can make other arrangements.

Cell Phones, Photos, and Video

Cell phone use must be minimal and used for immediate work-related matters only. You cannot use your phone to record or take pictures during the program.

Taking Breaks / Leaving the Program Location

Participants are encouraged to remain within the program program as much as possible for a more inclusive experience. From time to time, participants may benefit from quiet time or a sensory break away from the main program activity. An appropriate location for this break should be discussed and determined between the on-site supervisor and the support worker.

Should the participant need to take this break away from the group location (i.e., move to the lobby from the gym), sign-in/sign-out procedures must be followed with program staff before leaving the space / property. External Support Workers must be designated on the participant's registration information if the participant will be leaving the program space with them.

Washroom Procedures

If a scheduled, group bathroom break occurs:

- Support workers will accompany the group to the washroom and provide all required support to the participant. Program staff members will remain in the washroom area with the group for the entirety of the time.

If the participant has to use the washroom outside of these scheduled visits:

- Support workers designated on the participant's registration information must sign the participant out prior to accompanying them to the washroom and providing all required support.
- Support workers who are not designated on the participant's registration information must wait for a program staff member to accompany them and the participant to the washroom. The support worker will remain responsible for providing all required support,

Accessible Equipment

For any personal mobility or communication devices that are brought to the program, the municipality is not responsible for any loss, theft, or damage that may occur. If using municipal equipment, return equipment to the appropriate storage location or program staff after use. If the equipment is broken or no longer safe to use, inform program staff immediately.

Confidentiality

Support workers must handle the participant's personal information with sensitivity and confidentiality. It is inappropriate to share personal information about the participant you support with anyone other than municipal staff.

Interacting with Other Participants

If other participants require directions or support, please inform program staff so they may respond accordingly. Support workers should never engage in the behaviour management of participants who they are not supporting directly.

Safety

Any injuries sustained by either the participant or you as the support worker must be immediately reported to the applicable supervisor.

Any instances of workplace violence, disrespect, or concerns must be immediately reported to a Recreation Coordinator or full-time staff.

In the event of an emergency, lockdown, or evacuation, follow the directions of the onsite staff.

Program Expectations

The Municipality wants to provide an environment that is safe, fun, and welcoming. Making sure that everyone in the program has the same understanding of needs, expectations and awareness are vital to ensuring an enjoyable program experience.

We expect that everyone participating will:

- Stay with the group and take part in activities
- Use respectful and appropriate language
- Not cause harm to or threaten the safety of other participants, staff, patrons, or themselves.
The participant code of conduct and behaviour management policies will apply.