

SUPPORT PERSONS

Purpose

Siskinds LLP (“Siskinds”) is committed to serving people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines regarding the provision of our legal services to people with disabilities when they are accompanied by a support person.

Scope

This procedure applies to every person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person. This procedure also applies to every person interacting with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of Siskinds, whether a partner, lawyer, employee or independent contractor.

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.

The foregoing definition includes disabilities of differing severity, whether visible or non-visible and whether temporary or permanent in nature.

Support Person means any person (whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend) who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or with access our legal services.

Procedure

Identifying Support Persons

A support person may be a personal support worker, volunteer, friend or family member. He or she may help a person with a disability with communicating, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or with access to our legal services.

In some situations, it may not be clear which person is the support person. A person with a disability might not introduce his/her support person. To determine who the support person is a Siskinds representative should take the lead from the person who is requesting our legal services or ask. When it is determined who is the client (as opposed to the support person), the Siskinds representative should speak directly to the client, not to the support person.

Areas Open to Support Persons

A person with a disability and his/her support person are permitted to enter those areas of Siskinds property that are open to the public or other third parties. Unless otherwise requested by the person with a disability, the support person will be permitted to remain with the person with the disability throughout the entire duration of that he/she is accessing our legal services.

Confidential Information

When a Siskinds representative must discuss confidential information with a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person, the Siskinds representative will ask the person with a disability whether the support person may remain present. If the person with a disability chooses not to have the support person present, the Siskind representative will offer a close, comfortable location where the support person can wait.

Appropriate Behaviour

Support persons are required to adhere to the same rules, and demonstrate appropriate behavior, as are all other persons accessing our legal services.

Admission Fees for Support Persons

When occasions arise that Siskinds charges fees on a per person basis for services offered (e.g. seminars, workshops, etc.), Siskinds will provide notice of the amount of any admission fees applicable to support persons accompanying people with disabilities.

When a Support Person is Required

Siskinds may require a support person to accompany a person with a disability on its property, if the support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability, or the health or safety of others, on such property.