

BLUE SKIES ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

This policy was approved by organizers at the May 28, 2016 meeting

1. PREAMBLE

The Blue Skies Cultural Centre (“Blue Skies”) is committed to accessibility where possible for festival attendees and participants in all Blue Skies programs. Blue Skies will put the following policies into practice as required by *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

The following applies to the Blue Skies Music Festival, all organizational meetings, and all Blue Skies in the Community programs.

2. THE RUSTIC, WILDERNESS NATURE OF THE BLUE SKIES FESTIVAL

The Blue Skies festival takes place on a rustic, wilderness site – it has many hills and rocks and lacks shelter, pavement and other modern amenities. Within this context which is a fundamental aspect of the festival, Blue Skies will do its best to accommodate people with disabilities. Blue Skies will communicate the rustic nature of the festival site so that attendees can prepare themselves.

3. ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

Blue Skies is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. When asked, we will, provide information and communication materials in accessible formats with communication supports to the best of our ability. This includes publicly available information about our goods, services, and facilities, as well as publicly available information.

4. SERVICE ANIMALS AND ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Blue Skies will ensure that employees and volunteers are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by people with disabilities attending at Blue Skies events.

Blue Skies welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by certified service animals. While dogs are not normally welcome on the festival site, certified service dogs are allowed at Blue Skies events.

5. SUPPORT PERSONS/WORKERS

Blue Skies welcomes all support persons including family members, friends, and contract support workers accompanying an individual with a disability.

6. NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION OF SERVICES

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for people with disabilities (including, but not limited to on-site facilities, accessible parking, and volunteer assistance), Blue Skies will promptly to the extent possible notify affected people by announcements from the main stage.

7. TRAINING

Individuals in the following positions will receive accessibility training:

- Hats, Apprentices and Perennials;
- Festival Key Volunteers;
- People hired or volunteering with Blue Skies in the Community.

Training will include:

- a. An overview of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*;
- b. The *Blue Skies Accessibility Policy* (this document);
- c. How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- d. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing on-site services.

Ongoing training will be provided on updates or changes to the *Blue Skies Accessibility Policy*.

8. INFORMATION AND FEEDBACK PROCESS

Festival attendees may make requests for information related to festival accessibility at any time in the year by contacting accessibility@blueskiesmusicfestival.ca or by contacting Blue Skies accessibility contact person by telephone.

Festival attendees who wish to provide feedback on the way Blue Skies provides services to people with disabilities are encouraged to provide comments on accessibility, written or verbally, at the information booth during the festival. Feedback may also be provided via the email address above.

All inquiries and feedback will be directed to the Blue Skies Accessibility Coordinator. Blue Skies will acknowledge receipt of all inquiries/feedback and then address the concern to the best of our ability, and advise of what steps have been taken to address any concerns.

9. ONGOING PROCESS

Blue Skies will seek input from people with disabilities in order to ensure Blue Skies understands the needs of people with disabilities.

Blue Skies will review its practices and any that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities where possible will be modified or removed.