

February 12, 2016

Dear Passenger Assistant Program clients:

It was brought to our attention that in recent days Brampton Caledon Community Living has released a news statement via email and on their website about service changes to TransHelp's Passenger Assistant Program.

The statement was not authored or approved by the Region of Peel. Some clients may have misinterpreted this message. TransHelp would like to take the opportunity to clarify some of the points raised.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) required TransHelp to review the type and delivery of service it provides. The Accessible Transportation Master Plan adopted by Regional Council set out to make TransHelp an AODA compliant transit service by 2017 while also, providing a sustainable plan in response to the forecasted growth. TransHelp's 2017 eligibility criteria needs to align with Human Rights code definition of disability which includes a broader range of disabilities than what TransHelp currently accommodates, including cognitive and learning disabilities.

The Passenger Assistant Program was developed in 2009 because TransHelp's original mandate was limited to only serving clients with mobility devices. The Passenger Assistant Program serves clients with cognitive disabilities travelling to adult day programs. Approximately 128 clients are now served with no further capacity to provide service to the 1,080 individuals now travelling to day programs on a daily basis. The good news is these individuals may be eligible for TransHelp once it is AODA compliant. In essence, by 2017 we will be in a position to accommodate more clients with cognitive disabilities.

Once we are in a position to make changes to programs, we will communicate with clients and families in advance. We do not anticipate this happening for some time. As always TransHelp staff strives to be accessible and discuss and answer any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact TransHelp if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mark Castro
Manager of Accessible Transportation, TransHelp

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