

Expectations for Support Workers / Aides

The City of Calgary, Recreation welcomes people with disabilities and will work together to take reasonable steps within each facility's capacity to include people with disabilities in programs. However, it is recognized that there are times when a support worker is needed. If required, it is the responsibility of the participant to arrange for and provide their own Support Worker. There are no admission or registration fees for Support Workers to attend programs with a paying customer; although there are expectations:

1. Support Workers must **remain with the person with a disability at all times.**
 - a) If the program involves swimming, the Support Worker must swim alongside the person being supported and be prepared to provide assistance in the water to the degree required.
 - b) If someone is receiving 'fading support' to increase independence, the Support Worker does not need to be right beside the person all the time; but should be **engaged and participating** in the program (not sitting on the side).

2. Support Workers are responsible to **support the person with a disability within the program.** Common issues to clarify prior to the program starting:
 - a) Boundaries – the primary role of City staff is to lead the program, facilitate participation by all and ensure the safety of the group. Whereas, the primary role of the Support Worker is to assist the person with a disability. Where possible Support Workers may help modify or individualize the activity and suggest strategies which promote the person's involvement.
 - b) Communication – introductions are encouraged as it is helpful for program staff to be aware of the reasons why the Support Worker is in the program. Likewise, staff would be happy to provide the itinerary and orientate the Support Worker to facility policies and procedures; if needed.

3. Support Workers are expected to **follow all program & facility rules / procedures.** Support Workers should be prepared to:
 - a) Come dressed appropriately for the activity and wear appropriate foot wear (high heels, dress shoes, boots, short skirts, etc. are not appropriate in a recreation setting).
 - b) Provide the equipment for him/herself and sign all appropriate waivers if the program involves activities that require special equipment or waiver forms to participate – as they are expected to support the person with a disability by participating along with them.
 - c) Pay any additional costs; such as his/her own admission if the program involves an off-trip which requires the Support Worker to pay.
 - d) **Not use a cell phone** during program time.
 - e) Actively **participate in all program activities.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact 311 and ask to speak to the Recreation Program Specialist at your program's facility.