Persons with Hidden Disabilities Program

Purpose
The Northwest Regional Airport Terrace-Kitimat (YXT) is committed to providing an accessible, inclusive and supportive environment for all passengers.

The Persons with Hidden Disabilities Program provides passengers with a discreet means of identifying that they may require additional time, patience, understanding or assistance while travelling through the Airport.

This policy establishes the Airport's approach to the administration and use of the Persons with Hidden Disabilities Program and provides guidance to Airport employees, contractors, tenants and other stakeholders when interacting with passengers participating in the program.

Scope
This policy applies to Airport employees and contracted Security Guards involved in administering the Persons with Hidden Disabilities Program.

Airlines, ground handlers, screening personnel, tenants and contractors operating at YXT will be made aware of the program and are encouraged to ensure their employees understand the purpose and appropriate recognition of the program identifier. Each organization remains responsible for its own policies, procedures, employee training and applicable regulatory requirements.

Program Overview
A hidden or non-visible disability may not be immediately apparent to others and may affect communication, mobility, vision, hearing, learning, sensory processing, memory, concentration or an individual's ability to manage unfamiliar, stressful or busy environments.

Participation in the program is voluntary. A passenger participating in the program may wear or carry the designated lanyard to discreetly indicate that they may benefit from additional time, patience, understanding or assistance. Passengers are not required to disclose or explain their disability or provide medical documentation in order to receive a lanyard.

Requesting and Issuing a Lanyard
Passengers wishing to participate in the program may request a lanyard from the Security Guard located at the Airport Information Booth.

When a lanyard is requested, the Security Guard will:

1. Provide the passenger with one program lanyard.
2. If required, briefly explain that the lanyard identifies that the passenger may require additional time, patience, understanding or assistance while travelling through the airport.
3. Record the lanyard issuance on the Hidden Disabilities Program Tracking Log.
4. Allow the passenger to continue on their journey. No registration, medical documentation or additional approval is required.

Passengers may keep the lanyard after travel and are not required to return it to the Airport.

Program Tracking
The Security Guard will maintain the Hidden Disabilities Program Tracking Log to monitor program usage and lanyard inventory and to assist Airport Management in evaluating the program.

For each lanyard issued, the Security Guard will record:

- Date;
- Time;
- Number of lanyards issued; and
- Security Guard initials.

The passenger's name, disability, medical condition, diagnosis or reason for requesting the lanyard will not be recorded.

Airport Management may periodically review the tracking information to determine program usage, general usage trends, inventory requirements and whether the program continues to provide value to passengers using the Airport.

Interaction with Program Participants
When interacting with a passenger displaying the program lanyard, personnel are encouraged to:

- Be patient and allow additional time when needed;
- Speak clearly and calmly;
- Ask the passenger how they can assist rather than assuming what assistance is required;
- Repeat or rephrase information when necessary;Be mindful that busy, noisy or unfamiliar environments may be challenging for some passengers;
- Respect the passenger's personal space, independence and privacy; and
- Treat the passenger with dignity and respect.

The lanyard does not necessarily mean that a passenger requires assistance. Personnel should allow the passenger to communicate their needs whenever possible.

Privacy
Passengers participating in the program are not required to disclose the nature of their disability or condition. Personnel should not ask a passenger to prove or explain their disability solely because they are wearing the program lanyard.

Personnel should avoid drawing unnecessary attention to a passenger's participation in the program and should only share information when operationally necessary.

Security, Screening and Access Requirements
Participation in the Persons with Hidden Disabilities Program does not provide an exemption from aviation security requirements, passenger screening, identification requirements, access-control requirements or other applicable safety or regulatory requirements.

The lanyard does not provide access to restricted or sterile areas and does not automatically provide priority or expedited screening. Where a passenger requires assistance or accommodation during screening, the passenger should be directed to the appropriate screening personnel.

Airlines, Ground Handlers, Tenants and Contractors
Organizations operating at YXT will be provided information regarding the program and are encouraged to make their employees aware of the program identifier and its purpose. Formal training by individual airlines, tenants or contractors is encouraged but is not a requirement imposed by the Airport unless otherwise determined by Airport Management.

Airline-specific accommodations, boarding procedures, mobility assistance and other passenger services remain the responsibility of the applicable air carrier or service provider.

Emergency Situations
The program does not override emergency procedures. During an emergency, safety and security remain the priority. Where reasonably possible, personnel should provide clear and concise instructions and recognize that some passengers may require additional direction or assistance to understand or respond to emergency instructions.

Program Review
Airport Management will periodically review program usage and feedback to determine whether changes to the program, inventory levels or this procedure are required.