



CUSTOMER SERVICE PROCEDURES

For the Customer Service Policy Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Purpose Statement

This procedure addresses the Accessible Customer Service Standards requirements of Ontario Regulation 191/11 for the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

Scope

This procedure applies to municipal goods, services and facilities provided by Town Council and Town employees as well as by volunteers, agents, contractors (personnel) or any individual representing or performing any function on behalf of the Town.

The requirements set out in this procedure are being implemented by the Town in accordance with the standards and timelines established in the AODA.

Procedures

Assistive devices

Individuals may use their assistive devices as required to access Town goods, services and facilities unless otherwise prohibited due to health and safety or privacy issues. In such cases, other measures will be used to ensure the individual can access Town goods, services or facilities.

Where assistive devices are available in Town facilities, staff will be trained on how to use them.

Service Animals

Guide dogs and other service animals may be used in all Town areas/premises that are open to the public unless otherwise prohibited by law.

If a service animal is excluded from the premises by law, Town staff will inform the individual of the reasons why and discuss alternative methods for the person to access Town goods, services and facilities. When Town employees cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, they may ask the person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional confirming the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Support persons

People with disabilities can access their support person when using goods, services and facilities provided by the Town.

Where admission fees for the support person are applicable, advance notice of the fee will be made available.

The Town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person to protect the health and safety of that person or of others on the premises. This will only occur after consultation with the person with a disability and when it is the only way to allow the person with a disability to access the Town's goods, services and facilities. If the Town determines that a support person is required, the Town will waive any fee or fare for the support person.

Training

Training will be provided to all Town employees, volunteers, anyone who provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Town and anyone involved in developing Town policies and procedures. Training will be appropriate to the duties of employees, volunteers and other persons and include:

- The purpose of the AODA and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards;
- The Town's procedure on providing accessible customer service;
- The Ontario Human Rights Code, where it relates to people with disabilities;
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with people who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- How to use Town equipment or assistive devices available to help provide goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities (e.g. screen readers, wheelchairs, pool lifts, sound amplifiers etc.); and
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing Town goods, services and facilities.

The Town shall keep records of training in accordance with *Ontario Regulation 191/11*.

Service Disruption Notification

In the event of a service disruption at any Town facility, service, program or system, notice shall be provided on the Town website and posted at the location, where possible. The Town also uses social media to notify its followers about service disruptions.

The notice shall provide the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities, services, programs or systems that may be available.

Feedback Process

The Town will maintain a process for receiving and responding to feedback on how the Town provides goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities. The Town will ensure the process is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

Receipt of feedback shall be acknowledged by the end of the next business day and answered within 15 business days. If the Town requires additional time, the estimated date for response will be provided to the submitter.

Notice of Availability of Documents

The Town will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service are available in an accessible format or with communication support, upon request. Notice will be posted on the Town's website.

Definitions

Assistive Device - is a piece of equipment or aid that a person with a disability uses to help with daily living (e.g. wheelchair, screen reader, hearing aid, cane or walker, oxygen tank).

Barrier - means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Disability is:

- 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;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Service Animal – an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if,

- the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal or
- the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
 - College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
 - College of Chiropractors of Ontario
 - College of Nurses of Ontario
 - College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
 - College of Optometrists of Ontario
 - College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
 - College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
 - College of Psychologists of Ontario
 - College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

In addition to a registered health professional, the Town will also accept an identification card from the Attorney General or an officer of their Ministry, which confirms the identity of a blind person and their guide dog. R.S.O. 1990, c. B.7, s. 4 (2).

Support Person – a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

Responsibilities

The Clerk's Office is responsible for:

- Administration of and ensuring compliance with this procedure.

Human Resources is responsible for:

- Providing accessibility training in accordance with the AODA and relevant policies and procedures

All departments are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Accessible Customer Service Standard procedure is followed;
- Providing or arranging for accessible documents and communication supports upon request;
- Tracking accessibility requests;
- Providing information about service disruptions that will be posted on the Town's website and social media tools as required;
- Budgeting for accessibility requirements;
- Communicating and coordinating, when applicable, with a person with a disability regarding the use of a support person or service animal.

User (person with a disability) is responsible for:

- Supervising and keeping service animals in control when used to access the Town's goods, services and facilities; and
- Providing documentation confirming the service animal is required for reasons related to the individual's disability, if requested.