



Administrative Policies & Procedures

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service for Persons with Disabilities – Policy No. 63

Customer and Legislative Services Department

Topic:	Accessibility Standards for Customer Service	Affects:	All Employees & Elected Officials
Section	Accessibility	Replaces:	Old Policy No. 63
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Effective Date:	January 1, 2010	Next Revision Date:	
Prepared By:	Customer and Legislative Services	Approval Authority:	Council: September 15, 2009

1. BACKGROUND

Through the establishment of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy and supporting procedures and practices that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, the Town of Aurora is reflecting its commitment to sound governance, accountability and focus on service excellence in fulfilling its vision.

2. PURPOSE

The Town of Aurora is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access Town goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers. To ensure support for and compliance with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (AODA) and relevant regulations, the Town of Aurora will make reasonable efforts to ensure that it provides accessible customer service to people with various kinds of disabilities and respects the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity, as defined herein.

3. DEFINITIONS

Taken from the [Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07](#)

Assistive Device – means an auxiliary aid such as communication aid, cognition aid, personal mobility aid and medical aid (i.e., canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids, etc.) to access and benefit from the goods and services offered by the Town of Aurora.

Barrier - means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include a physical, architectural or attitudinal barrier as well as an information or communication barrier, technological barrier, a policy, procedure or a practice.

Disability - means any degree of physical disability including, but not limited to, diabetes, epilepsy, brain injury, paralysis, amputation, lack of coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, reliance on a guide dog, other service animal, wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; developmental disability; learning disability or dysfunction in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; mental disorder; or injury for which benefits were claimed or received under the [Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997](#).

Guide Dog or Service Animal - a “guide dog” means a guide dog as defined in section 1 of the [Blind Persons’ Rights Act](#).

For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal of a person with a disability if:

- a) It is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- b) The person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal

for reasons relating to the disability.

Legislation - for the purpose of this policy, refers to the [Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act \(AODA\)](#) and Ontario Regulation 429/07, [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#).

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

A support person may be a paid support worker, a volunteer, a friend or a family member; the support person does not need to have special training or qualifications.

4. PRINCIPLES

Dignity – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain their sense of self-respect and the respect of other people.

Equal Opportunity – service is provided to a person with a disability in such a way that they have an opportunity to access Town goods or services equal to that given to others without a disability.

Independence – when a person with a disability has the freedom to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

Integration – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods or services.

5. PROVISIONS

Accessible Customer Service - The Town of Aurora shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices as amended from time to time are consistent with the following principles by establishing a set of Customer Service Guidelines in support of this policy.

- a) The goods or services shall be provided in a manner that respects the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity of persons with disabilities.
- b) The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others shall be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- c) Persons with a disability shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.

Assistive Devices - The Town of Aurora permits a person with a disability to use and keep with them their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services offered by the Town of Aurora.

Where Town owned assistive devices are available, appropriate staff within the applicable department will be knowledgeable of the presence of these devices and trained in the use of the assistive devices. Staff will be available to assist with the Town owned assistive devices if requested for use by an individual.

Communication - When acting on behalf of The Town of Aurora and communicating with a person with a disability, do so in a respectful manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Service Animals and Support Persons - The Town of Aurora shall permit a person with a disability, who requires to be accompanied by a support person and/or service animal into all Town premises that are owned or operated public facilities. Both persons (if applicable) are permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability will have access to their support person and/or service animal.

A support person, when assisting or accompanying a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and/or services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

The Town of Aurora shall permit a person with a disability to be accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal into all Town of Aurora owned and operated public facilities and will ensure that the person is permitted to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

If the service animal is excluded by law from the facility, the Town of Aurora will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town of Aurora's goods and services.

Notice of Temporary Disruption - Public Notice of Service Disruption as per Appendix A & B, as amended from time to time shall be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities and/or community members usually use to access Town of Aurora's goods or services are temporarily unavailable or if the goods or service are expected in the near future to be temporarily unavailable, in whole or in part.

The Notice must include the following information:

- a) The reason for and information about the disruption
- b) Anticipated duration
- c) Description of alternative facilities or services, if available
- d) Contact information

Notice may be given by posting information in a conspicuous place on the premises, on the Town's website or any other such method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

Training - The Town of Aurora shall ensure the following persons will or have received training regarding the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities.

- 1) Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
- 2) Every person who participates in developing the Town's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

The training shall include but is not limited to the following:

- a) Review of the purpose of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (AODA) and requirements of [Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#);
- b) Instruction on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- c) Instruction on how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, other service animal or support person;
- d) Instruction on how to use equipment or devices available at Town premises or that are otherwise provided by the Town, that may assist persons with disabilities access Town services, such as TTY telephones, assistive software, elevators, lifts, accessible interactive kiosks, listening devices such as FM systems or other technology; and
- e) Instruction on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Town of Aurora's services.

Training shall be provided to each person as soon as practicable and training records shall be maintained as appropriate to ensure compliance with the legislation.

Training shall be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to the policy and supporting procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.

Departments utilizing the services of volunteers or other third parties are responsible for ensuring they have received training according to the legislation and for maintaining training records unless the services are secured through Purchasing and/or Office Services.

Third parties or contractors upon award of an RFP or tender process must verify training has been received and provide the Town the appropriate documents as it relates to the legislation prior to commencement of work. (The Town of Aurora may provide guidance as to where training can be obtained)

Feedback - The Town of Aurora has a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding accessibility and the manner in which the Town provides goods or services to persons with disabilities and shall make information about the process readily available to the public.

The feedback process shall permit persons to provide feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, online, on disk or by other method if applicable/available.

Notice of Availability of Documents - The Town shall provide notice that upon request the Town will provide a copy of this policy and supporting procedures and practices required under [Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#) to any person.

Format of Documents - Should the Town be required to provide a person with a disability with a document, or information contained in the document, the Town will give the person (by request) the document or information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

If the document is required in a different format, staff will discuss what options are available to the individual and then agree upon the format the Town will provide. Requests for documents in an alternative format should be sent to the Town of Aurora Accessibility Advisor.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY

All staff of the Town of Aurora shall use due diligence to ensure the Corporation complies with legislation by acting in accordance with the provisions of this policy and the supporting procedures and practices.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Management:

- Educate employees and ensure compliance with all aspects of the policy.
- Demonstrate behaviours that are consistent with the policy.
- Provide support and guidance to staff members in fulfilling the policy.
- Ensure all staff are trained according to the requirements of the AODA legislation.
- When aware of areas of non-compliance ensure appropriate action is taken.
- Complete and file the annual accessibility report as required by the legislation.

Responsibilities of all Employees:

- Comply with all aspects of the policy.
- Demonstrate behaviours that are consistent with the policy.
- Participate fully in training as it relates to this policy.
- When aware of areas of non-compliance ensure supervisor or manager is notified.

8. EXCLUSIONS

This Policy shall not apply during any period where an emergency has been declared by the head of Council.

9. REFERENCES

Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

Compliance Manual: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)

Blind Persons' Rights Act.

Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.