
Subject:	Accessible Customer Services	Policy Number:	TOB-2009-001 ACC
Date Approved:	December 16, 2009 (09-DS-167)	Date Modified:	May 14, 2014
Lead Department:	Planning and Development	Branch:	N/A

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this Accessible Customer Service Policy is to fulfill the requirements set out in Ontario Regulation 429/07 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and to establish a policy for the Town of Bracebridge governing the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 is a Provincial Act with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing Accessibility Standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises.
3. Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" came into force on January 1, 2008. The regulation establishes Accessibility Standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.
4. This Policy is drafted in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) and addresses the following:
 - 4.1. The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities,
 - 4.2. The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities,
 - 4.3. The use of service animals by persons with disabilities,
 - 4.4. The use of support persons by persons with disabilities,
 - 4.5. Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities training,
 - 4.6. Customer service feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, and
 - 4.7. Notice of availability and format of documents.

POLICY STATEMENT

5. The Corporation of the Town of Bracebridge is committed to providing quality goods and services that are accessible to all members of the public or other third parties served by the Town.

APPLICATION

6. This Policy applies to all persons who deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town of Bracebridge, whether the person does so as an employee, member of Council, agent, volunteer, student on placement or otherwise and all persons who participate in developing the Town's policy, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

DEFINITIONS

7. The following definitions shall apply to this policy:

Assistive Device - A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the Customer Service Standard.

Town - The Corporation of the Town of Bracebridge, excluding Boards and Commissions.

Disability - As per the Ontario Human Rights Code, Disability means:

- a) 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,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) a mental disorder, or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the Plan established as the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Guide Dog - As per Section 1 of the Blind Persons' Rights Act, Guide Dog means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having qualifications prescribed by the regulations in the Act.

Service Animal - Any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability.

Support Person - Any person who accompanies and supports another person with a disability in order to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs including access to goods or services.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Provision of Goods & Services to Persons with Disabilities

8. The Town of Bracebridge will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:
 - 8.1. The Town's goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
 - 8.2. The provision of the Town's goods and services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have a disability unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's Good and Services.
 - 8.3. Persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and services.

Communication with Persons with Disabilities

9. When communicating with a person with a disability, the Town will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities

10. The Town is aware that the operation of its services and facilities is important to the public. However, temporary disruptions in these services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the Town's control or knowledge.
11. The Town will make reasonable effort to provide notice of the interruption to the public, including information about the reason for the interruption, its anticipated duration of interruption and a description of alternative services or facilities that may be available. If possible, the Town will make reasonable effort to provide prior notice of a planned interruption. In the event of an unplanned interruption, advance notice is not possible and in such cases the Town will provide notice as soon as possible.
12. When temporary interruptions occur to the Town's services or facilities, the Town will provide notice as soon as possible by posting the information in visible places or on the Town's website at (www.bracebridge.ca) or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

Assistive Devices and Measures that Assist with Accessibility

13. A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using or benefiting from the Town's Goods and Services. Exception may occur in situations where the Town has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of persons on the premises.
14. In these situations and others, the Town may offer a person with a disability other reasonable alternatives to assist in obtaining, using and benefiting from the Town's goods and services, where the Town has such other measures available.
15. It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

Guide Dogs and Service Animals

16. Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and operated by the Town accompanied by a guide dog or service animal and keep the guide dog or service animal with them if the public has access to such premises. The Town will ensure that alternative means are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and services if a service animal is excluded.
17. It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that the guide dog or service animal is kept in control at all times.

Support Persons

18. A person with a disability may enter premises owned and operated or operated by the Town with a support person and have access to the support person while on the premises.
19. The Town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on Town premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.
20. A support person will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable when assisting a person with a disability to use, obtain or benefit from the Town's Goods and Services.

Feedback

21. The Town of Bracebridge is committed to providing high quality Goods and Services to all members of the public it serves. Feedback from the public is welcomed as it may identify areas that require modification. The Town encourages continuous service improvements.
22. Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of Goods and Services to persons with disabilities may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic form or through other methods.
23. Information with respect to the Feedback process will be readily available to the public and notice of the process will be posted on the Town's website or in other appropriate locations.

Training

24. The Town will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Services. The depth and format of the Training given will be based on the requirement for interaction with the public and involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services.
25. The Town of Bracebridge will:
 - 25.1. ensure that all persons to whom this Policy applies receive training as required by the Ontario Regulation 429/07 - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
 - 25.2. train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on the Town's behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.

- 25.3. train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing the Town's policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
26. The training will include a review of:
- 26.1. the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005,
 - 26.2. the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Services (Ontario Regulation 429/07),
 - 26.3. how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities,
 - 26.4. how to accommodate a person with a particular type of disability who is having difficulty accessing the Town's Goods and Services,
 - 26.5. how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person, guide dog or service animal, and
 - 26.6. how to provide instruction for the use of equipment or devices available on the Town's premises that may assist with the provision of Goods or Services to persons with disabilities.

Timeline for Training

27. Training will be provided as soon as practicable for all persons to whom this policy applies as well as on an ongoing basis as changes occur to the Town's Accessible Customer Service Policy and other policies, procedures and practices related to the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

Records of Training

28. The Town will keep records outlining training, including the date on which training is provided and the number of those trained. The record for training administration purposes of the names of persons trained will be subject to (MFIPPA) *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

AVAILABILITY AND FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BY THE ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE (ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07)

29. All documents required by the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, including the Town's Accessible Customer Service Policy, procedures and practices, notices of temporary interruptions, training records and written feedback process are available upon request, subject to (MFIPPA) *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
30. When providing a document to a person with a disability, the Town shall make every effort to provide the document or information in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

Notice of the Availability of Documents

31. Notice of the availability of all documents required by the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service will be posted on the Town's website and will be available through the Corporate Services Department, the Planning and Development Department and the Town of Bracebridge Public Library.

EFFECTIVE DATE

32. This policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by Town Council.

POLICY REVIEW

33. This policy shall be reviewed by Town Council at least once within each term of Council and at such other times as may be required to up-date and amend the Policy in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.