

# Implementation of Accessible Customer Service

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Toronto strives at all times to provide equal treatment and equitable benefits of City services, programs and facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

The City's Statement of Commitment to providing accessible customer service gives guidance to the delivery of City services to people with disabilities, in compliance with requirements of provincial legislation. (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07 established under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11.)

This Statement applies to all City employees, volunteers, and third party contractors who deal with the public on behalf of the City, and those who are involved in City policy and program development.

## Assistive devices

City employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall accommodate the use of personal assistive devices, which enable a person with a disability to access the City's services, programs and facilities. Assistive devices include and are not limited to: GPS, mobility devices, personal oxygen tanks, mini pocket recorder and communication boards (eg. a Bliss board).

Assistive devices for access to specific services and programs shall be kept in good working order and the public shall be informed of their availability. Examples are: Assistive Listening Devices and FM Loop systems.

## Service animals

City employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall accommodate the use of service animals by people with disabilities who are accessing City services, programs and facilities unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law, such as food preparation areas as prohibited by Food Premises, R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 562 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7.

**A guide dog is defined in Section One of the Blind Persons' Rights Act. To be considered a service animal under the Customer Service Standard, it must be readily apparent that the animal is being used because of a person's disability or the person with a disability must provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that it is required because of his or her disability.**

## Support persons

Where a person with a disability accessing City services, programs or facilities is accompanied by a support person, City employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall ensure that both persons are permitted to

enter the premises together and shall ensure that the person with a disability can access the support person while on the premises.

**A support person is a person who accompanies the person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. The support person can be a paid support worker, volunteer, a friend or a family member.**

### **Admission fees**

If the City charges an admission fee in connection with a support person's presence at an event or function, the City shall post a notice, providing information in advance about the amount, if any, that is payable by the support person accompanying a person with a disability.

### **Communication**

When communicating with a person with a disability, City employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall do so in a manner that respects the person's disability.

### **Notice of service disruption**

If there is a temporary disruption in the availability of services, programs and facilities used by persons with disabilities (e.g., temporary loss of elevator service), the City shall notify the public of the reason for the disruption, the date(s) of disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available. Such notice may be provided by a variety of methods, depending on the circumstances, and may include postings in conspicuous places at the affected premises, other City facilities, and the City's website ([www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca)), as well as by other means that will ensure that the notice reaches those persons potentially affected by the temporary disruption.

### **Training**

The City of Toronto shall ensure that City employees and volunteers who deal with the public on behalf of the City, and those who are involved in City policy and program development receive training on accessible customer service.

Third party contractors who deliver goods and services on behalf of the City are also required to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07, as provided.

Training includes information on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11 and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07.

Managers and supervisors shall ensure that training records are maintained, including dates when training is provided and the number of employees who received training.

**Customer Service training can take various forms as a part of an orientation; or a separate training program. The training can be provided through handouts at an orientation session, a mandatory online module, in a classroom setting, or through other formats.**

### **Feedback**

The City of Toronto shall ensure that every area that interacts directly with the public develops and publishes a process for receiving and responding to feedback about how services and programs are delivered to people with disabilities.

Public feedback may be provided in person, by telephone, in writing or by electronic means. Feedback received by the City of Toronto shall be responded to, documented and tracked.

### **Documentation**

Documentation that describes this Statement and accessibility requirements shall be maintained on the City's website ([www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca)) and provided to individuals, upon request, in the appropriate format.

### **Responsibilities**

The City Manager's Office is responsible for reviewing this Statement and accessibility requirements annually and recommending amendments to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards and legislated obligations.

The City Manager's Office shall provide advice and direction on the implementation of this Statement.

### **Legislative and administrative authorities**

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005.
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07.
- Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19.

### **Compliance Resources: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Reg. 429/07; Accessibility Directorate of Ontario**

- Compliance Manual, October 2008.
- Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07, January 2008.
- Training Resource, February 2009.