



Customer Service Policy Statement for Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Application This policy applies to all employees, contractors and volunteers.

Policy Statement The following is the Toronto Water policy statement on providing customer service to people with disabilities. Note that the policy may be revised as other standards are introduced under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Introduction

TW shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

1. The goods or services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
2. The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must 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
3. Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services

1. Our commitment

Toronto Water strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

2. Providing goods and services to people with disabilities

Toronto Water is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

2.1 Communication

We will strive to communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

2.2 Telephone services

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. We will strive to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with customers by appropriate alternate methods if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

2.3 Assistive devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff is familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

3. Use of service animals and support persons

Toronto Water is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person or service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

4. Notice of temporary disruption

Toronto Water will provide customers with notice if a planned or unexpected disruption occurs for any event or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises.

5. Training for staff

Toronto Water will provide training on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities, to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. The training will be provided to each person as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties. Staff will be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to the policies, practices and procedures.

Training will outline the following:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the requirements of the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device, require the assistance of a service animal or a support person and the type of equipment or devices that help people with disabilities access our services
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Toronto Water's goods and services
- Toronto Water customer service policy statement and customer feedback form

6. Feedback process

The ultimate goal of Toronto Water is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated (see the *Customer Feedback Form*).

Feedback regarding the way Toronto Water provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by completing a *Customer Feedback Form* and submitting it to staff at a Toronto Water location or by forwarding the form to:

Manager, Business Management, Metro Hall
55 John St, Stn 1180, 21st Floor, Toronto M5V 3C6

Toronto Water staff will investigate and then contact the customer as soon as possible.

7. Modifications to this or other policies

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of Toronto Water that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified.

8. Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be referred to Ian McDowell, Business Management Analyst, 416 397-4939 or imcdowe@toronto.ca.

Approved by Lou Di Gironimo, General Manager, Toronto Water

Date Approved November, 2009

www.AccessON.ca/compliance

**Related
Information**

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